

Your Walking Papers

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A PROJECT OF CLEAN AIR COUNCIL

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Philadelphia Hosts ProBike/ProWalk

11th Annual International Conference on Bicycling and Walking

The Pro-Bike/Pro-Walk conference is coming soon, very soon: September 6, 7, 8. Who have seen the schedule of workshops and there is something for everyone interested in walking or biking.

Several sessions are geared to pedestrian advocates, some involve technical aspects of pedestrian mobility, and several focus on safe routes to school. To see the schedule, visit the conference website: www.bikewalk.com

or call Debby Schaaf at 215-683-4643. Peter Hecht will present Philly Walks' recommendations for pedestrian improvements at a session on the Parkway.

For those who don't have the time (Wednesday, Thursday, and half of Friday) or money (\$550 after August 21) to attend the whole conference, several alternatives are available. One-day registrations are available at a cost of \$250. **Volunteers may attend any sessions for free on the day that they volunteer to help out at the conference.** If you are interested in volunteering, call **Mike Farrell** at

610.891.4396.

On the Saturday after the conference, there will be several training sessions. In the morning, AmericaWALKS will offer a training session for pedestrian advocates. This session costs \$25 with pre-registration or \$30 at the door.

In the afternoon, there will be a session on evaluating neighborhood walkability, using Baltimore Avenue and the adjacent

neighborhood as an example. This session requires pre-registration and costs \$25. There is

an all-day training session on pedestrian design (\$85), and a morning session on applying for grants for pedestrian or bicycle projects (\$60).

Also, there will be a joint AmericaWALKS and Philly Walks reception on Thursday from 5:00 to 6:00 pm. This reception is open to anyone interested in pedestrian issues and will take place in Millennium Hall at Loew's Hotel (in the PSFS building at 12th and Market). This will be a great opportunity to meet pedestrian advocates from

Inside this issue:

ProBike/ProWalk Conference 1

Red Light Cameras 2

Footprints...Ped News in Small Steps 3

Blocked Crosswalk Leads to Injury 5

Bigger Trucks Fought 6

other cities, and AmericaWalks will present several awards.



Putting A Stop to Red-light Runners

Drivers who floor it when the light turns red may soon find themselves red-faced. But no police car pulls anyone over. And no sirens wail. Most drivers don't even know they've been nabbed. They are being caught in the act by a revolutionary new camera system that snaps a picture of the car running the red light. Then, a few weeks later, a citation in the mail shows up for as low as \$50 and as high as \$271 in Los Angeles.

The Lockheed Martin ISM photo enforcement system is changing the way communities control traffic. No longer will police need to be staked out at every intersection. With the IMS photo enforcement system, just before a vehicle runs a red light, it passes over wire loops embedded in the street near the stop line, triggering the camera. Two photographs are taken, the first just before the vehicle crosses the stop line, the second as the vehicle enters the intersection. Between midnight and 8 a.m. a technician collects and develops the film, using pictures of the license plate to find the vehicle's registered owner. Then, citations are printed, with a hefty fine, and mailed to the owner.

If you see a box the size of a birdhouse placed about 10-12 feet behind an intersection, you'll know what it means. A sign with a picture of a stoplight and the message "photo enforcement" displayed proudly usually accompanies it. These cameras come in pairs, and they are meant to be visible, they are meant to deter reckless driving. In some instances, the cameras may not even be working. Just their presence is good enough to stop most red-light runners.

As of November 1999 there were 250 cameras in the United States, from Baltimore to San Diego, catching

red-light runners in the act. Lockheed Martin is the primary manufacturer, for now, but *SafeLight* and *Red Eye 77* are also getting involved. The monitored areas include Virginia, California, New York, Howard County, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

Although the cameras are only activated after lights turn from yellow to red, at Lockheed's photo processing center in D.C., employees discard up to 30% of the photos for several reasons. Some pictures show motorists stopping just before the intersection, unreadable license plates, or even funeral processions. Some drivers try to contest the tickets, but it's really hard to argue with a picture of your car passing under a red light. Most citations come with 2 pictures- one of the car entering the intersection after the light is red and the other is the car reaching the other side under a red light. There is also a "data block," which lists the time and date, how long the light was red, and the speed of the vehicle. Although some drivers may say that they weren't driving at the time, some states hold the owner of the car responsible, while New York and California have additional cameras because their law requires that the driver be identified. Pennsylvania also has this requirement.

Studies in two different cities by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety have shown red light violation rates dropped by 40% at the monitored enforcement sites.

With every new idea, there is some opposition. In San Francisco, As-

semblyman Bernie Richter, a conservative Republican said, "I have a problem with generalized surveillance of this kind. It smacks of Germany in the 1930's."



Is this a birdhouse, or what?

Assemblyman Dennis Car-doza, who is one of three Democrats who joined Republicans in voting against the cameras, calls the program "Big Brother's intrusion into ordinary citizens' lives." He said the issue was becoming one of the most contentious in the legislature this year.

"What are they talking about?" countered San Francisco Democrat Kevin Shelley, who is also the majority floor leader in

the assembly. "This is solely about saving lives, and here we are on the threshold in California of saying we should no longer give our local communities the option of cutting down the number of deaths caused when motorists run red lights." As one Beverly Hills driver notes, "If you don't run red lights, you won't be photographed." So don't complain.

The result? Despite this revenue-raising system's effectiveness, California state legislatures voted to end the program because of the passionate remarks about Orwellian "Big Brother" surveillance by the government. But, in other states, it will go on.

This system is turning in big profits for the cities in which they are located. Lockheed Martin takes care of all of the start up costs for these \$50,000 cameras and the \$35,000 for installation. In return, Lockheed Martin receive up to 40% of the money collected for each ticket. Not surprisingly, there are some fears that the camera will become a crutch for cash-strapped

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)
local governments.

The average camera issues a \$50 citation every two hours. There are 30 cameras on New York's crowded streets. They generate about \$8 million in annual gross revenue and about \$1.5 million in profits for the city, according to Jack Fleming of EDS. In Howard County, their 20 camera-clad intersections collected \$1.37 million between February 1998 and May 1999. Baltimore's six red-light cameras have issued 9,500 tickets, or up to \$700,000 in fines-in just six months. Lockheed Martin estimates



The view from inside a box housing a red-light camera in Scaggsville, Md.

that the cameras will have generated \$100 million by the year 2000. These

numbers are adding up to big profits for Lockheed Martin.

Some people still aren't happy with the idea of such personal surveillance, even if it means safer streets. Vandals in New York fogged the lens of one camera with a lubricant. In Charlotte, North Carolina an angry motorist pumped 21 bullets into a camera's housing. The camera kept working.

PhillyWalks would love to hear your opinion of installing this technology in Philadelphia.

FOOT-PRINTS...

NEW TRAFFIC SIGNALS

In a conversation in June with Charles Denny, Chief of Transportation for the Philadelphia Streets Department, PhillyWalks President, Nancy Lavin, was told of the following changes in signals:

1. Significantly more NO TURN on RED signs
2. A full tri-color traffic light standard placed on 18th Street, at Locust Street
3. More "X's-in-a-Box" type street-striping where signs state, "No Stopping --- Bus Turns."

These changes are either now taking place, or will be in the near future.

When asked, Denny promised to study placing more signs instructing drivers to observe Pennsylvania State laws by yielding to pedestrians when turning on a green light. Currently, the signs are too wordy, and could have more of an impact if placements occurred in more dense intersections for pedestrians. As it is, the signs are few, and are in place only where vehicles begin to enter Cen-

ter City.

Finally, there is no particular signal plan as yet for the problematic intersection at Walnut Street and W. Rittenhouse Square, where the development of a Film Theatre / Restaurant / Parking Garage Complex is under consideration. It was explained to Mr. Denny that PhillyWalks members are experiencing considerable difficulty now, as they attempt to negotiate that intersection, and that changes should be designed at this time.

DEPARTMENT OF "WE DON'T NEED THIS TYPE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION"

Did you notice the Metro newspaper article of July 18th stating how bicycle-friendly the city has become? Unfortunately, a "Fact-box" alongside the story contained a list of BIKE LAWS that was incomplete and that left a very wrong impression of the law. Also unfortunate was a color-photo placed within the article's text, evidently chosen to depict support of their list of "laws" that stated, "Riding is permitted on sidewalks, but bikers must yield to pedestrians." The photo showed a cyclist riding on the sidewalk at Broad &

Chestnut Streets! Metro did print a correction article at the request of PhillyWalks, but it still did not cover the full content or intent of the laws.

Here is the Pennsylvania's Bicycle Laws:

"A person shall not ride a pedacycle upon a sidewalk in a business district unless permitted by official traffic control devices, nor when a usable pedacycle-only lane has been provided adjacent to the sidewalk."

But the City of Philadelphia goes further:

The Philadelphia Code, Section 12-808 (2) states, "No person 12 Years of age or more shall ride a bicycle upon any sidewalk in any district", (and this would include residential areas, as well.)

ON THOSE BROWN POST OFFICE RELAY (STORAGE) BOXES

Members of the handicapped community asked us to begin contacts with the locations of the boxes are too close to the curb, too near a curb-cut or are too close to bus-stops. PhillyWalks received a prompt response from the Postmaster's office who promised a re-assessment of where the boxes will be placed.

CLIP & SAVE FOR PEDS

To report Honor Boxes Blocking Sidewalks or Crosswalks

Call Larry Robinson, in the Streets Department's Permits Unit, at 215.686.5500. Report the location of the box, the publication using the Box (and its phone number, if possible), and the specific problem with that particular Box. Please report the Box to PhillyWalks, 135 S. 19th Street, Suite 300, Philadelphia, PA 19103-4219 or call 215.567.4004, x233.

Or, you can report the problem directly to the publication using it. If the box is blocking the curb ramp, you can expect courteous and prompt action. Here are some phone numbers for publications that use honor boxes:

Info News: 610.292.6310	Auto Shopper: 1.800.433.9712
Dating: 610.664.2410	City Paper: 215.732.5542, x228
Philadelphia Weekly: 215.563.7400, x148	Rents Guide: 610.668.8440
Rents: 1.800.406.8577	Parents Guide: 215.343.8400
Carrier Pigeon: 215.677.0277	News Gleaner: 215.535.4274
Employment Guide: 1.800.750.5892	Weekend Classified: 215.646.5100
Philadelphia Business Journal: 215.236.5151	USA Today: 610.407.5012 or 610.631.2838
Apartment Guide: 610.834.9813	Apartments for Rent: 215.637.1600 or 610.631.2838
Metro Kids: 215.291.5560	Weekly Press: 215.222.2846

Reporting Construction Sites Blocking the Sidewalk

Call the Streets Department's main office and the Licenses & Inspections district office listed below and ask for an inspector to visit the site to check their permit, to see if they have a right to block the right-of-way without providing alternative passage. Provide them with the following information:

- 1) The nearest intersection,
- 2) The work location (if not a corner), and
- 3) The name of the contractor, if possible (look for their sign on the construction fence or a vehicle)

City of Philadelphia Streets Department Main Office contacts:

Larry Robinson, 215.686.5500

Pat O'Donald, 215.686.5524 or 5525

Licenses & Inspections Department District Offices:

North District (5700 N. Broad St.), 215.685.2857

South District (11th & Wharton), 215.685.1575 (includes Center City)

East District (Rising Sun Ave. & Brenner) 215.685.0580

West District (43rd & Market), 215.685.7681

Join Us! PhillyWalks needs your support and involvement.

PhillyWalks is the only Philadelphia organization devoted solely to advocating on behalf of pedestrians and the promotion walking. PhillyWalks is only as strong as its members make it through their participation in the group's activities and through their financial support. Everyone is a pedestrian at some point in his or her daily routine. So you need us as much as we need you!

_____ **Sign me up!** Enclosed is my dues in the amount:c

_____ \$5 _____ **\$20** (Suggested) _____ \$35 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other

_____ I would like to volunteer for PhillyWalks. Contact me at: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Street Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip code _____ Email Address _____

_____ I do not want to join at this time but I have enclosed \$10 for a subscription to *Your Walking Papers*.

Blocked Crosswalk Problem For Blind

Definition of Legal Blindness: Visual Acuity of 20 [over] 200 or a Visual Field of 20 degrees or less; what a normal person would see at 200 feet, the Legally Blind see only at 20 feet. Thus perfect eyesight is scored as 20 [over] 20.

Carla McCollaum is a Board Member of PhillyWalks. Carla McCollaum is also legally blind. In February of this year she was reminded the hard way about what it is like to try to get around in this city with a visual disability.

Not one to let her lack of sight keep her from being active, Carla was crossing a center city street on her way to a disability-related meeting. As she approached the opposite side of the street her cane found a truck blocking the crosswalk, a challenge that is not uncommon for us to see in our packed city. Broken law #1: A large pick-up truck was blocking the crosswalk of the street she was trying to cross.

It was too late to turn back, so she quickly decided to navigate to the back of the truck, so she could avoid the oncoming traffic in front of the truck. As she headed behind the truck, she discovered that there was a flatbed trailer hitched to the back.

Carla turned back and proceeded to try going alongside again toward the front of the truck. Then she caught a glimpse of sky. The truck had hit her and before she realized what happened, she was lying on the ground, in the traffic lane.

The next thing she remembers is a police officer leaning over her asking if she was ok. All of the traffic had stopped -- but the truck was gone! Broken Law #2: The truck had no back-up beeper.

Carla didn't suffer any major physical injuries. However, the next few months would yield more problems. She spent the next few months recovering. Each trip outside the house required careful planning, taking cabs, and struggling to walk with a second

cane. As a result, she traveled to very few places during the next few months.

So is the Crosswalk really the pedestrian's friend? One of the first things that the disabled are taught is that the Crosswalk is the safest place to cross the street. Not in this case. Carla

will never again assume that trucks are equipped with back-up beepers. Neither should any person traveling in the city with a disability. Too often drivers take their rear-view and side-view mirrors for granted, making crosswalks dangerous.

THIS MONTH'S

Sidewalk Scofflaw Spotted...



A Fox Channel 29 TV van blocks the sidewalk on 4th Street!

PhillyWalks is a not-for-profit corporation incorporated under the laws of Pennsylvania and operates as a project of Clean Air Council. Our goals are:

- To work for a safe and functional pedestrian environment.
- To promote walking as an activity and a form of recreation.
- To educate government, transportation officials and the general public about pedestrian concerns.
- To create greater public awareness of pedestrian issues.

PhillyWalks

135 S. 19th Street, Suite 300
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4219
215.567.4004. x233

email us at: phillywalks@cleanair.org

Nancy Lavin, President
Peter Hecht, V. President

Janet Heller, Treasurer
Dennis Winters, Secretary

PhillyWalks Fights Bigger & Heavier Trucks

Imagine even longer and heavier interstate trucks rumbling through Philadelphia on its network of Interstate Highways. Imagine, further, that the traffic disruption caused by crashes involving these behemoths forcing large numbers of cars and smaller trucks to detour off the Schuylkill Expressway, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, I-95, or Roosevelt Boulevard, and onto city streets.

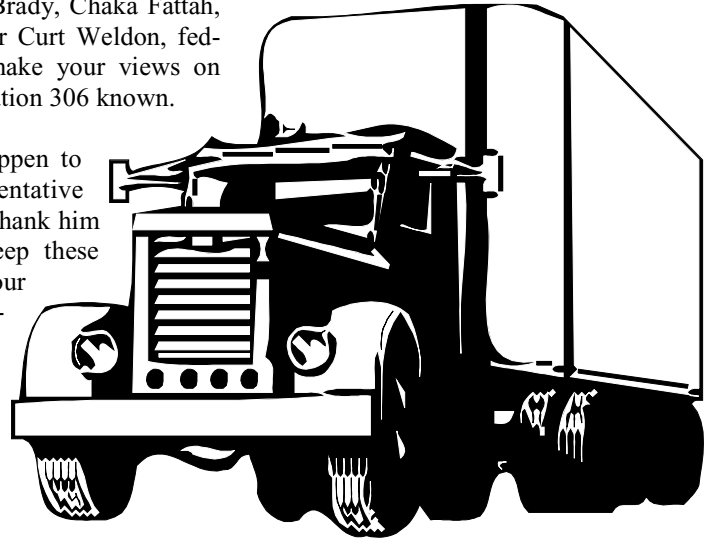
Most people would say that pedestrians already have enough to contend with and some in Congress would agree. Pending in Congress is a bill (actually a resolution) that would freeze current size and weight restrictions on tractor-trailer rigs. House Concurrent Resolution 306 is in need of additional sponsors from the Philadelphia area. Presently, only 13th District Congressman Joseph Hoeffel is a co-sponsor.

As the trucking industry con-

stantly lobbies for larger trucks (particularly on what are called "NAFTA Highways" like I-95), it is important for citizens to let their Member of Congress know how they feel about longer and heavier trucks lumbering around town.

If you live in the district of Bob Borski, Bob Brady, Chaka Fattah, Jim Greenwood, or Curt Weldon, federal election, to make your views on House Joint Resolution 306 known.

If you happen to live in Representative Hoeffel's district, thank him for working to keep these giant trucks off our streets and highways.



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