

Kathleen Ramsay

From: Laura Asermily <lasermily@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 05, 2018 9:09 AM
To: Kathleen Ramsay
Subject: Downtown Parking Future Letter to Editor

Kathleen--Please share this letter with SB and department heads. Thanks!

I hope that our plans for downtown parking and parks consider the full gamut of future parking we'll need as we aim to slow the damaging effects of climate change. Let's consider car pool and car share parking, bus parking, electric vehicle (EV) parking for an ever-widening spectrum of cars, mopeds, scooters, and utility carts, and weather-protected bike parking for regular, electric assist and cargo bikes. Parking for these low and no-fossil fuel transportation options should be encouraged, well lit, primely located, and coupled with EV charging stations, as we see in the Marbleworks. We could fit three or so e-bikes or e-mopeds or scooters into one standard repurposed surface parking space or under a solar-powered EV charging station canopy. We could transport people from Porter Hospital, our shopping plazas, the college or our schools to downtown using the ACTR bus shuttle system complimented by their dial-a-ride service and a myriad of on-demand "micro transit" options.

This will attract residents, business and visitors to Middlebury, especially the growing number of young professionals wishing to be car free and families transitioning to one car. It will also address the needs of those without cars--our elders, rail and bus travelers, those who are developmentally or physically challenged, those with life circumstances from revoked licenses to economic hardships trying to work and access our services and stores.

People don't come to our downtown to park. They come to experience something interactive--food, theater, events, services--and will appreciate our out-of-the-box parking and traffic management thinking as we complete our rail bridge and platform construction projects and future parks, trails and sidewalks. If we ever do consider a parking structure, I hope it would be innovative in addressing the future parking needs mentioned above. Meanwhile, VTrans Go! Vermont has launched an exciting menu of options to help us access downtown with tools like "trip traveler" and "ride share" and "van pools" and "V-Bike solutions" at connectingcommuters.com.

Climate change is speeding up. We must speed up. Not our cars, but our efforts to reduce our transportation carbon footprint. Ironically, speeding up our pursuit of low and no-fossil fuel transportation options, slows us down. To the pace of life. They can sometimes take more time, but leave us less congested with traffic, relieved of parking woes and more connected with each other and our natural world.

Laura Asermily
Middlebury