



SAVE Colonie

A Partnership for Planning

Sean Maguire
Town of Colonie Planning and Economic Development Director
VIA EMAIL
January 5, 2021

Dear Sean Maguire;

On Tuesday January 5, 2021, the Town of Colonie Planning Board is scheduled to hear a sketch plan presentation for Keeler Motor Car Company to expand its dealership to the former Hewitt's site. This proposal includes a 12 foot wide "multi use pathway" next to a 24 foot wide road which will extend from the rear of the proposed Keeler parking lot down a steep hill to River Road. The site plan indicates that pedestrian and bike access to this multi use path and road will be solely via the Keeler dealership parking lot.

There is pedestrian and bike route access from Albany through much of Colonie via Route 7 and through British American office development, but there is no safe way from there down to the Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail. While this Keeler proposal purports to create this connection, this is not a safe or practical way for pedestrians or bicyclists to reach the Mohawk Hudson Trail. Bike riders and pedestrians will have to share the proposed roadway with Keeler delivery vehicles (ie car carriers) and customers test driving Keeler cars, as well as vehicles using their parking lot, through which bikers and hikers would need to travel to reach the Keeler road. This is probably not safe.

SAVE has long advocated for a town-wide bike path/trail plan and expanded recreational opportunities for Town residents. We were delighted when, as part of the Planning Board's approval of the 2016 Cumberland Farms site plan approval, the Planning Board included *as a condition* the Cumberland Farms Bike Path easement. However, to date, no such easement has been filed with the Albany County Clerk's office.

Based upon our cursory review of these plans, it appears that there is no *dedicated pedestrian and bicycle only connection* from the British American Boulevard down to River Road, only the problematic "multi-use" road accessed through Keeler's parking lot. Consequently, this plan raises significant pedestrian and bicycle rider safety concerns.

Other concerns include: How will bike riders and pedestrians safely access the Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail, a considerable distance away from the proposed pathway, once they exit onto River Road? Currently, there are no sidewalks or dedicated bike lanes on River Road. How will the proposed vehicle access to River Road impact bike riders and pedestrian access to River Road? Will there be a signalized crossing area for bike and pedestrian users and appropriate signage on River and Troy Schenectady Road?

We hope that the Planning Board takes this opportunity to fully examine connecting the existing bike routes with the Mohawk Hudson Bike-Hike Trail, considering the safety and practicality of all possible options. Towards that end, we strongly recommend that Town Planning staff consult with interested stakeholders such as the Vly Denison Birchwood Road Neighborhoods, the Capital District Transportation Committee's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the Albany Bike Coalition and the Parks & Trails New York.

Sincerely,

Susan Laurilliard
Susan Weber

for SAVE Colonie:
A Partnership for Planning

Cc: Mahan
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Town Board Members