

New Class 1 Bike Trails in Sebastopol?

Biking through Sebastopol on Highway 116 or Highway 12? Lynn Deedler has a better idea: why not find a way to walk and bicycle on parallel routes that would be safer, friendlier and show off some of the hidden attractions of the town. The north-south route would run from the Joe Rodota trail near the Laguna and skirt the eastern edge of town to the city limits and beyond; the other would use city streets part way and end at Watertrough Road, thereby giving a safe route for the kids going to the schools on Watertrough.

When he first brought the idea to Bike & Walk Sebastopol in early spring 2009, he had already scouted routes, talked to some property owners and had made some rough maps using satellite images from Google. I liked the idea a lot, as did the others, but I thought it was so outrageous that the chances of getting it to fly were vanishingly slim. Then I accompanied him on a scouting trip for the east-west route and he won me over pretty quickly as we cycled through the Sebastopol Memorial Lawn (a big yes! from the owners) and heard about all the other property owners who ranged from willing to consider it to enthusiastic.

Lynn decided to take the his campaign public last week with a short presentation at a pedestrian forum co-sponsored by the City and Bike & Walk Sebastopol. While most of the forum consisted of various complaints and grumblings about crosswalks, speeding and the need for more driver education, people sat up and got excited about the proposed routes. Also attending was George Snyder, writer for the Sonoma West Times & News, who wrote a front page story on the proposal

SEBASTOPOL – An idea linking the Joe Rodota Trail to Bloomfield Road via a class 1 bike route could be growing wings, assuming backers can drum up community support.

The idea, offered by veteran bicyclist Lynn Deedler, at a recent Sebastopol City Council sponsored pedestrian issues workshop, would use a route using mostly private property to parallel Highway 116 along

much of the way, making it a class 1 bike route free of automobile traffic.

Putting the idea out there is just the first step, of course. There are many hurdles to overcome before anyone can take in the views of the Laguna de Santa Rosa on their way south to Bloomfield Road, from obtaining rights of way to all the necessary environmental studies. But...what a terrific idea and what a huge asset the trails could be to our town!