

## **Bike Newton Candidate Questionnaire**

### **Tarik Lucas's Response**

#### **Question 1: Please summarize your discussion with Bike Newton's on February 2.**

At first we talked about the appropriate locations to install protected bike lanes. I said there should be a protected bike lane(s) on Washington Street in-between Washington/Comm and Newton Wellesley Hospital. Cars routinely speed on that stretch of road. Protected bike lanes along with some new trees, will help slow down traffic, promote more bike usage on that part of the road, and will reduce the heat islands. When the Riverside development is completed, it will be helpful for Newton residents to gain access to the site, without the need to use their cars.

I believe the city could add protected bike lanes on the southern side of Washington Street, from Washington/Chestnut in West Newton to Washington/Lowell in Newtonville. 3 years ago, a contractor for Mass DOT cut down hundreds of trees on Washington Street that abut the Mass Pike. This has created a massive heat island in the neighborhoods that are on Washington Street. I would support protected bike lanes and trees on the southern side of Washington Street near the Mass Pike in-between Chestnut and Lowell.

Staying in Newtonville, the group and I talked about the Walnut Street enhancements. I said that if the City is going to install protected bike lanes, then it should on Lowell Avenue in Newtonville. Walnut and Lowell run parallel to one another, but Lowell Avenue is largely a residential neighborhood, while Walnut is a mix of businesses and homes. As a result, Walnut Street has heavier traffic compared to Lowell. Seeing as how the street has already been narrowed, the bike lanes would make more sense on Lowell Avenue.

We also talked about the infamous and non-lethal "Circle of Death" in Newton Corner. Bike Newton and many other Newton residents and business owners would like to see a new traffic design in Newton Corner. Srdj Nedeljkovic said he created a new design for the area several years ago, that would help with the traffic flow and promote bicycling and walking in Newton Corner. But unfortunately any re-design of the area would need State approval and funding. Meaning, Newton cannot control one of the worst traffic intersections in its own city.

One thing that I wanted to bring up, was the fact that living a healthy lifestyle is one way to fight against Covid-19. Everyone should try to get additional exercise during the pandemic. One way to achieve this goal is by riding a bicycle and going for long walks.

Near the end of the call we talked about bike infrastructure. The Bike Newton Steering Committee asked if I was willing to support earmarking a portion of the City's budget for updating and improving the bike infrastructure. I said that is an excellent idea, and I would advocate for that during the budget season.

And at some point on the call, we talked about my own personal history with biking. I told them that I don't know how to ride a bike and I never learned how to ride a bike. I did mention that I just recently bought a Peloton exercise bike. I try to get a 30-minute workout everyday.

**Question 2: What other aspects or information in your platform is specific to active mobility/bicycling?**

One of the cornerstones of my City Council platform is communication. I will be a City Councilor that represents the voices of the residents and makes decisions based on their input. I look forward to maintaining a relationship with Bike Newton to continue to hear their concerns and needs.

Environmental justice plays a huge role in my political platform and advocating for a city that is friendly and accessible for bicyclists and pedestrians is an important part of that.

As a City Councilor, I will be someone who pushes back on developers to make sure that we are negotiating the best projects possible in Newton. Part of that negotiation will be around resources for bicyclists and pedestrians, including but not limited to, bike racks, bike paths, rest areas, and Blue Bike expansion.