



Friday, December 9, 2011

Dear Board of Commissioners of the Delaware River Port Authority,

On behalf of the hundreds of cyclists and pedestrians who use the Ben Franklin Bridge daily, the hundreds of thousands of bicyclists who ride throughout the region, and the over 2500 members of the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, I request that you restore funding in the 2012 Capital Program Budget for an ADA compliant ramp on the Camden side of the Ben Franklin Bridge at your December 14th meeting.

Because it is DRPA's mission "to provide quality transportation services across the river and invest[s] in the economic growth of Southeastern Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey," it must prioritize building the ramp as a 2012 capital project.

The Delaware River Port Authority's Finance Committee approved a draft Capital Program Budget on December 7th that omits this project. DRPA CEO Mattheussen committed at the July 2010 Board meeting that the ramp would be built in 2012. This ramp will replace a steep and cumbersome three flight stair tower that has been in the 5 Year Capital Program for over five years and was scheduled to begin in January of 2012. The project is Capital Project BF1101.

Eliminating this project goes against NJ's Complete Streets Policies and continues to deny the public ADA access to the Ben Franklin Bridge Walkway. The ramp connects directly with the \$6 million regional trail investment made by the 2010 federal TIGER Grant awarded to Camden, which Coopers Ferry Partnership is now implementing. NJ DOT is providing support and guidance for the TIGER project and even delivered a cost estimate for the ramp. The lack of a ramp is a critical obstacle to the region's trail network and is a deterrent to Camden and Philadelphia's economic development efforts to enhance the Delaware Riverfront.

The action of the Finance Committee to remove the project from the Capital Program Budget was taken without public comment or an announced public review period. There was no public notice about the Finance Committee's agenda or that the Capital Program Budget would be reviewed or voted on December 7th. The 2012 Capital Program Budget was announced and posted on the DRPA website after the December 7th meeting.

We request that the DRPA Board reinstate Capital Project BF1101 into the 2012 Capital Program Budget at the upcoming December 14th meeting. It is imperative that this long awaited and long promised Capital Project begin in 2012. As long as DRPA continues to refuse to fund the ramp, it is denying safe and accessible transportation to members of the public who want to bike or walk across the Delaware River.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Doty".

Alex Doty
Executive Director