

NEW YORK POST

REINING IN THE PEST-I-CABS

June 16, 2009 --

Mayor Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn say they've agreed on a plan to license and regulate the city's ubiquitous pedicabs -- days after an out-of-control cab nearly killed two passengers when it rammed a taxi on the Williamsburg Bridge.

And good for them: Pedicabs have been clogging traffic, cutting off pedestrians and ignoring the rules of the road since they first appeared on city streets.

The new regulations -- expected to go before the council this month -- are sensible: They'd require pedicabs to be equipped with seatbelts, headlights, taillights and a posted fare card, and require drivers to pass a safety test and own insurance.

The cabs would also be banned from bridges, tunnels and bike lanes.

Now, the bike-lane prohibition seems a little odd: Mayor Mike's recent green-themed streetscaping means that such lanes occupy nearly half of many blocks in Midtown -- surely there's enough room for pedicabs on *them*.

But the bigger question is why these regulations weren't in place years ago. The City Council, after all, passed a similar bill in 2007 over the mayor's veto.

That bill also limited the number of licensed pedicabs to just over 300. But the administration was soon bogged down in a legal dispute with pedicab owners over how to issue licenses -- and the law was never enforced.

The new law sets no such limit -- far more in line with Bloomberg's environmental sensibilities.

But let's hope it does the trick anyway.

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