



So I Guess I Should Endorse Someone for Mayor....

Posted by [Glenn](#) on October 28, 2005 - 8:12pm in [The Oil Drum: Local](#)

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The year's mayoral race has been a big yawn, mostly because of the low key styles of the two men running. Frankly neither candidate for Mayor has made much of an impression on issues that would really prepare NYC for an energy scarce future.

Bloomberg has done an adequate job of taking care of many practical issues that has mollified the middle class, while not irritating the minority communities as much as his predecessor. The smoking ban showed that he was willing to take on quality of life issues that had an impact on people's health and dry cleaning expenses. The property tax increase showed that he was not simply a tax cut crazy right wing nut.

On the issues that I care about in light of the coming energy crunch, he has a pretty mixed bag. He did not fight hard against the MTA's fare increase or proposed service cuts. He originally backed ideas like tolling East River Bridges and building a freight tunnel that would have done much to allievate the incredible volume of trucks that come through the Manhattan central business district every day. But he quickly backed down when faced with minor local opposition. I hope that if he does win a second term, he will have more political freedom to get important projects like that done.

However the primary reason I cannot support him centers around the way he has limited free speech and allowed the NYPD to engage in brutal tactics with protestors and demonstrators at Republican Convention, particularly those on bikes. Since then Bloomberg has labeled the monthly Critical Mass ride a political "demonstration" that requires a permit from the city. As a result, the NYPD has rountinely arrested dozens of people on bikes that are simply riding their bikes together in large numbers - often tackling bikers without warning while they are stopped at red lights or more dangerously, while they are still in motion. This is unacceptable and should be the shame of NYC. This fits with a pattern that Bloomberg has set in restricting the right of large groups of people to gather to make a political statement - particularly the anti-war protests of the Iraq invasion.

As for Freddy Ferrer, he has run a good, honest campaign, talking about issues of social and economic equity, but he has been outspent and is clearly running far back in the polls. He's not an inspiring candidate, but I think he would govern well. He's now really campaigning for a respectable showing after a lifetime of public service. A vote for Ferrer will now most likely simply be a protest vote against Bloomberg's anti free speech policies.



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