TO: Will Handsfield, DDOT

FROM: David B. Morris

DATE: November 6, 2020

RE: DDOT Bike Infrastructure Improvement Plan for Kentucky Ave., SE

 Intersection of Independence/Kentucky Ave/13th St SE

Dear Mr. Handsfield,

Thank you for your willingness to consider the significant concerns residents have voiced about how this project will impact their lives. In lieu of attending Monday’s scheduled meeting via the Lincoln Park listserv, I would like to summarize my views on the project in the hope they are useful to you and other decision makers during the meeting. My comments focus on above intersection, shown on Sheet 7 of DDOT’s plan dated November 2020.

*The northbound bike lane on Kentucky north of the intersection is the root cause of almost all the concerns residents have voiced.* The lane itself is not the problem, but all the cumbersome adjustments to the intersection that must be made to access it. These are:

* Large bump-outs and standoffs at the northeast portion of the intersection. Without the bike lane these could be smaller and still achieve traffic-calming.
* Reduced parking in the same area beyond that needed for traffic calming and pedestrian safety.
* The necessity for ugly visual aids such as flexposts and large “”turning vehicles STOP” signs to warn motorists of northbound bicyclists bearing left from 13th onto Kentucky.

The price residents must pay for a one-block northbound bike lane on Kentucky is steep:

* A reduction of already scarce parking, especially for the many elderly residents near the intersection and those with young children.
* The usability of streets near the intersection for all residents is reduced, even for short-term loading and loading. Frequent double-parking and blockage of 13th street for drivers and bicyclists alike will be the inevitable result.
* An ugly and jumbled streetscape. I appreciate the efforts made to reduce flexposts. But the signage and mark-offs necessary to carry the Kentucky bike lane north of the intersection will degrade the street scape severely. Sheet 7 is easily the most cluttered map in the entire project plans.
* A reduction in home values for those living very near the intersection, who also feel the above negative impacts most severely.

I submit that it is simply not worth these costs—to the city and to residents—to insist on this one-block portion of the bike lane north of the intersection. Bikers can already proceed north on 13th, reaching a well-regulated intersection at Mass. Ave, with signaled crosswalks leading to Lincoln Park. A biker taking the proposed Kentucky lane, however, would have to cross both Independence and 13th, look out for northbound cars eager to drive through the thicket of bump-outs, then submit herself to the tender mercies of eastbound traffic on East Capitol while crossing into the park. This “alternative” is simply not worth it.

For these reasons I urge you and DDOT’s team to eliminate the northern portion of the northbound Kentucky bike lane on sheet 7 and instead focus on the true needs of this intersection: traffic calming, pedestrian safety, and the maintenance of an attractive streetscape within a national and local historic district.

With best wishes,

David B. Morris

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Cc:

Charles Allen, DC Council

Steve Holtzman, ANC 6B

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