



Mr. Alex Freedman
Planner
City of Takoma Park

September 29, 2023

Re: Takoma Park's Maple Avenue Connectivity Project

Dear Mr. Freedman:

Given that Takoma Park is "revisiting previous designs for the Maple Avenue corridor from the DC border to Sligo Creek Park," the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) provides comments as follows.

General:

1) We recommend a 20 MPH (or lower) speed limit for the full extent of this project, from the Washington DC border to Sligo Creek Parkway. Reduction is permitted by [Maryland Transportation Code § 21-803\(a\)\(4\)](#), which states "A local authority may decrease the maximum speed limit to not less than 15 miles per hour on a highway only after performing an engineering and traffic investigation." This Maple Avenue Complete Streets Design effort satisfies the state's engineering and traffic investigation requirement.

We note that the [Maple Avenue Complete Streets Design - 30% Design](#) document states, on page 3, "Promoting low vehicle speeds is one of the most important aspects of bicycle safety. Ideally, people biking and people driving would be moving at the same speed down a street, around 15 MPH."

2) Montgomery County's Bicycle Master Plan, enacted in 2018, indicates separated bike lanes on Maple Avenue between Philadelphia Avenue/MD 410 and Sligo Creek Parkway, one lane in each direction. The existing roadway is wide enough for bike lanes in each direction. We ask that the Connectivity Project's design be revised to include these separated bike lanes, in accordance with the master plan and the city's commitment to road safety.

3) Certain crosswalks shown -- a minority -- are marked ADA RAMP AND HIGH VISIBILITY CROSSWALK. All crosswalks should have ADA ramps. See, for instance, PS-05: The ends of the two crosswalks at Valley View Avenue, and three of four ends of the crosswalks at Old Philadelphia Ave, do not indicate ADA ramps. This is just one example.

Comments on particular drawings:

4) PS-01: Correct spelling, TACOMA PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT and PLAYFULL CITY (sign), and confirm the location of the SOUTHERN PROJECT LIMIT, which appears to be some distance into the District of Columbia.

5) PS-06: We support the elimination of the current right-turn lane for motor vehicles from Maple Avenue onto Philadelphia Avenue, and its replacement with a protected bike lane, should the city not revise the Maple Avenue design to conform to the Bicycle Master Plan, by creating separated bike lanes between Philadelphia Avenue/MD 410 and Sligo Creek Parkway. Particularly given the narrowing of the eastern lane of Maple Avenue to 10', south of Grant Ave, we recommend continuing that narrowed width to Philadelphia Avenue accompanied by widening of the bike lane and installation of a protection barrier (curb work) between the bike lane and the motor-vehicle lane.

6) PS-09: We recommend narrowing the extraordinarily wide driveway and curb cut for the Franklin Apartment building, opposite Lincoln Avenue, which creates unnecessary and avoidable exposure for sidewalk users, and squaring the crosswalk across Maple Ave to create an easier crossing.

7) PS-12: An indicated sign reads PAKRWAY [sic] CLOSED SUNDAY and another reads ATTENTION PARKWAY CLOSED EVERY SUNDAY. For several years, the Sligo Creek Parkway has been closed Friday to Sunday late afternoon with additional closure on Monday holidays. We suggest finding a better signage solution.

Thank you for considering our advocacy.

Sincerely,



Seth Grimes, Maryland organizer

cc: Rosalind Grigsby
Mayor Talisha Searcy and City Council Members