

In February, DCCA received preliminary bike lane plans for the 17th Street and raised the following issues with DDOT. Many of these still apply to the current finalized plans. Although the covid case numbers are now considerably lower than they were in February, the concern about adequate walking space for pedestrians is still an issue, even without social distancing.

DCCA has three comments/questions on the plans. For the most part these stem from concerns we have had during all discussions of 17th Street, particularly the blocks between P and R Streets: These blocks serve as a 'central square' for residents of East Dupont; as such DCCA has endeavored to represent the needs of local residents and businesses, and to urge that these needs be considered on at least an equal footing with the use of 17th Street as a minor arterial for vehicles and bicycles.

Comments/Questions:

- 1) The current pandemic-related configuration of the east side of these blocks includes an extended sidewalk area to allow for social distancing, although some streateries seem to have encroached into this space. The work proposed for this spring eliminates the extended sidewalk. At this time, daily COVID-19 cases in DC are higher than they were when the extended sidewalks were first implemented. Although cases are now trending down, does it make sense to plan to eliminate extended sidewalks as soon as a few months from now?
- 2) You state that the plan is for the shared southbound lane for bicyclists to be replaced with a fully protected bike lane after the pandemic is over. It is not clear where a southbound PBL would go, since presumably parking will be restored on the west side when the streateries are removed on that side. Where will the needed 6' come from?
- 3) DCCA has advocated that the bike lanes through this area include some mechanisms for calming bike traffic, to make crossing 17th Street more friendly to pedestrians. Those of us who live in this area conduct much of our shopping and other business on 17th Street, or we cross it several times each day to go to Dupont Circle or Logan Circle destinations. We have proposed several ideas, such as a raised area in front of the two larger condominium buildings (the Copley Plaza and Cavanaugh Courts), which have loading zones at their entrances. Such raised areas would not only serve to slow bike traffic, but also allow residents of these buildings to enter vehicles or receive deliveries more easily. This need was pointed out to us by a resident Cavanaugh Courts, who had suffered a broken leg. Signage will help, but physical calming measures would be desirable.