

The draft Master Bicycle Plan status was discussed briefly at the February 21 CCCFH meeting. Work sessions that were to occur with planners will not, and the plan is being sent to the Council virtually as is. Julie Davis of Somerset House reports on this below:

Julie Davis:

Following the CCCFH meeting, I sent an email to David Anspacher, Supervisor of the PB's Functional Planning and Policy Division who is heading up the Bike Plan project, to inquire about the schedule for work sessions on the recommendations in the Plan. According to the PB website, three work sessions were scheduled for February 15, February 22, and March 1 to discuss broad issues involving the Plan, including design, configuration, budget and implementation. The website also indicated that the PB would subsequently hold a series of additional work sessions to discuss the specific routes included in the Plan in light of the testimony and comments received in connection with the January 27 hearing.

David called me back yesterday morning to report that the PB at the initial February 15th work session had decided against holding any further work sessions on the draft Plan, including those scheduled for February 22 and March 1, as well as those concerning the Plan's specific routes. Instead, the PB will send the draft Plan to the County Council virtually as is, with only a few changes discussed at the February 15 session (none of which involve routes in the Friendship Heights area). Because the Council is working on the annual budget, there is no schedule for when it will take up the draft Plan, although David said it would likely be the late spring. At that time, the Council will hold its own hearing(s) on the draft Plan, and make whatever changes it considers warranted in light of the testimony and comments it and the PB has received and based on input from the County DOT.

I pointed out to David the PB website as of yesterday morning still showed the original work session schedule. I suggested the PB should advise the public that no further work sessions would be held, and that no significant changes would be made to the current PB draft before it is sent to the Council. David agreed to get the word out, and then ended our conversation by repeating what he has been telling concerned communities throughout this process, i.e., that the purpose of the County-wide Master Bicycles Plan is to provide non-binding recommendations and guidelines over a 25 to 30 year planning period, and that because of County's current and projected long-term fiscal situation, there is little probability of widespread implementation in the immediate or near-term future.