



Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Staff Report: Canal Street Improvements – College Hill, Downtown – Ward 12 (For Action)

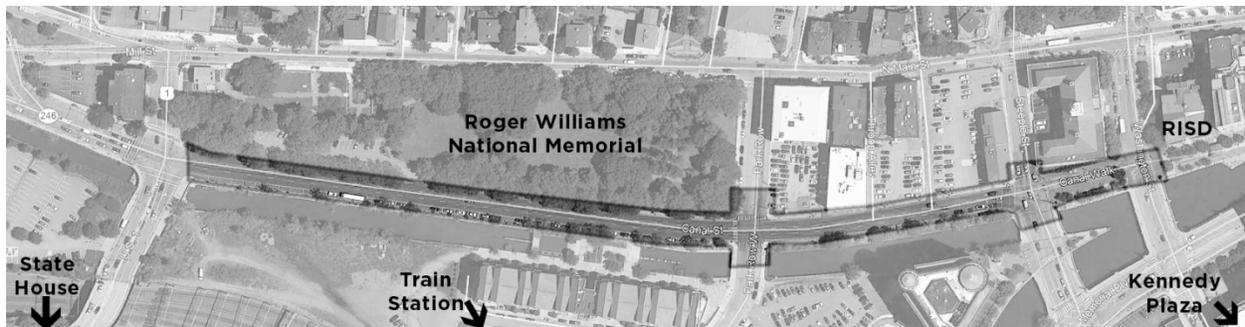
Presented at October 16, 2016 BPAC meeting

Project Description

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation has presented plans to the City for improvements to Canal Street between Smith Street and Washington Street. These plans resulted from the Canal Street Road Safety Assessment previously reviewed by the BPAC at its February 2017 meeting. The City seeks comments from the BPAC regarding these changes. This is the second time this project comes before the BPAC, and if approved, the improvements would be implemented in 2018.

The BPAC previously discussed the Road Safety Assessment which led to this proposal at the Commission's February 2017 meeting.

Project Map



Project Description

- A left-side protected bike lane is proposed for Canal Street between Smith Street and Park Row. One vehicular travel lane would be removed to make room for this. The bike lane would be 5 ft wide with a 7.5 ft buffer, with flexible delineators in the middle of the buffer to provide adequate room for plowing.
- The left-side bike lane continues as a traditional striped bike lane without a buffer from Park Row to Steeple Street. The three remaining vehicular travel lanes would remain at a narrower width to provide room for this.
- A traffic signal along with curb bump-outs are proposed for the intersection of Canal Street and Park Row.

Previous BPAC Recommendations

- Give greater thought to how bicyclists will enter that left-side bike lane from the Smith Street intersection.

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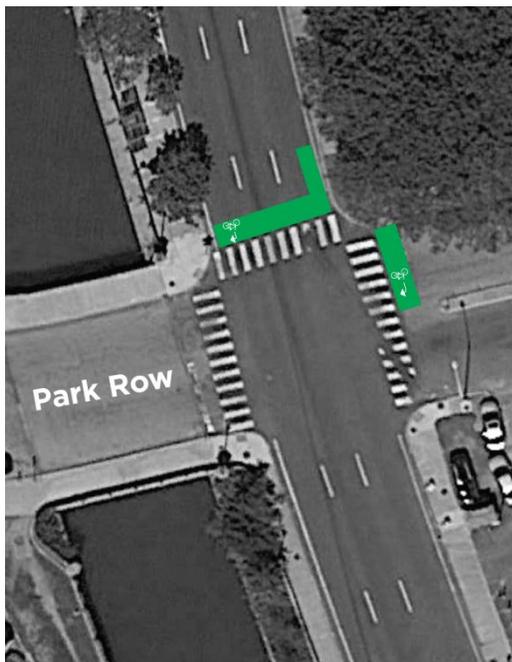
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- Consider bike signals at Smith Street and Steeple Street.
- Consider a future phase converting the bike lane on Canal Street to bidirectional.
- Look at the turning radius required for buses at Park Row.
- Consider moving the bus stop north on Canal Street to get it further from the Park Row intersection.
- Look at installing the vertical elements as far from the curb as the bike lane buffer allows so as to provide room for plowing and sweeping and possible future use for a bidirectional facility.

Staff Recommendations to BPAC

Based on feedback from the public and Commission members received at the February BPAC meeting during which this project was previously discussed, staff to the BPAC make the following recommendations:

- At the intersections with Park Row and with Steeple Street, bike boxes should be added to facilitate safe right turns by bikes out of the left-side bike lane. Both intersections need two bike boxes to facilitate right turns, one for when bicyclists arrive during a red signal phase (the bike box on Canal itself that crosses over the through lane) and another for when bicyclists arrive during a green signal phase (in front of the stop bar on the perpendicular streets). See proposed configuration below.



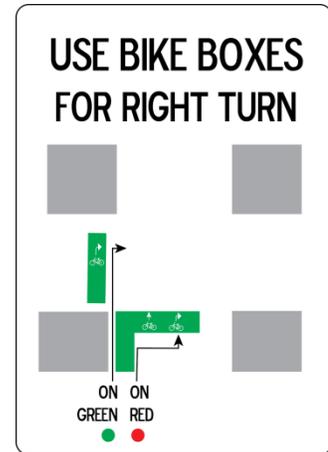
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- Signage should be added along with the bike boxes to instruct bicyclists how to safely turn right. See example at right.
- The project scope should be expanded to continue the left-side bike lane across Steeple Street to Washington Street
- At the Smith Street end of the protected bike lane buffer, two delineators should be placed at the “mouth” of the bike lane to create a 7 ft opening, in order to discourage motorists from entering the bike lane.
- How bicyclists navigate the intersection of Canal Street and Smith Street should be given greater thought. The repaving schedule for this intersection should be looked into and better bicycle accommodation coordinated with that project.



Respectfully submitted by Alex Ellis.