Princeton Junction Redevelopment Plan not Bicycle/Pedestrian Friendly

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The latest version of the Princeton Junction Redevelopment Plan is not bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The plan, which was hastily approved by the West Windsor Township Planning Board on Thursday, January 29, lacks bike lanes and a pedestrian-friendly promenade, among other issues.

The plan's goals, as written by Township Council, are laudable, including a goal that the plan "will include sidewalks and bicycle lanes," and a policy that "continuous sidewalk/path and bicycle connections should be provided throughout the Redevelopment Area." The goal also states the plan "will utilize traffic calming on roadways where appropriate."

The plan details, as they emerged during the Planning Board hearings, do not meet these goals. Bike lanes are largely absent from the Redevelopment Area – only Washington Road is shown with bike lanes. In addition, the Main Street near the Promenade will encourage high speed through traffic, since it is 3 lanes wide (including a center turning lane), and lacks on street parking, bike lanes or other traffic calming features.

The public review period was insufficient. The plan was released to the public January 12, 2009, and approved 17 days later, although the Planning Board had 45 days for review. The West Windsor Bicycle and Pedestrian Alliance (WWBPA) recently submitted detailed recommendations outlining bicycle and pedestrian improvements to the Planning Board, however, these were largely ignored, as were alternative solutions provided by Township Transportation Consultant Gary Davies. In the rush to finish the review, an opportunity was missed to greatly improve the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians in our town. These issues are vitally important and must now be addressed by the Township Council, which we hope will act to include bicycle and pedestrian friendly design requirements in the plan.

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