

April 9, 2019

My name is John Jennings. I live in Heritage Green, a townhouse development of eighty homes.

The reason I am here tonight is to let you know the County is about to make a bad decision, a decision that is impractical and illogical. I am talking about the County's proposal to develop the active playground behind Harper's Choice Middle School into a complex consisting of a new police headquarters, a fire station with accompanying fueling station and several additional buildings. More than 360 County employees will be employed in this complex. A new access road for this complex will be built to accommodate the emergency, police and employees' vehicles. This new road, fire and fueling stations will be located directly across the street from Heritage Green, no more than 50 yards from some of our homes.

If this complex is developed, our residents who currently enjoy a good quality of life will be confronted with dramatic changes. Our current quiet neighborhood will be punctuated with a clamor we have not known, including the sounds of emergency sirens and horns blowing, the rumbling of diesel engines, air brakes releasing, the beeping of trucks backing up and vastly increased vehicular traffic. And this will be 24-7-365, forever.

Vehicle traffic and the resulting safety issues on the two neighborhood roads, Rivendell and Cedar Lanes will increase substantially. With more than 360 employees in this complex and their vehicles travelling twice daily on these narrow streets,

together with emergency vehicles, will create congestion and traffic situations in which we are not accustomed. This daily usage of the new access road at an already slightly dangerous intersection will cause unknown safety issues. The County has made no plans for this intersection and traffic calming in the area. Additionally, children walking to and from the middle school will have to cross the new access road at the same time these emergency and employee vehicles are using it. The County seems oblivious to this and potentially dangerous situation.

Further, these unaccompanied preadolescent children will be walking on a path located very close to the fire station that will not be protected by a security fence. The children, some of whom may be curious and perhaps a little mischievous, could venture onto the fire station property and pose safety risks. Further, children playing on the middle school baseball field, which is only 50 yards from the fire station and people playing on Field 6, Cedar Lane Park West will periodically be retrieving balls from fire station property, again another safety issue.

A fueling station with two 10,000-gallon buried storage tanks will cause environmental problems for our residents. There is the risk of spillage while County vehicles and tanks are refueled. The County reports, "... there have been no significant spills..." at any of their other fueling sites. This means the "insignificant" spills will flow with surface water into the existing retention pond in our development and eventually into the Patuxent River run off. It's important to note the County

has discounted the results of their own “Fueling Stations” study which recommends a fueling station should not be sited within 500 feet of schools, parks, etc. Both the Harpers Choice Middle School and the athletic fields at Cedar Lane Park West are well within this distance.

Starting in late summer each year, the Columbia Ravens, the local youth football teams, use the field where this complex is to be built. If the complex is built on this field that they have used for fifteen years, more than 275 local children will be impacted each year.

When their football season starts, their games are played on Field 6, Cedar Lane Park West. The southern end of this field is no more than 50 yards from the proposed location for the County’s fueling station. Multiple games are played all day and night. There is a constant movement of people and cars as games start and end. During game days the fields, parking areas, stands, and the surrounding roads are inundated with people and cars. Police do not enforce parking restrictions and the Columbia Association has to place a guard on the road to their Dog Park to prevent illegal parking in that area.

Bottom Line. A fire station with emergency vehicles running in and out during these times would be very unsafe. Rivendell Lane would be the only road that could be used. Cedar Lane would be out of question.

For these reasons, it is difficult to understand why the County is proposing to construct such a complex in this location. It is

readily apparent the County has not done the proper amount of due diligence. It seems someone made the decision to wedge this facility into an area bordering on a middle school, a dog park, athletic fields and our development without considering the inherent problems

I urge you to not support the construction of this complex.

Thank you.

John Jennings



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Larry Corsa, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Heritage Green Townhouse Association, Inc. to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding Capital Budget items F5976 and P4928 to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Larry Corsa

Signature: *Lawrence J Corsa III*

Date: 4/9/2019

Organization: Heritage Green Townhouse Association, Inc.

Organization Address: 5305 Village Center Drive, PMB 184, Columbia, MD 21044

Number of Members: 80 Owners plus families

Name of Chair/President: Lawrence J Corsa III

This form can be submitted electronically via email to councilmail@howardcountymd.gov no later than 5pm the day of the Public Hearing or delivered in person the night of the Public Hearing before testifying.

Project T7107 Downtown Columbia Patuxent Branch Trail Extension

Ted Markle
6281 Amherst Ave.
Columbia, Md 21046
410-730-3931

My testimony concerns project T7107 the Downtown Columbia Patuxent Branch Trail. This path will run along the Little Patuxent River from Downtown Columbia to Stevens Forrest Road and cross under Route 29.

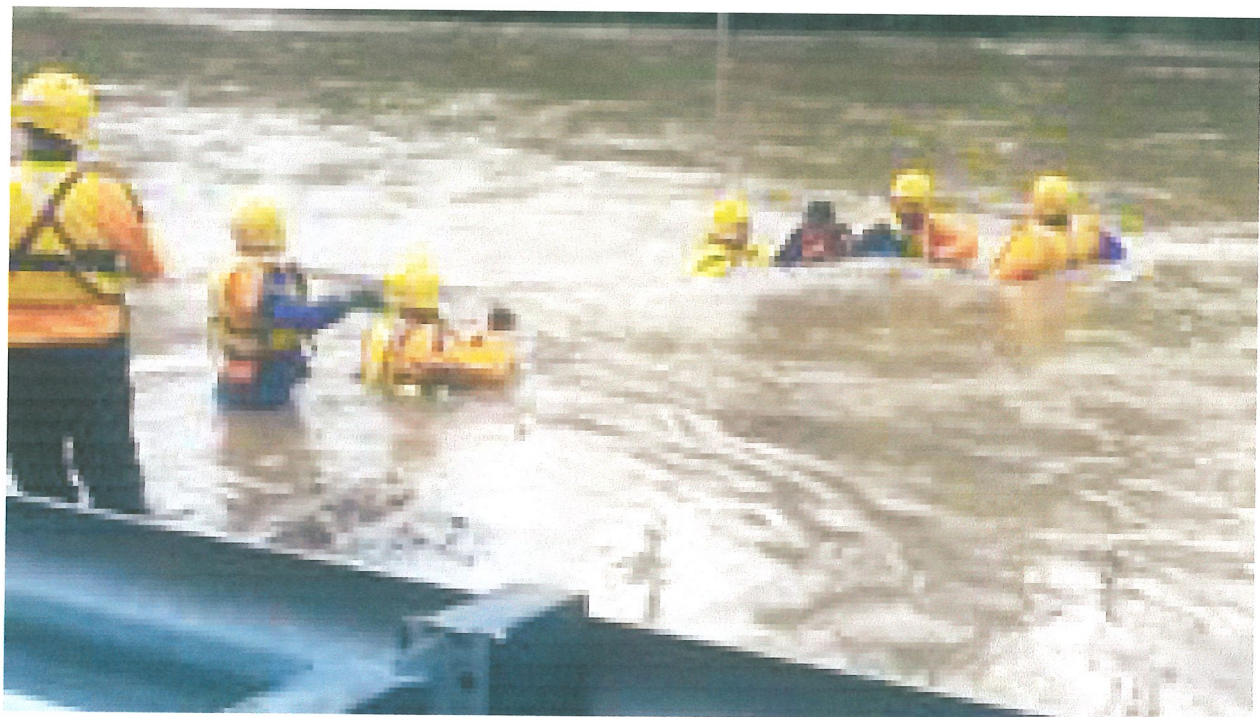
In light of the flooding in Howard County in recent years, I think we need to take a very close look at this proposed path. Because of the extreme flash flooding it is very unsafe to built a path in this area. Below is a picture of a flood near Route 29 with the red line showing where the path would be built.



April 30, 2014 Route 29 & Little Patuxent River- Mid-Storm

The most used flood plain designation is the 100 year flood plain. (There is no designation to show the 10 year or 1 year flood plain). By saying bike paths in the flood plain are OK does not tell the whole story. Recently, the area under the Route 29 bridge has been flooding almost monthly, making it 1000 times more likely to flood than at the top of the 100 year flood plain. (Bike advocates saying the police will close down the path and get everyone off the path if it floods is wishful thinking.) The area under the Route 29 bridge floods first, long before any roads flood.

Several years ago 2 kids climbed a tree to escape flood waters and had to be rescued by the fire department because of a flash flood from the Little Patuxent River. (In May, 2014 a police officer in Savage saved a girl from the swift current of the Little Patuxent River.) Below is a picture of a water rescue on Route 29 near the Little Patuxent River only 1/4 mile from the proposed path.



Rescue on Route 29, May, 2018; 1/4 mile from the proposed path

Bike advocates say that people will just get out of the way of rising waters. Well why didn't people in Ellicott City and on Route 29 get out of the way and why didn't they move their cars so dozens of cars would not have washed down the Patapsco River. The answer is flash floods are unpredictable and happen too quickly for people to get out of the way once they realize they are in trouble. We have already had enough heartache with too many deaths in Howard County from flash floods we don't need to intentionally put people in harm's way.

I have seen the area under the Route 29 bridge flood when Columbia didn't receive any rain. The water came upstream from Ellicott City. During a flood in 2018 the Little Patuxent River rose 10 feet in a matter of minutes because of upstream waters from Ellicott City even though it had stopped raining in Columbia.

During heavy rains the water running under the Route 29 bridge is funneled into a small opening creating a very dangerous situation. Also, the path under the bridge will need to be narrow and the vertical clearance less than the recommend height.

See the picture below.



Sewer Manhole under Route 29 bridge February 2017

The plan is to put a flood gauge under the bridge which will light up warning signs on the path in the case of rising water. The problem with this idea is since the water level is only a few feet from the top of bank the warning lights will go off every time there is 1/2" rain or more. Also, after a heavy rain the water in the river can stay high for days; therefore, the flood warnings lights will stay on for days. After awhile people , especially the kids, won't pay any attention to the warning signs because they will be on frequently. (I have DO NOT trespassing signs on my property and only about 30% of adults and 10% of kids pay any attention to the signs. When we get to the point of having to install flooding warning lights we should not build this path.)

The reason that the path is proposed is because bike advocates state there needs to be a path from downtown Columbia to Savage. There is currently a path that runs from Downtown Columbia crosses the Route 29 bridge path and goes to Savage only 3/8 of a mile from the proposed path. (I have ridden this path many times.) The proposed path is unnecessary and duplicative.



Route 29 bridge path Columbia 3/8 of a mile from proposed path

In 2014 Columbia Association , who owns most of the land, paid for a feasibility study to be done on the proposed path. (Obviously the consultant stated that the path was feasible since CA paid for the study.) This study was immediately accepted by the Howard County DOT as the basis to go ahead with this project. This was not an independent study as Howard county did not perform this study and should not be the basis on which to build this path. (Bike advocates are very aggressive and are loath to make any changes to the plan.) I am hoping that common sense will overrule politics and this project removed from the county's budget.

P.S.

If the path were built from Downtown Columbia to Stevens Forrest Road that would make 5 places to cross Route 29 within a 1 1/2 mile area. These include 2 bike and pedestrian paths (the other path is the Route 29 bike path bridge) and 2 roads (Broken Land Pkwy and Route 175) crossing Route 29 within a one 1/2 mile area. Bridge Columbia would be less likely to receive approval.

Tuesday, April 9th, 2019

Dear Howard County Counsel,

My name is Bethany Burke and I am here to represent the Savage Community Association. I am a Howard County resident and board member on the SCA. I would like to start by saying that we are disappointed that the funding for complete streets in Savage has been pushed back to FY 2021. However, we are thankful that during FY 2020 construction will begin to address the dangerous intersection of Foundry St and Washington St. We do recognize that the county budget is limited but we also feel like our needs are not being met.

The area of most concern is the reductions in funds to make repairs on historic Carroll Baldwin Hall. On pages 121-122 of the Executive Proposed Capital Budget for FY 2020, funding for exterior renovations to historic Carroll Baldwin Hall was reduced by \$100,000. This funding is critical to repair a crumbling entrance, improve drainage to prevent further water intrusion, and to improve access for persons with disabilities. We would also like to stress that a large portion of the construction is already underway.

We would like to know why this project was selected for a funding reduction. It is essential that we complete these critical repairs before additional water damage occurs and to improve access. Furthermore, why didn't anyone at the county level ask us about the project or the impact of this reduction? We are very disappointed that we were not at least given notice that a reduction to the funds was being considered.

I, on behalf of the SCA, implore you to reinstate funding to repairs to the Carroll Baldwin Hall. The hall has had water damage due to a poorly designed drainage system and that must be corrected in order to preserve this historical site. The stairs on the west side of the hall have been crumbling for many years. And the current ramps are not sufficient to provide access for persons with disabilities. These repairs are critical to maintain this cherished historic building that is the pride of our community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Cordially,

Bethany Burke



**HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION**

I, Nikki Highsmith Vernick, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

The Horizon Foundation to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding the capital budget to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Nikki Highsmith Vernick

Signature: 

Date: April 9, 2019

Organization: The Horizon Foundation

Organization Address: 10221 Wincopin Circle, Suite 200, Columbia, MD 21044

10221 Wincopin Circle, Suite 200, Columbia, MD 21044

Number of Members: NA

Name of Chair/President: Nikki Highsmith Vernick

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David Wolf

Bill No: FY 2020 Budget – Funding for Bicycle Infrastructure
Position: SUPPORT

The Horizon Foundation, the largest independent health philanthropy in Maryland and Howard County's local health foundation, fully supports the \$2.2 million allotted in the budget for expanding bike routes in Howard County. We recognize these are tight fiscal times, and we appreciate that this level of county spending shows that bike routes are a priority.

The Foundation believes – and research shows – that a more bikeable and walkable Howard County will be a healthier Howard County. Too many of our streets are not accessible or safe for walkers, cyclists, bus riders or people with disabilities. This was a top issue named by residents in the county executive's listening sessions and included in several sections of the county executive's Transition Team report.

Thousands of residents also have weighed in on this issue and told county leaders that they want better, safer biking and walking built into our community. Together we believe that *everyone* should be able to safely, easily and comfortably bike or walk where they need to go, and get the physical activity they need to stay healthy.

Funding and laws are both critical to making this possible.

We now need a vision and an accountable, strong implementation plan to be set forth by law, which will guarantee safer, more accessible walking and biking for our residents now and in the future. A strong complete streets law will require new neighborhoods, new businesses and rehabbed public spaces to have safe places to bike and walk. A strong complete streets law will make a real, specific commitment to making changes that will last for generations – with transparency, public involvement, equity considerations and accountability.

We have been talking about bike routes and pedestrian routes for a long time in this county. We have plans that have yet to be built, and thousands of people who have been waiting for action. For many in our community, bike routes and sidewalks are a necessity to safely get to work, to school, to the bus stop and other everyday locations.

Investing in these changes and implementing laws to move these changes forward will yield many benefits – from reducing greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change to increasing competitiveness for local employers to attract workers.

We look forward to working with you, the county executive and our partners to continue making progress.



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Jack Guarneri, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Bicycling Advocates of HC (a 501(c)4) to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding FY2020 Budget to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: James M. (Jack) Guarneri

Signature: JM Guarneri

Date: 4/9/19

Organization: Bicycling Advocates of HC/Bike HoCo

Organization Address: 10224 Little Brick House Ct
Elliott City, MD 10224

Number of Members: 10 Board / > 500 Supporters

Name of Chair/President: Jack Guarneri

This form can be submitted electronically via email to councilmail@howardcountymd.gov no later than 5pm the day of the Public Hearing or delivered in person the night of the Public Hearing before testifying.

Jack Guarneri

President
Bicycling Advocates of Howard County
A 501(c)4-Non Profit



Cell: (301)844-8930
Home: (410)465-7892
president@bikehoco.org
<http://www.bikehoco.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/BikeHoCo>



Bicycling Advocates of Howard County

Testimony to County Council Public Budget Hearing at April 9, 2019

The Bicycling Advocates of Howard County (Bike HoCo) was founded as a 501(c)4 non-profit in 2008 by groups representing over 1000 cyclists. There are two major Bike HoCo objectives that have remained consistent: to increase cycling safety through infrastructure improvements and greater awareness and to be proponents that bicycling should be a part of an energy efficient, environmentally sustainable transportation system for Howard County and the region, a forward-looking system that meets the needs and desires of all between the ages of 8 to 80+. Bike HoCo has functioned as a subject matter expert and provided advise to the County Government and the County Executive on bicycling issues in Howard County.

Bike HoCo is uniquely positioned to help identify, analyze, comment, prioritize and advise on the impact of this year's budget on the *Bike Howard* Master Plan having been involved in its development, funding, and execution to date. We have several issues that I want to review:

1. In the 3 years since Council Resolution approved Bike Howard unanimously in April 2016 this year's budget will finally allow progress to be made but this is just the beginning and more significant money will be needed in next few years.
2. The near term *Bike Howard* projects are mitigation/remediation of lack of attention given to bicycle accessibility in the past, and these have been underfunded.
3. A *Complete Streets Law*, a new *Design Manual* for roads, and a rewrite of *Development Regulations* are needed for future in order to control growth and move forward with multimodal transportation in Howard County.

WHY:

The primary issue for cyclists has been the exponential increase in automobile traffic on all County roads but especially on those frequently cycled roads that we use daily. It has been like a storm that starts with some light rainfall and eventually turns into a flood or 1 school portable that turns into 15. Cyclists started experiencing the impact of growth on roads in mid 2000's - which is why leaders from major cycling groups formed Bike HoCo. Roads that were formerly safe, or at least rideable, became much less safe -- slowly, over time. Traffic is cumulative and each little increase in development resulted in an increase car trips per day. This is why we decided we needed the County to remediate/mitigate the problem on roads we ride and in the long-term control growth and to change the culture to avoid having to fund future mitigation.

WHAT:

Bike HoCo worked with the County to create a Bicycle Advisory Group (BAG) and functioned as intermediaries' with the cycling community to start developing a bicycle master plan in 2012. It took 4 years to finalize and to have the County Executive and Council approve *Bike Howard*. At

that point we believed that we were finally on our way to improving/adding bicycling infrastructure. That proved to be optimistic.

Near-projects in *Bike Howard* were intended to add 72 miles of infrastructure over 10 years at a ROM total cost of approximately \$30 Million. In the past 3 years, only about 10 miles of bike lanes have been added (see Figure) primarily through restriping roads being repaved by Public Works. In that same time period approximately 5000 units of residential housing and over 25,000 car trips per day were added to HC roads. A total of less than 2 million dollars was spent over FY 17/18/19. Our neighboring Counties have spent significantly more on bicycle improvements in the same timeframe: Montgomery County has committed \$26.69 per resident and Anne Arundel \$10.14 per resident bicycling transportation projects while HC has spent only \$3.20 per resident. This years proposed budget for Bike Howard of \$2 Million in County funding plus for Bike Howard plus Grants and pathway projects averages \$7 per resident. We are finally making progress, but have a long way to go.

Bike Howard Approved
↓

	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	Projection FY19
Miles of Sidewalk (cumulative)	1045.2	1065.3	1065.7	1068.3	1071.3
Miles of Bike Lane (cumulative)	23.4	24.0	26.9	34.4	37.6
Miles of Shared use Pathway (cumulative)	105.8	106.2	107	107.7	108.1
Total miles of sidewalks, bike lanes and pathways	1174.4	1195.5	1199.6	1210.4	1217

Figure: Howard County Progress on Infrastructure for Bicycling and Walking (Office of Transportation)

HOW:

Finally, the majority of the near-term (*Bike Howard Express*) projects are intended to remediate, or at least mitigate, the damage to bicycle accessibility that has occurred in the County over the past 20+ years. For the future we have to address traffic and multimodal accessibility for all road users; we can't build our way out of traffic congestion or even mitigate it unless we first control it. The way forward is to change our culture in the County and to enable alternative transportation by bicycle and walking. We need to accelerate the County adoption of three documents needed to safeguard our transportation system and to lead to a more environmentally sustainable future:

- A Complete Streets Law with adequate level of detail on County Department responsibilities and action items with specific deadlines.
- A new Public Works Design Manual (Volume III Roads and Bridges) that provides guidance for new roads and rebuilt roads to ensure they adequately address the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians.
- A rewrite of the County Development Regulations (currently under development as HoCode Rewrite) which should add stringent guidelines for multimodal transportation in the new development approval process and
 - In order to accelerate this process a County Council Bill similar to the Anne Arundel Council Bill 78-2018 which added a multi-modal transportation assessment to existing County development policies and processes.

Testimony delivered by Jack Guarneri, President Bike HoCo



**HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION**

I, Lori Lilly, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Howard EcoWorks to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding D1164 to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Lori Lilly

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: 4/9/19

Organization: Howard EcoWorks

Organization Address: 9770 Patuxent Woods Dr

Columbia MD 21042

Number of Members: 11

Name of Chair/President: Bill Withers / Dick Hesser

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**HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION**

I, Kevin McAiley, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Wilde Lake Village Board to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding Complete Streets to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.

(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Kevin McAiley

Signature: Kevin McAiley

Date: 4/9/19

Organization: Wilde Lake Village Board

Organization Address: 10400 Cross Fox Lane

Number of Members: 5

Name of Chair/President: Kevin McAiley

This form can be submitted electronically via email to councilmail@howardcountymd.gov no later than 5pm the day of the Public Hearing or delivered in person the night of the Public Hearing before testifying.