

Sayers, Margery

From: Denise Moore <niecy118301@aim.com>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 10:06 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support of Capital Project T-7106- Jeffers Hill Traffic Circle Funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good morning,

Thank you all for the hard work you do on behalf of Howard County residents. It has come to my attention that on Monday, May 10th, during the County Council's budget meeting, you will be discussing the funding of the Jeffers Hill traffic circle at Tamar and Old Montgomery (Capital Project T-7106).

As a long-time resident who lives down Tamar, I pass through this intersection numerous times a day. My four-year-old daughter attends the preschool (Happy Sprouts) located within the Neighborhood Center. An increase in traffic coming through this intersection was noticeable after the completion of Blandair Park. To say that it has progressively gotten more dangerous is quite frankly an understatement. My neighbors would agree with my sentiments as this hazardous intersection is a frequent topic of discussion. Having witnessed many near accidents and some of which involve pedestrians and children on bicycles, I implore you to strongly consider the life-saving benefits of traffic mitigation at this intersection. Many drivers coming from Old Montgomery to Tamar view the stop sign as merely a suggestion that is frequently ignored.

I, on behalf of the residents of this community, request that you do not delay on approving the funding for this project. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Denise Moore

Sayers, Margery

From: Ryan Green <vtwakeboarder@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 9:55 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please fund the Jeffers Hill traffic circle

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Please fund the Jeffers Hill traffic circle (Capital Project T-7106). I understand it may be discussed in the County Council's budget meeting Monday, May 10

The current intersection is confusing, which is especially problematic considering how many out-of-towners travel that route between route 175 and Blandair park. On the way from the park, folks frequently pull out in front of cross traffic, mistakenly thinking it is a 4-way stop. On the way to the park, it is easy for them to miss the dinky "Yield" sign which I think gives people coming from the opposite direction the right-of-way when turning left.

Anyway, from my perspective, as someone who lives down the Tamar Drive hill (6165 Waiting Spring)...and has an active family with two very young boys (ages 2 and 4) - my biggest concern is crossing on foot or bicycle. I have a hard time of it, and dread the time when my boys start daring to cross there - to go to Pete's snowball/produce stand, Blandair Park, or eventually Oakland Mills High.

Thanks

-Ryan Green
6165 Waiting Spring
Columbia MD 21045
410-988-2591

Sayers, Margery

From: Jordyn Chaimiti <jchaim1379@inst.hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 9:37 AM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Save Cedar Lane Park Letter

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Executive, Calvin Ball, and to others whom it may concern,

I am Jordyn Chaimiti, an 8th grade student at Harpers Choice Middle School. A few weeks ago, I was informed about the plans to replace Cedar Lane Park fields with a new fire station. Many others and I are opposed to this idea. This proposal will have an extremely negative impact on our community because it is taking away a highly cherished park, it will interrupt the vast wildlife in the park, and the noise will not be helpful towards surrounding places.

To begin, the community near Cedar Lane Park uses that space for sports, activities, a place to socialize, and a playground for children to play. Taking it away may result in a decrease of exercise in minors. It may also result in less communication throughout the neighborhood. These things will not benefit the community at all, especially in the Covid-19 pandemic. It's already been hard to get outside without being paranoid, and now a local park is being taken away too? Getting rid of natural grass fields in walking distance will cause adults to end up driving their kids to other open parks which will cause harmful exhausts to be released into the air making it even more polluted than it needs to be. Avoid this situation by not building the fire station.

Pursuing this further, building the station will interfere with the wide amount of wildlife and nature in the park. The park isn't only a place for entertainment, it is also a home for animals. Destroying these fields will put our ecosystem into even worse shape than it already is. The fumes and plumbing from the station will disrupt the flora and fauna that has been created in the park over past years. These days lots of fields and green locations are being torn down, do not let Cedar Lane Park be one of them.

Yet another reason why many are against this plan, the noise the fire station will cause will not be helpful to surrounding areas. Not only is Cedar Lane Park near homes, but it is also neighboring schools and other facilities. It's no surprise that fire trucks make lots of noise and placing a fire station near countless homes is not a good idea. It can also distract people from their work and distract students from their lessons. The firetrucks can also add to the crowdedness of route 108.

Given the reasons above and many others, building a fire station in place of fields at Cedar Lane is not a good idea. It will have a negative impact on the community. It is taking away a highly cherished park, it will interrupt the vast wildlife in the park, and the noise will not be helpful towards surrounding places. Not only will it directly affect the people living close to the park, but it will also affect civilians getting to and from their home. Overall, many people are opposed to this project, and I hope that you listen to our concerns. Please take into consideration the impact this park has had on our community, if you do, you'll realize the park is worth saving.

Thank you,

Jordyn Chaimiti

Sayers, Margery

From: Jordyn Chaimiti <jchaim1379@inst.hcpss.org>
Sent: Friday, May 7, 2021 9:30 AM
To: calvinball@howardcounty.gov
Cc: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Save Cedar Lane Park Letter

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Thank you,

Jordyn Chaimiti

Testimony to County Council Public Hearing May 10, 2021

- My name is Fran LoPresti. I have lived in the Village of Owen Brown for more than 40 years. I am a member of the Steering Committee for the East Columbia 50+ Center.
- There are 6 50+ Centers in Howard County.
- Build dates
 - Bain built in 1981 (renovation in 2020)
 - East Columbia in 1992 as an afterthought attached to East Columbia library
 - Glenwood in 2005
 - North Laurel in 2011
 - Ellicott City in 2013 (expanded in 2015)
 - Elkridge in 2018
- In 2015, during the Kittleman administration, a Facilities Master plan was developed. Appendix E was for “Planning for the Growth of the Older Population in Howard County”.
- The report specifically said that the East Columbia 50+ Center was inadequate in 2015 and should be a high priority for capital improvements.
- The report included a space needs assessment across the county and anticipated a 51,000 sq. ft. shortage of space in 2020. And that is what we have, mitigated in part by the Elkridge build. The East Columbia 50+ Center build would significantly close that gap.
- On pages 25 and 42, the report proposes a 32,400 sq foot Regional 50+ Center specifically in East Columbia due to it having the highest rate of increase in the senior population in Howard County.
- This Regional Center was to serve seniors as well as the rest of the community. And that is exactly what has been proposed including services to veterans and a space for community activities for all ages. And in the report’s preferred location next to the library.
- The report proposed that East Columbia be built after Elkridge was completed in 2018. But that is not what happened.
- We have been sitting in 3 dinky rooms since 1992 – that is 28 years. We only have box lunches. We have no exercise room. We have no program for early dementia.

- It has been planned since 2015 and it is time to move forward this year.
- Let me be clear. This center is not a “nice to have” project. It is an absolutely necessary project that will be a lifeline to seniors physical and mental health in a community that has been underserved for far too long.
- If constituents in your district presented these statistics and history to you asking for a center to be built where none existed, would you say we can’t afford it or we don’t need it or ask them to wait more than 28 years? I think not.
- Please make this center a reality.
- Thank you.

Sayers, Margery

From: Rita Cohen <rcohen0126@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 8:36 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support the East Columbia 50+ Center

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

My name is Rita Cohen, I live in Clary's Forest and have come to the 50+ Center for about three years now for movies, Tai Chi classes, and reserving a room in the library to play Majhong with friends. The space is very small considering the number of seniors that use it and the programs provided and it really needs to be expanded!

Please support the expansion of the East Columbia 50+ Center!

Thank you,
Sincerely,
Rita Cohen

Sent from my iPad

Sayers, Margery

From: Laura Smit <laura.c.smit@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 1:41 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Opposition to proposed Cedar Lane Park Fire Station

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Resending email that bounced back.

Laura Smit

Email: laura.c.smit@gmail.com

Mobile: 410-608-6287

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Laura Smit** <laura.c.smit@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, May 6, 2021 at 1:24 PM
Subject: Opposition to proposed Cedar Lane Park Fire Station
To: <crigby@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: <ewalsh@howardcountymd.gov>, <ojones@howardcountymd.gov>, <dyungmann@howardcountymd.gov>, <djung@howardcountymd.gov>

Christiana, I am one of your constituents and live at 7228 Dockside Ln, in the Village of Owen Brown. While I am a resident of Lake Elkhorn, I am writing asking you to oppose the building of the proposed new fire station in Cedar Lane Park. I am also opposed to the proposed changes to several of the park's natural grass fields. I love the natural environment of Cedar Lane Park, and I have many friends who go there to walk their dogs, picnic or watch sports games. In addition, Cedar Lane Park is used by a lot of low income families who live in affordable housing in the area.

I am against the proposed fire station as it will reduce land from a beautiful park, and it will also lead to light and noise pollution for local residents - and also affect wildlife. The stretch of Rt108 between Harpers Farm Rd and Rt. 29 is narrow and often congested. It is also across from the Dar-Al-Taqwa mosque. The Banneker Fire Station at Little Patuxent Pkwy and Gov Warfield is only a bit over a mile away, so residents of Harper's Choice can have a fire truck there in around 5 mins. It seems unnecessary to destroy a field to build a new fire station and to disturb old Columbia neighborhoods. Some residents will be only 15' from the proposed fire station.

I am also against the proposals to change several of the natural grass fields into astroturf, which plenty of studies have shown are not good for the environment.

Please vote against the proposed fire station and the changes to Cedar Lane Park. I don't want to lose more natural beauty in Columbia/Howard County. We have such a great legacy of parks and trails. I love riding my bike daily down the Patuxent trails from Lake Elkhorn, as well as to downtown and Cedar Lane Park.

Laura Smit

7228 Dockside Ln, Columbia, MD 21045

Email: laura.c.smit@gmail.com

Mobile: 410-608-6287

Sayers, Margery

From: Raamin Mostaghimi <raamin.mostaghimi@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 12:18 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Jung, Deb
Subject: Thoughts on Cedar Lane Park (items F5976 and N3108) from a District 4 Columbia Resident

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello Executive Ball and Councilmembers,

I stumbled across the Save Cedar Lane Park petition and website, and wanted to send an email in with my opinion as well. I'm emailing specifically about items F5976 (North Columbia Fire Station) and N3108 (Park Systemic Improvements).

I worry sometimes that the loudest voices are the only ones that get heard, and in this case I really disagree with those loud voices.

I think the reflexive, reactionary NIMBY-ism of some of the members of this community is frankly appalling. I've seen it constantly since moving in, any time a change to literally anything is proposed - from adding food trucks to the community pools (!!!) to now upgrading the fields at Cedar Lane Park - and I can't imagine how frustrating it must be as executives and council members looking to improve Howard County.

I think there's a fully valid conversation to be had about the noise concerns from living near a fire station - I'm fully supportive of exploring that further. I also support the right of residents to have a voice in the process, this sort of civic engagement is what local government should be built on.

However, the selective demands for rigor this organization is making (a traffic study, an alternative site analysis, some sort of research on the negative health impacts of turf - which I honestly don't understand) are clearly made in bad faith. The language and rhetoric on the facebook group is so hilariously hyperbolic that I'm honestly not certain what to say to some of the organizers. I saw language in "suggested emails" that included things like concern about the "carcinogenic and environmental impact of artificial turf", and outrage that the only egress for the Dar-al-Taqwa mosque would be blocked by fire trucks.

I'm sure the leadership of the mosque and the other local businesses are more than capable of raising concerns on their own without the assistance of the reactionary NIMBY crew (and if they do raise concerns, they should be weighted appropriately!), but the rest of these concerns are so obviously farcical and manufactured that I hope you are giving them their appropriate weight in this decision-making process - absolutely zero. If playing soccer on a turf field actually caused cancer, I wouldn't expect to read about it for the first time on a Facebook group with 93 members - and nor would it be the responsibility of Howard County to conduct independent tests to validate the hypothesis.

Finally - just one more note from me. One of the themes in the reactionary facebook group's comments and posts is along the lines of "YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD COULD BE NEXT". I live in Harpers Choice, right next to the Hobbits Glen golf course, and let me state unequivocally - if "YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD COULD BE NEXT" means that we would be next in line for an increased level of county services, improved athletic facilities, and higher density usage of our ample land, then sign me up.

Thank you very much.

--Raamin Mostaghimi
11421 Barrow Downs, Columbia, MD 21044
District 4 - Council Member Deb Jung
--Raamin Mostaghimi

Sayers, Margery

From: Linda Kangrga <lkangrga@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 11:58 AM
To: calvinball@howardcounty.gov; CouncilMail
Subject: Longfellow Neighborhood Impact of proposed changes to Cedar Lane Park

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Executive and Howard County Council Members,

I am writing to protest the upscaling of the park facilities at Cedar Lane East.

I live in the Longfellow Neighborhood. I can hear the games being played at the field at Cedar Lane Park that is on Cedar Lane and close to the water tower and dog park. The game announcements can be heard on Endymion Lane where I live as the gas line is a clear path from the park to my street. That is the first reason that I think the proposed lighting, speaker enhancements and permanent stadium seating would harm my neighborhood. The second is that my bedroom window overlooks what used to be wooded Columbia open space. It now overlooks what Ecotone has made of that space. As a result of the change I can see and hear all of the neighbors that my property backs to as I never could before and the car headlights reflect off my bedroom walls through my window every night, all night long as was only the case in the winter prior to the stream renovation. This affects your park modifications in that when I look out my bedroom, kitchen, dining room and recreation room windows I look right up Eliots Oak Road in the direction of the proposed park enhancements. With what I am just now reading about your proposal, I will be seeing that park lighting as late as 10:30 pm illuminating Eliots Oak as well as hearing game announcements coming right down the Ecotone clearing from the park to my house and ears. I thought that the Ecotone demolition of the woods was for the benefit of avoiding flooding downstream below the Wilde Lake dam and across Route 29 below the Mall so I have not complained.

I am not so worried about the fire station location as I used to live near the Jeffers Hill fire house and it was not too bad, but why could you not select a location such as the Old Columbia Flier Building which has a huge amount of pavement doing nothing good for the environment and is also located at a new light signal and not far from the Bannecker Station. The Old Flier Building would make a lovely community outreach location for fire and police activities and it is near the college. I also used to live on Beech Creek and am familiar with having lighted ballfields nearby. Did you know that when Longfellow was built that the landscaper used by the contractors deliberately removed as few trees as possible when they built each house in this neighborhood and the tree lined streets have been a major draw for homeowners ever since. The peaceful woods existed before we built houses and the neighbors loved it so much they built a tradition of the annual Fourth of July parade and afternoon ballgames at the park to celebrate it. Which brings me to the question of who these park modifications are really for. At previous HCCA Board Meetings I heard neighbors complain that a lot of the cars dropping children off in the middle of the street for games on Cedar Lane were coming from outside of Howard County. When we moved here, Cedar Lane was understood to be a neighborhood county park where I walked my children to the playground, played baseball and tennis, but it appears that it has been morphing into an asset serving sports organizations outside our local area. My neighbors and the local wildlife that I enjoy so very much are alarmed at what is being done to the property around our houses and yards.

In the past, having served on the neighborhood board, I was accustomed to hearing about major changes well in advance of this sort of project and I was aware that the proposed fire house was moved away from the middle school and water tower, but this new proposal comes as a bit of a surprise. We have a fire station a few miles down the road in Clarksville which we have supported and it seems to me that this new station to supplement the Bannecker Station could have been integrated into all that new construction going on downtown if you cannot put it on The Flier building property. My final complaint is that the parking is already a problem for the existing fields and for the overflow parking

for the Mosque. Drivers fly down Eliots Oak despite the calming humps and hit legally parked vehicles at an alarming rate. I expect your newest proposal will cause additional parking overflow into our formerly quiet neighborhood as well as people cutting through neighbors' backyards to get to the fields and get away from the inevitable traffic backups that occur after games when everyone piles out of the park at the same time with only one exit. There is no sidewalk along Route 108 between Eliots Oak Road and Cedar Lane Park and the Mosque(past the Vet and the residential property). The proposed changes to the park seem unsafe and ill conceived from my vantage point.

Best Wishes,

Linda Kangrga

5163 Endymion Lane, Columbia MD 21044

Cell: (410) 262-2254

To:
County Executive Calvin Ball:
CBall@howardcountymd.gov
All Howard County Council Members:
councilmail@howardcountymd.gov

From:
Dr. & Mrs. David L. Mazzone
6507 Lawyers Hill Road
Elkridge, MD 21075

RE: Concern regarding another fire station in a residential area

Dear County Executive Calvin Ball and County Council Members:

My husband and I live on Lawyers Hill Road, close to the Elkridge Fire Station. We want to share our experience and concerns regarding the construction of the Elkridge Fire Station in the hope that our experience will help to inform your decision about the proposed fire station on Cedar Lane Park.

Last week, we saw the article in *Patch* about residents who are concerned about the proposed location of a fire station on parkland and in a residential area. As I read the article, my thought was, "Oh no. They're trying to do this...AGAIN?!" I will share some background about the Elkridge Fire Station and the situation as we experience it today.

There was a community meeting informing residents that the Elkridge Fire Station was no longer going to be placed on Route 1 but, instead, was going to be placed at the intersection of Rowenberry and Montgomery Roads—an area that was mostly all woods and within residential areas. I walked by that area with my dog regularly, and it was not unusual to see a herd of deer and wildlife, especially since a stream ran nearby. Presenters at the community meeting showed the architectural drawing for the massive fire station, and the location of the station appeared to be a done deal. Residents were angry and upset.

Of course, the loss of forest was a great concern—but another significant concern was siren noise. Those in attendance were assured that we wouldn't hear sirens because fire personnel would be able to control the light at the intersection of Montgomery and Rowenberry Roads.

So – the woods and land were scraped bare and the massive fire station/parking lot was built:



What was once woods...



So residents, who were looking at woods right across the street, were now looking at this massive construction right outside their door. The lack of predictability in Howard County with respect to what we might expect in our neighborhoods is highly concerning. When I walked my dog along Rowenberry, I frequently spoke with other residents who were outside with their dog. I know of one person who moved because of the fire station. I remember him saying, “Who wants to live across the street from a fire station?” He told me that he knew of others who were moving—and he pointed to homes that had for sale signs.

Once the fire station was constructed, we started to hear sirens—lots of sirens. We called and spoke with a fire captain (I cannot recall his name), and I asked, “We were told at the community meeting that we wouldn’t hear sirens. Why are we hearing sirens—and so many of them?” He stated that they are required to use the siren on Montgomery Road. “Well, that wasn’t stated at the community meeting,” I said. Note: Both directions on Montgomery Road are residential, and I’ve read facebook posts where residents have complained about the siren noise. So we are not alone.

We installed soundproof windows to minimize I95 traffic noise and were very pleased that the I95 sound barrier was constructed. But now we have SIREN noise which breaks through the soundproof windows and our double-cement block/sided home. We cannot open our windows at night, and we play white noise to attempt to drown out a siren. Please also consider that there are people with chronic illnesses who need to sleep well at night and sometimes nap during the day. Siren noise is intended to send one's body into alert mode. While we got somewhat accustomed to the drone of 95 traffic noise, we cannot become accustomed to siren noise. It always startles.

Another surprise was the installation of a commercially-sized, opioid awareness sign:



Exiting Lawyers Hill Road onto Montgomery Road. This is what Lawyers Hill Road residents view each time we leave our neighborhood.

The sign is situated on Rowenberry and is angled. It's a very concerning "welcome to our neighborhood" sign:



Regardless of the content of the sign, a sign of **this size** should not be located in a residential neighborhood. The conclusion? This fire station did not—and does not—belong in a residential neighborhood. (Councilperson Walsh: Would it be possible to move this sign to a commercial area, e.g., Route 1—or maybe the library? It would have more exposure there.)

Notice the digital, neon-lettered sign on Montgomery Road:



The digital sign is also not compatible with our neighborhood. The combination of the huge opioid sign and the digital sign causes this construction to be that much more in keeping with Route 1 versus a neighborhood. When the opioid sign was installed, I called the fire captain and asked why the opioid information couldn't be placed on the digital sign, which is easily updated. He said that the opioid task force didn't think the digital sign caught enough attention. County Executive Ball and Howard County Councilmembers: There's no problem with "attention getting" signs but not in a residential area. This further suggests that fire stations do not belong so closely embedded within neighborhoods.

The next surprise was Food Truck Fridays. It's very popular. In fact, you should see the line of cars down residential Rowenberry every Friday during Food Truck Friday season. So people who at one time were looking at woods now have commercial food sales going on across the street from them. Once again, the lack of predictability with respect to zoning and construction in Howard County is stunning. This fire station did NOT belong in a residential neighborhood.



Please understand that we very much appreciate the hard work and bravery of our firefighters and strongly support our fire department. But we must find locations for our fire stations that enable personnel to do their jobs—yet also work toward minimizing environmental impact and minimizing siren noise for residents. Further, such locations need to be appropriate for commercial practices like selling food and constructing commercially-sized and designed signage. I urge you to seek alternatives to yet ANOTHER fire station within a residential area—this time involving loss of parkland.

We request that this email become part of the record.

Sincerely,

Dr. & Mrs. David L. Mazzoni

cc: Chris Chlumsky
Ahmed Elsayed
Maribel Sanchez
Stu Kohn, Howard County Citizens Association

Testimony
Dipper Wettstein

My name is Dipper Wettstein and I am a resident of District 4. I grew up as a product of Columbia and Rouse's vision of affordable housing and have approximately 25 years of experience as a realtor, serving the Howard County area. I am testifying in support of, a minimum of, \$9.1 million in funds for affordable housing in the proposed FY2022 Operating Budget.

I love that my career allows me to share with people how wonderful it is to live in Howard County, but the nature of my career means that I only get to help people who are in a superior financial position that allows them to afford living in Howard County. This is not an economic reality for too many individuals or families. This has always been the case, but now post-pandemic, housing prices are skyrocketing, and inventory is at historic lows. The result of this will be shutting more and more people out of our great schools, amenities, and services. The very people who serve us by teaching our children, who keep us safe, who served us in the military, who raised their own families here – they can't afford to live here.

According to national real estate data trends, 42 percent of homes sold in the U.S. in March 2021 went for above the list price. That is a record & in April 2021 we will break that. While there was a shortage of housing even before the pandemic, Covid-19 only multiplied the problem.

Demand for housing in general is far outpacing supply. The National Association of Realtors calculated that at the end of 2020, there were only 1.9 months' supply of housing left — this means that in just under two months, if no additional homes were put on the market, the country's housing inventory would completely sell out.

As you all know, when supply is low and demand is high, prices increase. This is as true for the housing market as it is for rental units. Suppressing the supply of houses and apartments artificially drives up the cost of all homes and leads to widespread economic harm.

When middle- and low-income Americans cannot afford to move to Howard County, it stifles the opportunity for economic growth. It prevents talented people from living here, working here, and contributing to our communities. It also makes it harder and harder for current residents to stay in the county especially our aging community in Columbia. If we do not address the housing crisis, we are not only keeping individuals out; we are harming the economic future of our entire county and way of life.

Affordable housing units address two aspects of the housing shortage at once: price and number of homes. The former is self-explanatory, as these homes are protected from the market trends that price out so many people. Affordable housing projects also have a major impact on the supply of homes. Unlike single family homes on individual lots, affordable housing units are generally more compact, allowing for more housing on a given plot of land. The \$9.1 million in the budget designed to increase affordable housing units will go a long way in helping Howard County to combat the housing shortage and invest in our community.

Sayers, Margery

From: Jodi <jodisiciliano3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 9:03 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: re: D1164 - HOWARD ECOWORKS

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

As a member of our Howard County community, I am writing this letter of support for project D1164 in the Howard County Executive's capital budget for Howard EcoWorks' workforce development and environmental programming. Howard EcoWorks has a high impact in our community through the administration of green jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public infrastructure, leadership for achieving environmental sustainability, and rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept. These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a *cost-effective investment* in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development.

Please support D1164 in the capital budget in order to so that we may continue to provide the following services.

1. **Green jobs.** With funding from Howard County and administration through Howard EcoWorks, we are a leader for our region with our green jobs programming. Between the READY program providing summer employment to young adults and the 9-month UpLift program creating an employment pipeline for disadvantaged populations to permanent employment, we are demonstrating a unique way that we can achieve both environmental and workforce development objectives.
2. **Seeds of Change.** At the Corrections Dept, we will continue operation of our native plant nursery with support from Dept and the in-mates. This unique program is an innovative and cost-effective program that provides so many benefits to individuals, the County, our community and the environment. Again, we welcome you there any time.
3. **Safe and Sound** inspections and debris removal after triggering wind and rain events. In 2020, we responded to 6 different Safe and Sound events, 2 of which were nested within events that had already been called. We will continue to provide this leadership for the County and EC community in FY22.
4. **Stream restoration maintenance.** We provide regular management of Howard County's stream restoration projects, in fact, we consider ourselves to be the long-term stewards of these projects that represent millions of dollars of public investment. We are the regular eyes on these projects and help to keep them functioning as intended for the reductions of pollutants and protection of our water resources.
5. **Education and outreach.** We are able to reach out to and educate the community in numbers and in meaningful ways as demonstrated by scores of past events. We are looking forward to increasing community engagement opportunities with our organization and work in FY22 through partnerships, workshops, tree giveaways and more.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Jodi Cosgrove

Sayers, Margery

From: Bill Harris <billharris3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 6, 2021 8:54 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Ball, Calvin
Subject: Support the Jeffers Hill traffic circle!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Council Members,

I am writing to exhort each of you to support the URGENT need for a traffic circle in Jeffers Hill, at the intersection of Tamar Drive and Old Montgomery Rd, near the Jeffers Hill Elementary School and Community Center.

This has been widely known as a dangerous intersection for motorists and pedestrians alike (many of you were present at the Safe Streets Event at Guilford Baptist a couple years ago where this intersection was presented as a hazardous location).

My family lives a few houses down from this intersection and we hear horns blowing from near miss crashes MULTIPLE times each day, and I fear for my family's safety each time we walk or drive through it. The additional traffic from Blandair Park has only made a terrible intersection worse in recent years. Moreover, the proximity to the park, the paths, the elementary school and the community center/ pool make it an urgent matter to fund and rehabilitate for the public's safety and welfare.

Please support the funding that is being considered on Monday.

Thank you,

Bill Harris
6066 Granite Knoll
Columbia, MD 21045

Howard County Housing Affordability Coalition

Testimony County Council FY 2022 Operations Budget Public Hearing May 5, 2021

Good evening Chair Walsh, Co-Chair Jones and Council members Jung, Rigby and Yungmann. It is my privilege to offer testimony on behalf of the Housing Affordability Coalition in support of the Department of Housing and Community Development's proposed FY 2022 operations budget and support for the proposed new investment of \$5 million to establish a Housing Opportunities Trust Fund.

Department of Housing and Community Development

Within the DHCD operations budget, the Coalition specifically asks Council support for the \$4,060,000 gap financing for the Dorsey Overlook development, which also is receiving Section 811 funds to provide six critically needed rental units for persons with disabilities and 25 project-based area of opportunity vouchers for low-income residents in an area of our County where rental housing options are limited.

The Coalition also requests Council support of the Department's new grants team position that has been made to respond to a quadrupling of federal and state grants received in the past year. This position is necessary to ensure County accountability for the administration, monitoring and reporting that will be required over the 2-3 year term of these grants that will provide essential eviction and foreclosure prevention and other assistance for low and moderate income Howard County residents who have been severely impacted by the COVID pandemic.

Housing Opportunities Trust Fund

Included with our written testimony is a document that provides a summary of the economic and social imperatives that underscore the need for establishing a Howard County Housing Opportunities Trust Fund. We are appreciative that the County Executive has taken the important first step in establishing such a Trust.

The concept of a Howard County housing trust has been under discussion for twenty-plus years going back to the Robey Administration. This is an idea that is long overdue and whose time has finally come, as will be affirmed in the Housing Opportunities Master Plan. Neighboring jurisdictions have used such trust funds for decades to effectively manage a steady stream of housing development and redevelopment that expand housing opportunities so everyone, regardless of income, can have equitable access to housing they can afford.

From our perspective, the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund will promote and support equitable, geographically disbursed and affordable rental and for-sale housing opportunities throughout the County; will assist in alleviating the difficulties of many low- and moderate-income households, including seniors and people with disabilities to obtain and maintain housing that meets their needs at costs that they can afford; and will meet these needs by providing funding for rental housing development, preservation and rehabilitation, rental assistance, homeownership, home improvements and other affordable housing opportunities.

The Coalition considers the FY 2022 proposed \$5 million as an initial seeding of the Trust. We know more money is needed through some combination of ongoing, similar annual appropriation and/or an ongoing dedicated funding stream. We have advocated for more funding than proposed and will continue to advocate for ongoing significant commitments of funding to sustain the availability and access to affordable housing in the County.

With the Council's support, the long-sought goal of a Housing Opportunities Trust Fund can become a reality to help Howard County individuals and families. We look forward to working with you as you consider this initial funding proposal and then with the Administration and the Council to establish the administrative structure that will operationalize the Trust.

Council members, thank you for your time and attention. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you about our testimony and urge your support of the proposed DHCD operations budget and funding for the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund.

Respectfully, Jackie Eng, Coalition Coordinator

Howard County Housing Affordability Coalition

Why Howard County Needs the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund

- Recent Howard County studies related to economic growth and quality of life have observed that much of the current and future economic success of the County depends on its continuing to be an appealing place to live and work, which means continued investment in infrastructure, including housing.
- A critical element of the County's economic appeal depends on the availability of equitable and affordable housing opportunities for all people who want to live here and the lack of housing ultimately will hamper the ability for Howard County to grow as an economic hub as it becomes hard to recruit workers who may be priced out of the local market.
- There is already a significant unmet housing need for limited-income households and people with disabilities and the gap is ever widening.
- The 2021 Housing Opportunities Master Plan emphasizes the importance of residential options that provide a greater diversity of housing stock, including differing product types (e.g., multifamily apartments, higher-density single-family attached or townhome options single-family rental, etc.) that allow for price points that make housing attainable to a more diverse market audience.
- The 2021 Housing Opportunities Master Plan emphasizes serious homeownership pricing barriers with only 27% of housing (both rental and for sale) as affordable to households making less than 60% AMI, with 92% of this inventory being over 20 years old; and as such, compared to surrounding counties, Howard County has less than its fair share of low- and moderate-income households.
- The current supply of 2,678 moderately priced housing units addresses only 29 percent of our County's 9,250 moderate income households with incomes below 60 percent of AMI, which means the county has a shortfall of more than 6,500 affordable rental units for families at those low and very low-income levels.
- In 2020, the number of eligible households that called the Howard County Coordinated System of Homeless Services emergency hotline (648) continued to exceed the number of referrals to case management programs from the waiting list (217).
- Home ownership is a well-recognized opportunity to build personal wealth but the high cost of for-sale housing in Howard County is a significant barrier to persons of color who wish to purchase a home.
- 2019, 22% percent of Howard County households spent more than 50% of their income on rent—an increase of 33% since 2010, when it was 16%.
- The rental housing shortfall disproportionately impacts persons of color, creates concentrated areas of poverty and therefore is a social justice, racial equity issue.
- In 2018, the county had 32,358 renter households of which 21% or about 6,700 were seniors over 62, with about 1,700 having incomes of less than 30% AMI, and about 2,850 having incomes of between 30% and 60% AMI; about half of all senior renters were severely rent overburdened spending 40% of their income on rent; and the "peak" of the County's population base is now over the age of 55, and these residents will require age-friendly housing options to remain in Howard County.
- In 2019, 21,801 individuals with at least one disability lived in the County and 1,655 of those were 18-64 years old living in poverty; in January 2021 there were 140 County residents on the Weinberg Apartments waitlist; and there is a significant lack of accessible housing in the County with much of the newer accessible units having rents unaffordable to those who need the accessibility.

Testimony to County Council in Support of Affordable housing, Daniel Newberger

Good evening. My name is Daniel Newberger, I live in Columbia, in District 4. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I'm here to ask that you please fight to preserve funding for affordable housing in the FY22 budget.

Those of us who care about increasing affordable housing in the county are watching the budget process closely. We know that tough decisions must be made, with passionate community stakeholders on both sides of almost every issue. Honestly, when looking at the cold political math of it all, affordable housing funding is a pretty safe part of the budget to cut. The community members most directly affected hardly ever speak up, either because they can't afford to live in Howard County so don't even have a voice in this process, or if they do live here, they lack the luxuries of free time and energy to advocate as loudly for their interests as those who oppose affordable housing.

Those of us who support affordable housing know that almost all of you agree with how important it is for our community. We know this because almost all of you campaigned in support of it. Councilperson Jung, your campaign website said you would "look for opportunities to increase affordable housing." Chairperson Walsh, on your campaign website you said, "Let's invest in cohesive plans for ample and affordable housing."

We know that you know that the county's budget is a moral document. It is a bridge between who we are as a community today and the community we wish to become tomorrow. Our budget reflects not just dollars and cents, but the values and principles we hold most dear. Please hold fast to those values.

Howard County is a wonderful place to live and raise a family, and the diversity of our community is at the heart of what makes it so. Please do everything you can to preserve affordable housing in this budget, to keep the doors to Howard County from slamming shut on families who deserve to live here every bit as much as you and I.



20 South Charles Street, Suite 801
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-223-2222
www.brhp.org

May 5, 2021

Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

Dear Councilmembers,

The [Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership \(BRHP\)](#) is dedicated to providing housing assistance and counseling to some of Baltimore's lowest income families through the Baltimore Housing Mobility Program. Our mandate is to remedy the harm caused by decades of public disinvestment in low-income and minority communities. Since 2012, we have enabled more than 5,000 families to move to areas throughout Central Maryland where they have better opportunities for economic mobility. Through our program, over 8,000 children have benefitted from the resource-rich communities, diversity, and strong schools they need and deserve to thrive.

[Researcher Raj Chetty found through his Moving to Opportunity experiment](#) that families using housing vouchers to move from high poverty to low poverty neighborhoods enables children to grow up in healthier neighborhoods. These children are more likely to attend college, less likely to become single parents, and more likely to earn more as adults compared to children in high poverty neighborhoods. In fact, Chetty found a 31% increase in annual income for children under 13 years old who move to less poor neighborhoods. The increase is about \$3,500.

Today, we witness this progress for families and children threatened by attacks on affordable housing in Howard County and throughout the region. As the third largest administrator of the Housing Choice Voucher Program in the region, we feel compelled to urge the council to continue to support funding for the Dorsey Overlook development.

The reality is, there is a shortage of affordable housing and it is out of reach for many renters with the lowest incomes. [According to data from the National Low Income Housing Coalition](#), there are only 40 affordable and available rental homes per 100 extremely low-income renter households in the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson area. Additionally, 81% of extremely low-income renter households in this area are cost burdened. This means they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs and utilities. A significant factor in explaining these severe housing cost burdens is the lack of subsidized affordable housing for low-income households.

The Dorsey Overlook development will be a lifeline to many families. The 82-home community is designed to serve families in stacked rental townhomes within walking distance to Dorsey's Search Village Center, Centennial Park, and nearby transit. The development will be a mixed-income community

The Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership is an equal housing opportunity provider.





20 South Charles Street, Suite 801
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

410-223-2222
www.brhp.org

servicing a range of incomes and populations from large families earning less than 30% - 80% of the Area Median Income to unrestricted market rate units.

Similar developments have encountered stiff NIMBY opposition, and other jurisdictions in our region have embraced that opposition, leading to enforcement actions from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The County, like all other entitlement jurisdictions, has an obligation to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing, and the local funding component of the Dorsey Overlook development allows the County to do just that.

Dorsey Overlook will be an economically integrated development in one of the region's most desirable areas. Once complete, this development will further the County's commitment to inclusivity. The Howard County funds required to make this development a reality will leverage millions in Federal and State funds, and we encourage the Council to support the funds allocated to this project in this budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adria Crutchfield".

Adria Crutchfield
Executive Director
Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership





May 5, 2021

Liz Walsh
Opel Jones
Christiana Rigby
Deb Jung
David Yungmann

Dear Howard County Council members,

On behalf of Bridges to Housing Stability, Inc. in Howard County, I am writing in support of the proposed operating budget for the Community Service Partnership (CSP) funding through the Department of Community Resources and services, and the budget for the Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development.

We understand that it is a tight financial time for the county, and appreciate the County Executive's consideration to keep funding level for CSP grants and Plan to End Homelessness (PEH) dollars. For thirty years Bridges has provided rehousing services for low income households and those experiencing homelessness in the county. Thousands of individuals have been impacted and stably housed long term. We have struggled this past year to hold fundraising events that raise as much funding as the in person events we held prior to the Pandemic. Knowing that the CSP and Plan to End Homelessness dollars will be level helps us to continue to serve the most vulnerable, employ 17 staff, and help those whose housing is in jeopardy because of job loss or sickness caused by the pandemic. Operations funds and program funds that pay salaries are essential to our success. We will continue to work with the Department of Community Resources and Services, and the Coalition to End Homelessness to move forward in keeping homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring in Howard County.

The Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development support allows Bridges to continue to provide additional scattered site affordable housing solutions to low income households making 30-60% of Howard County Median Income along with strengthening relationships with landlords and providing support services to keep these households stable. Affordable housing for these low income households that often have housing barriers is very scarce in Howard County, there is at least 6000 units needed for this income group.

The eighty five households that have been housed through our Housing Connections and Bridges Alliance programs depend on the below market rents, and support services to remain housed. None of these households were able to find affordable housing in the county before they came to Bridges and entered one of these programs supported in large part by the Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development through the years.

Bridges continues to leverage the funding received through CSP, PEH, and DHCD grants with hundreds of thousands in other funding to continue the work and lower the percentage of the organization's budget that comes from the County.

I hope you will support these items in the budget. Many other organizations that serve thousands of County residents can continue the great work they do thanks to CSP and PEH funding. Many thanks to all of you for your service to the County.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me anytime at 410-312-5760 ext. 117 or jennifer@bridges2hs.org

Thank you,

Jennifer Broderick, LCSW
Executive Director

Bridges to Housing Stability, Inc.
9520 Berger Rd. Suite 311
Columbia, MD, 21046

FY 2022 Operating Budget Testimony- County Council

The county council is limited in what it can change in the executive's budget, but I want to emphasize some important areas and ask for your support. Perhaps you could cut some less important programs and ask the executive to use that money for more urgent needs.

ROADS

Like police and schools, roads are a core function of the county government that should be a top fiscal priority, but maintenance of neighborhood roads is being sorely neglected and is totally unacceptable.

Our rough roads are not safe for our most vulnerable residents, our children and our seniors. It is not safe to drive, ride bikes, or even walk on them. It makes a poor first impression on visitors, which ultimately could affect property values and the tax base.

I see more potholes in the roads today than I can remember in the 54 years I have lived in Howard County. The roads need resurfacing, but there has been little or no money in the budget for it. The proposed budget acknowledges a backlog of over \$60 million in road resurfacing and repair but only appears to provide \$10 million for the effort. Please support all the funding and URGE the county executive to provide more to maintain roads properly.

Good road maintenance is needed for successful operation of new initiatives in mass transit and Complete Streets as well as to serving the many citizens in communities that are not dense enough for significant mass transit or for cycling and walking to serve most of our needs.

STORMWATER

Dunloggin land is clay and rock and drains poorly. Our steep slopes exacerbate the runoff. Our lots were oversized to accommodate this. Over the years, the county allowed significant infill without requiring additional storm water management for the added units. As a result of these bad decisions by the county, many of my neighbors have spent thousands of dollars each, in several cases more than \$50 thousand, to repair damage and mitigate future damage. We get damage, not just from the devastating floods like 2016 and 2018, but also from the recurring heavy rains we have seen in the last few years.

The Tiber and Plumtree watershed studies identified many study areas needing storm water and drainage improvements. There is money in the capital budget and there seems to be some in the operating budget for a few of these areas but not all.

BODY CAMS

A Howard Sun article ("\$1.8B budget proposed by Ball") reported that the proposed body cam program for the police and sheriff's departments will require 10 new positions in the police department and 13 in the State's Attorney's office. According to the article, the 13 state's attorney positions will be for reviewing footage.

If a body cam program requires this kind of overhead, is it the best solution to the problem? Instances in which the evidence is needed are significant but rare, and mental health support or better psychological screening for law enforcement recruits might be more effective, if less exciting, alternatives.

I looked at the budget document and confirmed the positions are there, but I could not determine what they will be used for. If the article is accurate I hope you will not support the program as proposed but ask Dr. Ball to find better alternatives. We need programs that work and spend our money wisely, not just whatever program happens to be popular in the media.

Angie Boyter

3914 MacAlpine Road

Ellicott City MD 21042

angie@boyter.net

410 465-1444



*ACS supports Howard County nonprofits in the achievement of their missions
because strong nonprofits improve the quality of life for all*

FY22 Operating Budget Hearing Testimony May 4, 2021

Good evening, Council members. My name is Joan Driessen. I am the Executive Director of the Association of Community Services and I am speaking tonight on behalf of ACS and our 154 member organizations and community advocates.

I must begin this testimony by extending my **sincere gratitude for the creation of a budget line item for the Housing Opportunities Trust Fund and the \$5 million beginning allocation for it.** According to a recent rental housing survey, we have approximately 450 units available for the 3,000 households that earn \$30,000-\$50,000. The shortage of available housing units leaves nearly 1 in 4 Howard County renters severely rent-burdened (i.e., more than 50% of income is spent on rent). These residents are left with unaffordable options that limit their ability to afford other essential needs in order to stay housed. The Housing Opportunities Trust Fund is a critical step in building Howard County's housing infrastructure, implementing the recommendations of the Housing Opportunities Master Plan, and having long-term solutions to our existing housing challenges that were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

On behalf of the nonprofit community, thank you for **maintaining even funding for: The Community Service Partnership (CSP) grants so nonprofits can continue responding to the basic needs of our residents and stay afloat, \$320,000 in one-time grant funding to meet COVID-19 needs, prioritizing transit funding within the CSP grants, and level funding for the Plan to End Homelessness.** The County relies on nonprofits to maintain critical services and our nonprofit sector has repeatedly demonstrated how effectively it can leverage County money together with outside grants, donations, and the support of volunteers to address both urgent and long-term needs.

In 2020, you demonstrated additional support for nonprofits through grant allocations made possible by the CARES Act. As The American Rescue Plan Act's (APRA) allocation of approximately \$63.1 million to Howard County is received over time, **ACS requests that a portion of ARPA funding be prioritized to meet the needs of fellow residents served by our nonprofit community, expand the capacity of nonprofits, and to support the long-term sustainability of nonprofits.** The County's ability to continue responding to the pandemic is dependent upon maintaining a strong and effective nonprofit sector.

I encourage you to **ensure that the County budget reflects our commitment to building an equitable present and future.** Our soon-to-be-released Self-Sufficiency Indicators Report [<https://www.acshoco.org/self-sufficiency-indicators/>] tells us that we have a significant way to go to eliminate disparities in Howard County. This latest report not only captures the impact of the COVID-19



*ACS supports Howard County nonprofits in the achievement of their missions
because strong nonprofits improve the quality of life for all*

pandemic on financial stability for Howard County residents, but it is also the first time we have been able to demonstrate how different racial and ethnic groups experience disparate impacts across our systems. These disparities are not due to inherent attributes associated with any given group, rather, they are indicators of systemic factors – budgets, laws, government policies, written and unwritten practices, workplace cultures – that have created and sustained the outcomes we see today. Now is the time to change courses and build an operating budget that reflects our values so every resident can truly prosper.

ACS supports the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) equity initiatives and efforts to reimagine safety in our schools. **We urge you to take the opportunity of determining the FY22 operating budget to partner with us in fostering a better educational experience for our current and future students.** You, as Council members, play a critical role in making this possible by funding the HCPSS budget to make these priorities a reality. Specifically, as Dr. Martirano proposes school safety plans that both include and exclude School Resource Officers (SROs), the budget has to enable either plan to be successful. We recognize that SROs are presently funded in the police department's budget, however, we will not be in a position to plan for school safety without SROs if the HCPSS budget does not have the latitude to incorporate alternatives proposed in Dr. Martirano's plans.

As always, ACS is prepared to work with County government to support our residents and nonprofit sector and continue working to realize the shared vision we have for Howard County. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this evening.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Driessen

Executive Director

Sayers, Margery

From: M H RAHMAN <mhrahmanny@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 2:20 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Save Cedar Lane Park

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Council Members,

I am writing to oppose the building of a fire station and the proposed park changes in Cedar Lane Park East. This park provides tremendous value to Columbia, MD and all Howard County residents. Not only will placing a fire station cause increased traffic and danger to those that live directly off of this section of Rt. 108, but also negatively impact your constituents that live in the surrounding communities. This plan goes against Dr. Ball's words stated during the most recent environmental town hall held on April 29th, 2021, "Prioritize protecting green and open space". Not only is the County proposing to place a fire station in such a congested & unideal location, it is proposing to take away 2 natural fields, replace one with ARTIFICIAL turf, and place a significant amount of impervious surface in that area. Overdevelopment throughout Howard County, including the replacement of natural areas with impervious services, is a serious concern and the loss of habitat and impact on the environment would be significant. I do not support these changes and would hope that you would stand by your words and commitment to protect green, open space in Howard County. Let's place an emphasis on environmental stewardship.

Thank you.

Md Hafiz Rahman



**FY 2022 County Operating Budget – Community Renewal
County Council Public Hearing – May 5, 2021
Testimony of Peter Engel, Executive Director of the Housing Commission**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the Community Renewal portion of the County's FY 2022 operating budget. The Howard County Housing Commission ("HCHC" or the "Commission") is the housing authority for Howard County. In that capacity, the Commission preserves and creates housing opportunities for low and moderate income households in the County and for those who work here but cannot afford to live here. It is in our capacity as advocates for the County's lower-income residents and workers that we strongly support the County Executive's proposed budget for Community Renewal.

As the Executive Director of the Commission, I regularly receive calls and email from people who are searching for affordable housing. Some are on the verge of losing their homes, some are desperately looking for housing choice vouchers, some are searching for an affordable option for their elderly parents, and some are already homeless. Many are employed. When it comes to emergency food, or a ride somewhere, or help with resumé writing, or clothing, the County generally has assistance for people. But not when it comes to housing. All too often I have nothing to offer but a listing of apartments and the State's searchable database of affordable options.

The on-going crises in housing affordability is well documented. Locally, there are more than 5,000 households who earn \$50,000 or less annually already living in Howard County who are paying too much for rent. This doesn't include the new housing that is necessary to ensure future job growth in the County.

The high cost of housing leads to housing instability, which ultimately translates into lower school performance for children, longer commutes and more stress for parents, health issues, and other tangible harms. Nationally, we have seen ever-increasing homeless populations in cities, more moderate wage-earners priced out of many markets, rents rising substantially faster than incomes, and such a raft of other problems that a number of states are revisiting rent control, a policy that has been largely out of favor for thirty years or more.

Even with eviction prevention measures in place, the COVID pandemic has only exacerbated the problem, with many tenants losing income and struggling to pay the rent. The County has spent millions to date on rental assistance and yet the need continues to grow.

The County Executive's operating budget sends a strong signal of support for the County's residents who are struggling to pay for housing in the County. In particular, it funds three initiatives that will have a real impact on the needs of County families and individuals.

For the first time ever, the budget establishes a fund to support a multiplicity of housing efforts. The Housing Opportunities Trust Fund would begin to bring Howard County in line with its progressive neighboring jurisdictions, some of which have had housing trust funds for years. Montgomery County has been allocating over \$30 million annually for affordable housing production and preservation. Baltimore City established a \$20 million fund. Arlington County, Virginia, a County of comparable population and income, typically appropriates about \$20 million annually for housing affordability efforts. Washington, DC has a trust fund that has been spending upwards of \$100 million annually for a number of years. And this year, Anne Arundel County received State legislative authorization to create a housing trust fund with a dedicated source of revenue from transfer taxes.

While the \$5 million request for Howard County's program is understandably modest given the on-going pandemic conditions, we strongly applaud the County Executive's establishment of this long-sought fund and encourage the Council to vote its approval. Potential uses for the new dollars are myriad and include support for moderate-income homeownership, the creation and preservation of affordable rental housing, home improvements, including renovations that allow seniors to age in place, and rental assistance.

We urge the Council to approve the funding while the program is being operationalized.

We also urge the Council to approve the approximate \$4.1 million that were placed into contingency last year. These funds will aid the Commission in the creation of new affordable, rental opportunities that are desperately needed. In 2019, 42% of the renter households in the County were cost-burdened, which means that they spend more than 30% of their income on rent, and 22% - nearly one in four - spent more than 50% of their income on rent. Over the nine-year period from 2010, this category of "severely cost-burdened" households has risen by over 33%. The development to be funded with the contingency funds will add to the County's stock of permanently affordable housing, creating opportunities for working and special needs households who are currently struggling.

Finally, we ask that the Council approve the Department of Housing and Community Development's request for a position to help manage the new grant funds that have been part of the response to the COVID pandemic. The pools of rental assistance funds that the County has created from federal and State resources have been instrumental in helping County renters to stay in good standing and avoid eviction issues. While all efforts have been made to streamline processing, grant funds always come with compliance requirements and it is necessary to have the appropriate level of staffing to ensure that the County does not run afoul of state or federal rules.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the County Executive's Community Renewal budget and we look forward to your due consideration and approval of these necessary funds.

Sayers, Margery

From: Daniel Orourke <cdorourke1@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 12:12 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail
Subject: Fwd: Cedar Lane Park East Expansion

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

-----Original Message-----

From: Daniel Orourke <cdorourke1@verizon.net>
To: cball@howardcountymd.gov
Sent: Mon, Apr 12, 2021 4:30 pm
Subject: Fwd: Cedar Lane Park East Expansion

From: Daniel Orourke <cdorourke1@verizon.net>
Date: Monday, April 12, 2021
Subject: Cedar Lane Park East Expansion
To: calvinball <calvinball@howardcount.gov>, councilmail <councilmail@howardcountymd.gov>

Good Morning:

I am writing in opposition to the plan to expand Cedar Lane Park East. My address is 10891 Beech Creek Drive, Columbia, MD 21044.

Beech Creek Drive intersects with Rt 108, several hundred yards from the entrance of Cedar Lane Park East. As you know, Rt 108 is an old country road with limited space and limited sight-lines with rolling hills. In this area is the Board of Education, Homewood School, a Mosque, a Veterinarian Clinic, Clark's Farm petting farm, the Iron Bridge Wine Bar, and Centennial Park.

In the last ten years, my family has experienced four car accidents on Rt 108 within a half mile of the intersection of Beech Creek Drive and Rt 108. Three of these accidents were rear-end collisions which resulted in these cars being a total loss. When a Howard County Police Officer responded to one of these accidents, he told us that he avoids even driving on Rt 108 because it is the "worst road in the county."

To add more cars onto Rt 108 adds more congestion and is not the right location to add a Fire Station, Pickle Ball Courts, and a new Field. I request you reconsider this plan as it will add more congestion, accidents, and is just not the right location to try to fit in these expansive buildings and related projects. This part of Rt 108 is dangerous now,. Add more cars and activities in this area will result in a more chaotic situation than what we are experiencing today.

Thank you,

Dan and Clare O'Rourke

Sayers, Margery

From: WORTMANWJ@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Warren Wortman
<WORTMANWJ@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 10:28 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022
Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget to make Howard County safer for all.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Warren Wortman
5215 Patriot Ln Columbia, MD 21045-1902 WORTMANWJ@YAHOO.COM

Sayers, Margery

From: Pam Ecker Interiors <interiorsbypam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 8:07 AM
To: tellhoco; Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Cc: Maribel Sanchez
Subject: Response from your email.

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Ms. Priuim

You are wrong in what you are stating on the email you sent me !!!

This project at **THIS** location has not been in the woks for several years !!! I know there were plans to locate a station near the Old Cedar Lane school but the change in location only occurred in the past year.

I found out about it by accident a few months ago! Its a good thing I just happened to be walking my dog at the park when I saw surveyors putting ribbons around the trees. I asked them what was going on and they told me they are building a fire station here! Can you imagine if this was you and you found out this was happening in YOUR BACKYARD!! I am certain you would not respond to me this way!

Also , We already have 2 fire stations just a few miles from this location ! We have Clarksville and Merriweather stations . This tiny park is not the place for another fire station ! The congestion on Route n108 is already unbearable and dangerous . We have the Mosque, Clarks Farm which has added a tremendous amount of traffic the past few years.

This project has not be studied to the extent that it should be ! I realize there is a need for a new fire station but this little park is not the place.

Please look into the facts about this . You are wrong what your saying and we as residents of Columbia/ District #4 have a right to be heard.

Pamela Ecker
10728 Cottonwood Way
Columbia, MD. 21044
District #4

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your email and the opportunity to respond. First, please know I have shared your concerns with appropriate staff for their consideration. In case you were not aware, the North Columbia Fire Station has been under consideration for several years and is needed to respond to recent growth

patterns and increasing call demands in the North Columbia and Greater Columbia area. As Fire Chief Anuszewski noted, the most recent call demand diagrams illustrated the need for an additional fire station in the North Columbia area for public safety reasons and to improve response times.

In addition, the construction of this fire station will allow the County to address the needs of the Banneker facility, which has aged past its useful life and has a poor Facility Conditions Index rating, presenting a sub-standard working environment for first responders and other staff currently working at this station.

We understand you oppose the fire station at this site; however, if there are ways we can work with you to improve the project design, we welcome the opportunity to work with you and your fellow neighbors.

For the most up-to-date information regarding this project, please continue to check DPW's website: <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Bureau-Of-Facilities>

Best,

Kimberly Pruim
Director
Constituent Services and Community Partnerships
Office of the County Executive

Sayers, Margery

From: Patti Petry <patti.petry@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 11:00 PM
To: CouncilMail; Ball, Calvin
Subject: North Columbia Fire Station Location

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Mr. Ball and Council Members,

I am against the proposed Cedar Lane Park location for the North Columbia Fire Station.

Living on a street that exits on to Route 108, I am very concerned about the traffic now, and the addition of the station can only make it more dangerous. Often during rush hour, traffic backs up at the lights along Route 108. Turning left onto this road is difficult and dangerous at those times. On Friday evenings, Route 108 is especially congested by the mosque traffic. This mosque is located very close to the proposed fire station. Overall, having emergency vehicles traveling more frequently on Route 108 certainly increases the risk of serious traffic accidents.

Please reject this location.

Regards,

Patti Petry
11513 Manorstone Lane
Columbia, MD 21044
Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10


Sayers, Margery

From: Vicki Milton <vickim0956@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 9:57 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard County 50+ Center

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

My name is Vicki Milton, I live in Prince George's County. I know first hand what it means to have a Senior Activity Center, before COVID, I visited mine daily for different activities, classes, and events. When visiting the Library for line dancing in Howard County, which is excellent for exercising the mind and body it's hard in those little cramped rooms. Please vote to fund the 50+ Center.

Thank you in advance for your vote!

Have a wonderful day,
Grateful Vicki 



Sayers, Margery

From: Ann C <ana.cortes49440@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 9:54 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; calvinball@howardcounty.gov
Cc: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David; Ahmed S. Elsayed; Ann C; ozfisch@gmail.com; hlugmayer@hotmail.com; pishnicki@gmail.com; jmason2stess@yahoo.com; trobins@comcast.net; maribel.sanchez08@gmail.com
Subject: Please Do Not Take Our Green Space Away

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Greetings County Executive Calvin Ball,

I am writing to you on an urgent matter that is very concerning to my community and I. I have recently become aware of the county's plan to uproot the green fields of Cedar Lane Park, and replace them with a fire station. This destruction of nature will cause major issues such as a violation of the space thousands of people use, and a negative environmental impact. To start, removing the fields will be a major breach on the welfare of the citizens who utilize the park, and the neighborhoods surrounding it. By taking away these fields, people will no longer be able to take their children for sports, or simply enjoy the area for themselves. Howard County is one of the richest counties in the United States. So why are you taking away our park, when there is land that can be purchased? The county also owns several locations within this vicinity that can be used. And yet, these Officials seem fixated to invade the happiness and safety of Howard County citizens, from the tiniest soccer players to the senior joggers. Many of these people are unaware that their beautiful park is subject to ruin. In school, we have been learning about democracy and what it means to be an informed citizen. But how can someone be informed when such valuable information is being kept from them by their own county leaders? Responsible and just leaders would not keep these plans from their citizens, but would instead spread the word and truly think about the possible consequences a plan like this could have on our community. Is this the example being set for future generations? Is it okay for those in charge to hide major headlines from their citizens who will ultimately be impacted? My family has had conversations with several families at the park who were all shocked and upset after learning about your proposed plans. The other concern is the distressing and regrettable environmental impact these actions will hold. As we know from the flooding in Historic Ellicott City, over-development causes flooding due to the lack of natural absorbers. I overheard some adults stating the possibility of flooding in our neighborhood's backyards as an effect of the removal of the natural grass fields. I live on Eliots Oak Rd and can see perfectly from my home's windows the bleachers and fields of Cedar Lane Park. These fields are just a two-minute walk from my backyard. I would love for you to come visit us, so I can show you our proximity to the park. I would also like to mention that I met you at Longfellow Elementary School in my fifth grade year. As the National Junior Honors Society President for my school, I feel it is my responsibility to advocate for my community, and make their voices heard. With these thoughts in mind, I please ask you to reconsider the location for the fire station and to not take our peaceful green space.

Thank you and I look forward to your reply.

Scarlett Lopez

Grade 8

Please reply to the following email address: Musicalfan1776@icloud.com

May 5, 2021 Testimony Opposing the North Columbia Fire Station

My name is Donald Jung and my wife and our special needs son live on Cottonwood Way in Columbia. I oppose any and all funding streams for the North Columbia Fire Station.

The County has proposed building a fire station at Cedar Lane Park East. This park provides tremendous value to all Howard County residents. Not only will placing a fire station cause increased traffic and danger to those that live directly off of this section of Rt. 108, but also negatively impact your constituents that live in the surrounding communities. This plan goes against Dr. Ball's words stated during the most recent environmental town hall held just last Thursday, April 29th, "Prioritize protecting green and open space".

Not only is the County proposing to place a fire station in such a congested location, it is proposing to take away 2 natural fields, replace one with ARTIFICIAL turf, and place a significant amount of impervious surface in that area. Overdevelopment throughout Howard County is a serious concern and the loss of habitat and impact on the environment would be significant. I would hope that the County's elected officials stand by Dr. Ball's words and commitment to protect green, open space in this County.

This proposed location for a new fire station simply does not make sense. Not only are you removing a valuable and well loved park, disturbing the long-established neighborhoods surrounding the park, but the Fire & Rescue Services performance goals of reducing emergency response times will most certainly be negated by the increased traffic. Why must park land be sacrificed for public safety? These proposed plans do not represent smart development.

On a very personal front, my wife and I are very fearful for our 34 year old son who takes anti-seizure medications. Any sudden and loud noise that presumably will come from the Fire Station might trigger seizure activity.

I urge all Howard County Council members to oppose the North Columbia Fire Station as currently proposed.

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Sayers, Margery

From: Karen Lilly <klb929@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 4:55 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Funding the 50 plus center in Columbia

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear council,

I am a 69 year old Howard county resident and I have used the 50 + center in Columbia. I have been to the North Laurel and Beltsville centers as well. They are very nice and modern. The Columbia center needs to be expanded and improved to support more seniors. Please fund this project.

Sincerely,

Karen Lilly



marylandnonprofits.org

1500 Union Avenue | Suite 2500 | Baltimore, MD 21211
410.727.6367 | 800.273.6367 | Fax 410.235.2190

May 4, 2021

Howard County Council
George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Dear Council Member Rigby, Council Member Jones, Council Member Walsh and Council Member Yungmann,

Thank you for your leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit our state with such severity. During these trying times, the nonprofit sector has been a vital lifeline for communities in need. The American Rescue Plan is bringing \$6 billion into Maryland and an estimated \$63 million to Howard County Government. As CEO of Maryland Nonprofits, I am reaching out to all county and municipal leaders to encourage their support of local nonprofits and to encourage partnership with your local community foundation. Maryland Nonprofits is the statewide association serving Maryland's 37,000+ nonprofit organizations, and we have 1,200 members across the state.

Nonprofits are on the front lines of providing COVID-19 relief, reaching deeply into their communities with food distribution, rental assistance programs, support for seniors and people with disabilities and more. At the same time, nonprofits are businesses that have lost significant revenue due to COVID and have the same pressures of other businesses of meeting payroll, managing facilities and putting safety measures in place. In non-crisis times, nonprofits are significant employers and economic drivers, representing more than 12% of Maryland's private workforce and \$59,000,000 in combined revenues and providing communities with lifesaving and life-enhancing services. By allocating a substantial portion of your ARP funding to nonprofit grants, Howard County Government will maximize its impact and stimulate your economy in a time of exceptional need.

Your local community foundation is a great asset to the community and could be a potential partner with you in administering such grants. Maryland's 14 community foundations are permanent sources of local philanthropic investment that specialize in serving their respective regions' evolving needs. Together, they hold a total of more than \$700 million in philanthropic assets and distribute about \$128 million in grants each year to nonprofit organizations in their communities, addressing a wide range of issues. Community foundations know the nonprofit sector and are experienced grantmakers, uniquely positioned to accept your investment of ARP dollars for the maximum impact on your constituents.



Maryland Nonprofits' mission is to strengthen organizations and networks for greater quality of life and equity.



marylandnonprofits.org

1500 Union Avenue | Suite 2500 | Baltimore, MD 21211
410.727.6367 | 800.273.6367 | Fax 410.235.2190

I know that you may already have a relationship with the leadership at your community foundation. If helpful, I have provided a list of the community foundations serving regions throughout Maryland to encourage continued collaboration with the foundation serving your area.

Thank you again for your continued support. We look forward to our continued partnership on our shared policy priorities and building a stronger, more equitable Maryland for all.

Sincerely,

Heather Iliff
President & CEO
Maryland Nonprofits



Maryland Nonprofits' mission is to strengthen organizations and networks for greater quality of life and equity.



marylandnonprofits.org

1500 Union Avenue | Suite 2500 | Baltimore, MD 21211
410.727.6367 | 800.273.6367 | Fax 410.235.2190

Community Foundations of Maryland

Baltimore Community Foundation

11 E Mt Royal Ave
Baltimore, MD 21202
Executive Director: Shanaysha M. Sauls, Ph.D
Email: ssauls@bcf.org

Chesapeake Charities

101 Log Canoe Circle
Suite O
Stevensville, MD 21666
Executive Director: Linda Kohler
Email: linda@chesapeakecharities.org

Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County

900 Bestgate Road
Suite 400
Annapolis, MD 21401
Executive Director: Mary Spencer
Email: mary@cfaac.org

Community Foundation of Carroll County

255 Clifton Blvd., Ste 313
Westminster, MD 21157
Executive Director: Audrey S. Cimino
Email: acimino@carrollcommunityfoundation.org

Community Foundation of Frederick County

312 E Church St
Frederick, MD 21701
Executive Director: Betsy Day
Email: b.day@cffredco.org

Community Foundation of Harford County

202 South Main Street
P. O. Box 612
Bel Air, MD
Executive Director: Jennifer Farrell
Email: jfarrell@cfharfordcounty.org

Community Foundation of Howard County

10440 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 230
Columbia MD, 21044
Executive Director: Beverly White-Seals

Email: jmcintyre@cfhoco.org

Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore

1324 Belmont Ave.
Ste. 401
Salisbury, MD 21804
Executive Director: Erica Joseph
Email: ejoseph@cfes.org

Community Foundation of Washington County, MD

37 S. Potomac Street
Hagerstown, MD 21740
Executive Director: Stacey Crawford
Email: staceyc@cfwcmd.org

Community Trust Foundation, Inc.

112 Baltimore Street
Suite 201
Cumberland, MD 21502
Executive Director: Leah Shaffer
Email: leah@ctfinc.org

The Foundation for Community Development

8859 Mistletoe Dr
Suite A
Easton, MD 21601-7530
Executive Director: Charles "Josh" Poore
Email: josh@tffcd.org

Greater Washington Community Foundation

1325 G Street NW
Suite 480
Washington, DC 20005
Executive Director: Tonia Wellons
Email: twellons@thecommunityfoundation.org

Mid-Shore Community Foundation

102 East Dover Street
Easton, MD 21601
Executive Director: W.W. "Buck" Duncan
Email: wduncan@mscf.org



Maryland Nonprofits' mission is to strengthen organizations and networks for greater quality of life and equity.

Sayers, Margery

From: Jean Silver-Isenstadt <jeansi@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 1:58 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: pls support Howard EcoWorks

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

This year, my neighborhood's HOA contracted with Howard EcoWorks to do significant forest restoration work in our community, install a new bayscape perennial garden in an area that currently sheets stormwater off pesticide-sprayed turfgrass, and to paint stenciling on our storm drains that reminds people that our storm drains lead to the Patuxent River. They have also worked with teens in my neighborhood through their "Alt-Spring Break" environmental community service program. They're a pleasure to work with—responsive and creative--and it is frankly inspiring the way their initiatives address critically important social and environmental needs at the same time.

Howard Ecoworks provides enormous value to the County and I am writing with strong support for project D1164 in the County Executive's capital budget for Howard EcoWorks' workforce development and environmental programming. We need more people trained in green jobs; we need to install and maintain rain gardens; we need to plant more trees; and we need to protect and invest in the natural resources we have. This program is a great investment.

Sincerely,

Jean Silver-Isenstadt
10174 Deep Skies Drive
Laurel MD 20723

Sayers, Margery

From: Daniel Orourke <cdorourke1@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 1:00 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Save Cedar Lane Park

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball,

Cedar Lane Park East provides immense value to the county. Losing the park to a fire station will cause serious safety issues by increasing traffic on Route 108, environmental concerns for the local wildlife and increase in impervious surfaces and light and noise pollution for neighboring constituents. This stretch of Rt. 108, between Harpers Farm Rd. and U.S. Route 29, is the narrowest and most busy section of road in comparison to the segments to the east and west. There is no shoulder for cars to pull over and depending on the time of the day, this road is virtually a parking lot. With 11 ingress and egress points within 1,200 feet of the proposed location of the fire station, including the lone exits for surrounding neighborhoods and the Dar-Al-Taqwa mosque across the street, this already congested and narrow section of road will only become worse. This proposed location for a new fire station simply does not make sense. Not only are you removing a valuable and well loved park, but the goal of reducing response times to the area will most certainly be negated by the increased traffic. These proposed plans do not represent smart development only a path of least resistance for county officials not interested in serving the communities they are entrusted to serve. I do not support the placement of a fire station in Cedar Land Park East and urge the Howard County Council members to oppose this plan too.

Thank you,
Mrs. Clare ORourke
10891 Beech Creek Drive
Columbia, MD 21044

**HOWARD COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL
Testimony submitted to Howard County Council
Regarding FY2022 Proposed Budget
May 5, 2021**

Good evening Chairwoman Walsh and members of the County Council. I am Coleen West, Executive Director of the Howard County Arts Council located at 8510 High Ridge Road. On behalf of the Arts Council, I want to recognize and thank you for all that you've done to support the citizens of Howard County during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

We recognize the difficult position you are in this year as you try to balance the needs of all citizens during this challenging time. And, we are thankful for the County's response to this crisis under YOUR strong leadership.

As a representative of your county arts council, I am here tonight to urge you to recognize the important impact the arts and creative workers have on our community and to remind you that when it comes to our quality of life and growing the County's economy, the arts can be – and should be - part of the solution. To that end, I ask you to fully support County Executive Ball's proposed annual arts appropriation of \$905,500 -- 73% of this funding will support grants to 50-60 local and regional arts organizations. In addition, we ask that you support PAYGO funds of \$150,000, which will fund the ARTSreach Festival at Long Reach.

Like other business sectors, COVID-19 is having a staggering effect on artists and the arts. According to Johns Hopkins University, the nonprofit creative sector was the hardest hit sector in the economy¹. While we are concerned about the long-term effect of this crisis on our arts community, they also have a critical role to play - **right now**.

The arts have the power to unite, heal, and soothe. During this crisis, people all over the world have turned to the arts to connect with one another and help make sense of what is happening around them. Whether it is concerts on rooftops, performances on

Tic Toc, or painting plein air, the arts help us cope with the deepening sense of hopelessness, stress and anxiety caused by prolonged social isolation. They are lifeline for those suffering from mental illness and depression. They provide us with a space for solace, wonder and joy.

Seventy-three percent (73%) of the proposed annual arts appropriation will be used to support 4 grant programs that provide operating and project support to county arts organizations, K-12 schools through Parent Teacher Associations, and Baltimore City arts and cultural organizations. These grants support 50-60 organizations that provide a broad range of arts and arts education programs for both children and adults. Pre-COVID (FY19), attendance at arts events funded through County and these grant programs was 284,000 and volunteers for local, county-based arts groups receiving grants donated 97,000 hours – a value of \$2.4 million – clear indicators that the arts are important to the citizens of Howard County.²

A strong arts sector improves our quality of life, but it is also an economic asset that stimulates business activity, attracts tourism revenue, and retains a high-quality work force. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that the arts and culture sector makes up 4.3 percent, or \$919.7 billion, of the nation's GDP and generates 5.2 million jobs.³

It's hard to imagine what the arts and culture sector will look like once we reach the end of this current crisis. The economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the arts and culture industry across the U.S. has mounted to \$16.3 billion and the percentage of job losses at non-profit arts organizations is 5 times the average of all non-profits (dancers have the highest unemployment rate of 45.6%),⁴ according to the latest report issued Americans for the Arts. Nationwide, 37% of nonprofit arts jobs were lost and the unemployment rate for creative workers is 63%. Such losses will likely force a contraction in the sector and will have a very real and immediate impact on artists and creative workers in the Howard County.

At the same time local companies face a global marketplace where value is increasingly determined by technology, knowledge and creativity. A study published by the Conference Board (serving the Fortune 1000 U.S. companies), found 97% of employers say creativity and innovation skills are important in U.S. workplaces, while 85% of employers say they can't find the creative, innovative applicants they seek.⁵

In an economy that will be increasingly driven by creativity and innovation, we will need creative workers - artists, entrepreneurs, innovators – made up primarily of gig workers - currently unemployed. To retain this creative workforce, we will need to provide adequate wages, affordable housing and maker spaces as well as arts, culture, technology and other creative businesses - large and small - to employ them.

Howard County has positioned itself well to meet these expectations. We have a vision for a vibrant arts, retail and entertainment district in Downtown Columbia along with Merriweather Post Pavilion and the iconic Chrysalis amphitheater. Ellicott City was recently named one of the “Top 20 Leading Creative Class Cities” by Richard Florida.⁶ We have a growing state-of-the-art community college, excellent recreational facilities and libraries, and the arts curriculum in our public schools is one of the strongest in the nation. And pre-COVID-19, we were home to 763 arts-related businesses that employ 3,511 people in the County.⁷ The arts sector accounts for 3.9% of the total businesses in the County, 1.7% of the people they employ, and is made up of major tourist attractions, for-profit media and design businesses, and a vibrant network of non-profit arts groups.

Howard County is a special place that has developed a strong community for the arts. Prior to this crisis, studies found Howard County:

- Had a higher number of arts and cultural organizations and artists than 91% of counties in the US;
- Raised more arts contributions and earned a higher level of program revenue than 96% of counties in the US⁸;

- residents spent more per capita on arts and entertainment than seven Baltimore-Washington metro counties.
- had the second highest level of arts participation per capita out than seven Baltimore-Washington metro counties⁸.

The arts (both for- and non-profit) are an important part of the County's small business sector. The heART of the arts community are the non-profit groups, which are also the primary focus of the Arts Council. Non-profits, such as the Columbia Festival of the Arts, HoCoPoLitSo, Rep Stage and others, provide opportunities for engagement and participation, they incubate artistic ideas and enterprises, and they create distinctive experiences that attract tourists, businesses and residents alike.

It takes a special ecosystem to maintain a vibrant arts community on a local level – you need the talent and dedication of practicing artists, strong arts organizations, innovative businesses, enthusiastic audiences, financial support and arts-friendly policies from government, and contributions from businesses and individuals. In addition, you need affordable space to incubate, create, and produce the arts and you need appropriate space to present the work and engage the public.

The non-profits work year-round to make the arts available to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. They do an incredible amount of work with very little resources. Even in good times, their budgets are extremely fragile. While they are used to operating on a shoe-string budget, this year, with shuttered venues and dark galleries, they had a total loss of ticket sales and a steep decline in earned and contributed income. Their already fragile budgets are at great risk.

The arts, like other businesses, took prudent steps to remain viable. Some got through by reducing budgets, scaling back programs and tapping into what little reserves they have, however FY22 and beyond will be a challenge. History shows us that the arts are one of the hardest sectors hit and the last to recover. For perspective, after the 2008

recession, it took the Arts Council 9 years to get our camp enrollment back to pre-recession numbers.

We are grateful for the CARES ACT funding from County, State and Federal governments which have helped the arts community remain afloat -- for now. As we begin to reopen with limited audiences, the small to mid-sized organizations (which make up the bulk of Howard County arts organizations) cannot make up for lost revenue by increasing productivity and reducing overhead – they have minimal operating expenses as it is – cutting budgets further means closing doors for good.

I am here tonight, to ask you to preserve flat funding for this non-profit sector by approving the County Executive's proposed budget. County funding provides arts non-profits with a life-line – a baseline of unrestricted support that they use to underwrite their core activities and to leverage private dollars.

County investment in the arts serves the public interest by broadening public access to the arts and by preserving and fostering diverse forms of expression. In turn, the non-profit arts groups give back to our community by enhancing our quality of life and community wellness, celebrating artistic traditions, attracting other businesses and jobs, and generating revenue for the County. Pre-COVID-19 (FY19), Howard County grantees not only provided us with exceptional programming, they used county funds to leverage \$3.8 million in revenues – 33% from earned income and admissions, 22% Howard County, 10% individuals, 9% State and Federal, 6% corporations, 3% foundations, 3 % from the Columbia Association, 15% other– and generate 141 FTE jobs.⁹

Statewide (pre-COVID-19), there are 13,185 arts-related businesses that generate 52,723 jobs¹⁰, including 258 non-profit arts groups that generate 16,900 FTE jobs. The non-profit sector alone has a total annual impact of \$1.3 billion.¹¹

The arts generate tourism dollars and - once we are back in business - will add to the recovery of our local economy. Based on past attendance, 20-30% of our non-profit arts audiences are made up of people who reside outside of Howard County,¹² these visitors come to our County and spend money at local restaurants and businesses. The Maryland State Department of Commerce reports that every \$1 of operating generates an additional \$4.16 in spending on goods and services.¹³ Using this formula, the non-profit arts groups in Howard County, generated an extra \$15.7 million in secondary spending to our local economy in FY19 for a total economic impact of \$19.7 million (this does not include revenue from for-profit venues such as Merriweather Post Pavilion, Toby's Dinner Theatre, movie theaters, or design, marketing and printing companies, or others that do not receive direct funding from the Arts Council). An investment in the arts is an investment in our future.

Seventy-three percent of the proposed county funding will go to support 4 grant programs that provide operating and project grants to 50-60 organizations and schools.

- 1) The Community Arts Development (CAD) program provides operating and project grants to local arts organizations as well as non-arts groups interested in presenting arts programs. In FY20, the Arts Council awarded \$377,175 (CAD: \$343,391, JRT: \$14,661; OD:\$18,623 CH:\$500) to 22 Howard County organizations.
- 2) The Baltimore City Arts and Culture (BCAC) program awards grants to city organizations that have regional significance and provide considerable services to Howard County residents. In FY20, we awarded \$171,000 to 11 city organizations.
- 3) The Outreach Howard program awards grants to City grantees to produce projects IN Howard County. In FY20, \$45,432 was awarded to 7 organizations.

- 4) The Artist-in-Education (AiE) program, a partnership with the County PTAs, provides grants to place visiting artists in school classrooms to enhance student experiences and skills and meet local and state goals for arts education. In FY20, we awarded \$25,770 to 13 schools.

The CAD, BCAC, and AiE programs must be matched at least 1-to-1 by the grant recipient. The goals of the grant programs are:

- To foster excellence, diversity and vitality in arts offerings for Howard County residents.
- To broaden opportunities for Howard County audiences, artists, and arts organizations.
- To increase the availability of arts activities in Howard County. And,
- To increase awareness of arts.

All grantees are required to submit final reports, which the Arts Council uses to evaluate grant programs, to track attendance and budget figures, and to hold grantees accountable to their request. These FY19 reports show that community interest and support, in terms of participation, is very strong – 284,000 attended arts events sponsored, in part, through County funds and 97,000 volunteer hours, valued at \$2.4 million, were donated. We also provided opportunities for 9,600 artists through these grant programs. NOTE: Any FY20 CAD and AIE returned/unused funds were awarded to county arts organizations as Emergency Relief funds in FY21. The Arts Council also assisted the County in administering CARES ACT funding through 39 HoCo RISE Artists Relief grants and 7 HoCo RISE Arts Organization Relief grants totalling \$100,000.

In addition to the grants program, the proposed budget provides funds to support the Arts Council's other principle program, the 32,000 square foot multi-purpose Howard County Center for the Arts in Ellicott City. At the Center, we sponsor year-round classes, art exhibits in our galleries, and performances in the community black box

theatre. We also provide low-cost studios for 14 visual artists, office space for 3 resident arts groups, and meeting space for 6 volunteer run groups that participate in our Arts Advancement Program. Pre-COVID-19 (FY19), 38,725 people visited the Center and we provided opportunities for 4,190 artists students to showcase their work. Whether they take a class, view an exhibit, drop in a studio, or enjoy a performance in the black box theatre, the Center provides rewarding experiences in the arts for people of all ages and from all walks of life.

Funds we receive from the County also support county-wide initiatives, such as, our on-line arts calendar, ARTsites, a partnership with 12 sites throughout the County to place sculptures in public spaces for one year, as well as free community-based arts activities for underserved audiences, such as our Head StART in ART program.

Head StART in ART is a model artist-in-residence program for preschoolers from low-income families that has been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Maryland State Arts Council as an exemplary early childhood arts program. This program introduces 100-150 children to practicing artists and provides them with experiences and training in the arts that would otherwise not take place. Each residency is designed to provide age-appropriate activities that complement Head Start's curriculum and reinforce core life and learning skills that are needed for future success. This program is free to participants. It received the John W. Holland Service Award from the Community Action Council in 2011. Cuts to the Arts Council budget would cause us to reduce or eliminate free public programs such as this and limit free public access to the arts.

Cuts would also adversely affect the groups that receive County funding through the Arts Council's grant programs. Local treasures, such as the Columbia Orchestra, the Columbia Festival of the Arts, and HoCoPoLitSo rely on these grants to meet their day-to-day operational needs. Unrestricted funds for general operations are rare, the Arts Council, through its grant from the County, is one of the only sources of such support. As mentioned earlier, the operations of the non-profit arts groups, both large and small,

are extremely fragile – any cuts to the arts budget will have a negative impact on our local arts groups, our community, and the people we serve.

In addition to the economic impact mentioned earlier, the arts impact our daily lives in other tangible ways. Numerous independent studies from the academic, arts, business, law enforcement, medical and technology fields confirm that the arts are an effective means to address a wide variety of issues and challenges in our community such as:

1) Workforce Development

Early encouragement and training in the arts help students develop core life and social skills that lead to future success, both academically and in the work place. To quote educator, Paul Lehman, “A lot of what is taught in schools suggests that there are correct and incorrect answers – as evidenced by the use of multiple choice and true/false questions. In the real world, questions are not posed that way.” He goes on to say that the academic, business, and public sectors say today’s graduates are not prepared to keep our workforce competitive in the new global economy. This is supported by the Conference Board study cited earlier. In order to be competitive and address real-life circumstances, employers need people who can do more than check off an answer from a prepared list of options or people who have only been taught what is tested - they need people who are able to make independent, complex judgments and decisions. The arts, by their very nature, teach people to seek multiple interpretations and solutions, weigh options and think critically. They also teach us how to be more tolerant and open.

In order to attract and maintain a creative workforce, greater emphasis on arts education and practice is needed in our schools and communities.

2) Education

The contributions the arts make to academic success are well documented, I will take this opportunity to cite two important studies. First, a report from the College Board Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers, which has been tracking tests for decades, shows that students who studied the arts or music for

four or more years, on average, score 93 points better on their SAT scores than students with just one-half year of arts or music.¹⁴ Second, is a study from UCLA that followed a sample of 25,000 American high school students over a ten-year period. The results of this study show that students who studied the arts had higher grades, scored better on standardized tests, had lower dropout rates, and were more active in community affairs than other students. In addition, it found that students from disadvantaged families who studied the arts improved their overall school performance more rapidly than other students.¹⁵

While studying the arts, students hone their perceptual, analytic and interpretive skills while developing creative thinking, communication and problem-solving abilities – providing them with the critical skills needed to succeed in school and in life.

The arts also provide a common ground for understanding. They facilitate intercultural understanding and provide a common lexicon for building relationships in an increasingly diverse and global society. With the growing number of non-English speaking students enrolling in our public schools, it is important to maintain a strong arts curriculum, one that is integrated with other subjects, in order to connect with non-English speakers and bridge the cultural gap.

And, during this time of distanced learning, some of the most engaging – and successful – on-line content is being developed by art and music teachers.

3) Community Health and Wellness

The arts have a positive impact on community health and wellness. Nearly one-half of the nation's healthcare institutions provide arts programming for patients, families, and staff; 78 percent deliver these programs because of their healing benefits to patients—shorter hospital stays, better pain management, and less medication.¹⁶ Physicians and therapists use visual art, music, dance, and drama

to treat patients with a variety of therapeutic needs. Here, the arts are used to strengthen speech patterns, self-image, and socialization skills; they help patients overcome or reduce physical dysfunction; and music therapy, in particular, has been very successful in treating seniors with Alzheimer's Disease. Military service members and Veterans rank art therapies in the top 4 (out of 40) interventions and treatments.¹⁷ The arts not only help patients cope with loss, isolation, depression, and the effects of mental and physical illnesses, but help families cope as well.

Amid the current COVID-19 public health emergency, people all over the world are increasingly turning to the arts to connect with one another, add perspective to their lives, and help make sense of what is happening world-wide. The arts are providing a solution to help mitigate the sense of hopelessness and dread caused by the stress of prolonged isolation. They provide solace, joy, and therapy that helps safeguard our mental and spiritual health.

The arts provide a means for seniors to remain active and productive in the community as participants, volunteers and audience members. Controlled research by the Center on Aging found that older Americans involved in the arts demonstrated better health, fewer doctor visits, and less medication usage – saving money and improving the quality of life of seniors.¹⁸

As Howard County's special needs and senior populations grow, more programs, such as the Arts Council's Fabulous Fifty+ Players musical theatre program for older adults and the No Boundaries musical theatre program for people with developmental disabilities, will be needed to meet their needs. In addition, infrastructure and specialized training and professional arts service providers are needed to integrate the arts into community health and wellness service delivery systems.

4) Youth At Risk

The arts help at-risk youth. Numerous studies have found that arts education programs can help reduce dropout rates - increasing the retention and engagement rates of students and raising educational attainment levels. Participation in arts programs decreases young people's involvement in delinquent behavior, increases academic outcomes for disadvantaged children, and improves students' attitudes about themselves and their future. Studies by the U.S. Department of Justice demonstrate increased pro-social behavior among adjudicated youth involved with arts programs.¹⁹ Similarly, an evaluation of Core Arts examined the effect of arts programs on adjudicated youth in Mississippi and found that participants in this program made notable improvement in cooperation, self-control, academic performance, interpersonal skills, attitude, and incidence of disruptive or risky behavior.²⁰

As the number of youth-related incidents continues to rise, Howard County may want to explore options to use the arts as a preventative measure or as an alternative teaching method for troubled youth or those suffering from mental health issues.

5) Community Revitalization

The arts are a powerful tool in community development and revitalization. They transform communities into special places by activating declining neighborhoods, bringing people together, creating a welcoming sense of place, and instilling a sense of community pride that is at the core of community building. Urban and cultural planners across the globe have used creative placemaking as a strategy to develop and revitalize cities and neighborhoods. It is a proven strategy that marries arts development with economic development and community development. The process typically starts with artists creating a stabilizing presence -- establishing studios, opening arts spaces, providing community activities in neighborhoods that are in flux. They make art and get involved in organizing community events and festivals. Soon people hear about interesting things happening in that neighborhood and want to see it for themselves. That

foot traffic creates even more buzz - attracting entrepreneurs and businesses who want to invest in the neighborhood. Coffee shops, restaurants, and unique boutiques start popping up. New people are attracted to the neighborhood and choose to move there. Most importantly, the social and economic health of the community is improved - enhancing the well-being of local residents and helping the quality of life and local businesses to “rise” along with the neighborhood.

In closing, as County leaders plan for a future after COVID-19, the arts can be- and should be- part of the solution for economic recovery, academic success, community health, and our own personal wellness. All of us in the arts look forward to working with you to ensure our community remains vital and resilient through this emergency and beyond.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak with you this evening.

¹ *ArtsLink*, Americans for the Arts, Spring 2021.

² Source: Howard County Arts Council Attendance Report for FY19 Grantees, 2019.

² Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and National Endowment for the Arts, <https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/arts-and-culture>, March 2021.

⁴ Source: Americans for the Arts COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on the Arts, <https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/103614>, Americans for the Arts, April 2021.

⁵ *Ready To Innovate*, Conference Board, 2008, cited on www.artsusa.org/information_services/toolkit by Americans for the Arts.

⁶ *America's Leading Creative Class Cities in 2015*, Richard Florida. *City Lab*, The Atlantic Monthly Group, April 20, 2015.

⁷ *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts*, Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet, 2017.

⁸ *Needs Assessment For Arts Facilities*, Howard County, MD, Webb Management Services, 2015, pg 20.

⁹ Source: Howard County Arts Council Revenue Sources for FY18 Grantees, 2018.

¹⁰ *Creative Industries 2017: The State Report*, Americans for the Arts and Dun & Bradstreet, 2017.

¹¹ *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Commerce, 2019.

<https://www.msac.org/publications/fiscal-year-2019-annual-report>

¹² *ArtsVision: State of the Arts in Howard County 2003*, Howard County Arts Council and Vision Howard County, 2003, page 21.

¹³ *Economic Impact of the Arts in Maryland*, Maryland Department of Commerce, 2019.

¹⁴ *2016 College-Bound Seniors: Total Group Profile Report*, The College Board, 2017; analysis by Americans for the Arts, 2018.

¹⁵ *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 76-77.

¹⁶ *2009 State of the Field Report: Arts in Healthcare*, Society for the Arts in Healthcare, 2009.

¹⁷ Source: blog.americansforthearts.org/2017/02/14/top-10-reasons-to-support-the-arts-in-2017.

¹⁸ Source: Americans For the Arts, www.artsusa.org.

¹⁹ Source: Americans For The Arts, www.artsusa.org.

²⁰ *A Study of Model Community Arts Programs*, Howard County Arts Council and the Horizon Foundation, 2002, pp 77-78.

Sayers, Margery

From: DIANE BUTLER <politicodiane@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 9:35 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: budgets

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To the council,

Infrastructure needs to be funded in the budget before any social programs and the outrageous suggestions from the equity task force. Fix the flooding in both watersheds. Do even the simple storm water management fixes that we supposedly have no money for (a curb) before any more of this social nonsense. Tax payers have entrusted you with this job. Please, do it.

Diane Butler

Sayers, Margery

From: Cynthia Monahan <cmonahanshop@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 8:28 AM
To: CouncilMail

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I strongly urge you to vote for the long overdue senior center;I feel the older village centers should have been given a nicer center first.

Sayers, Margery

From: Pam Ecker Interiors <interiorsbypam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 7:58 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: DANGEROUS DECISION!!! NO TO THE NORTH COLUMBIA FIRE STATION!!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Council Members,

Cedar Lane Park East provides immense value to the county. Losing the park to a fire station will cause serious safety issues by increasing the traffic on Route 108, environmental concerns for the local wildlife and increase in impervious surfaces, and light and noise pollution for neighboring constituents.

I HAVE BEEN A RESIDENT OF COLUMBIA FOR 53 YEARS and have lived on Cottonwood Way for 28 years. This stretch of Rt. 108, between Harpers Farm Rd. and U.S. Route 29, is the narrowest and most busy section of road in comparison to the segments to the east and west. There is no shoulder for cars to pull over and depending on the time of the day, this road is virtually a parking lot. With 11 ingress and egress points within 1,200 feet of the proposed location of the fire station, including the lone exits for surrounding neighborhoods and the Dar-Al-Taqwa mosque, across the street, this already congested and narrow section of road will only become worse. We also deal with the traffic from Clarks Elliotts Oak Farm which is right down the street.

This proposed location for a new fire station simply does not make sense. When I built my home here on Cottonwood Way in 1993 Rt 108 was a busy road but with all the developments and business that have opened on 108 it is nearly impossible to get out of my street certain times of the day.

You are also removing a valuable and well loved park, disturbing the long-established neighborhoods surrounding the park, but the goal of reducing response times to the area will most certainly be negated by the increased traffic. Why must park land be sacrificed for public safety? These proposed plans do not represent smart development, only a path of least resistance for county officials not interested in serving the communities they are entrusted to serve. I do not support the placement of a fire station in Cedar Lane Park East and urge the Howard County Council members to oppose this plan too.

Thank you,

*Pamela Ecker
10728 Cottonwood Way
Columbia, Md. 21044
District #4*

Sayers, Margery

From: Pam Ecker Interiors <interiorsbypam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 7:49 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: SAVE CEDAR LANE PARK EAST!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Council Members,

I am writing to oppose the building of a fire station and the proposed park changes in Cedar Lane Park East.

The destruction of field 7 for the building of a fire station is the only reason that the Department of Parks and Recreation are considering these so-called "park enhancements" to appease the removal of our precious open space parkland. Our parks are areas to be used by our entire community and I am against the idea of "plasticizing" our parks with artificial turf.

Artificial turf fields are not conclusively safe, with numerous studies noting the dangers of crumb rubber fill (made by shredding used tires), which contain numerous toxic irritants and carcinogenic chemicals. Why would we want our youth exposed to potentially cancer-causing chemicals? Cedar Lane Park is used by a large percentage of families who live in affordable housing. Converting all of Howard County's fields to artificial turf, primarily used by for-profit athletic associations reduces equity in recreational areas, by deprioritizing those who can not afford the expense of participating in them and a major loss of open space for everyone else.

If a family wants to have a picnic or fly a kite, are they supposed to do this on the artificial turf as well? We must choose whether we want Howard County to be a smartly developed place to live with natural beauty, or one covered with plastic and parking lots. Please leave the park alone, find another location for this fire station and Save Cedar Lane Park!!

This park is also home to our precious wildlife who's natural homes are being developed beyond repair. It saddens me as a resident of Columbia for 53 years to see what has become of "COLUMBIA'S OPEN SPACE". There was a time when Rouse was our leader that land was precious and Parks mattered. Now it's as if every inch of land is being developed with no regard to anything except the dollar. IT TRULY SADDENS ME.

Thank you,

PAMELA ECKER
10728 COTTONWOOD WAY
COLUMBIA, MD. 21044
DISTRICT #4

Sayers, Margery

From: Pam Ecker Interiors <interiorsbypam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 7:35 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: SAVE CEDAR LANE PARK EAST!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Council Members,

I am writing to oppose the building of a fire station and the proposed park changes in Cedar Lane Park East.

This is a beloved park that not only the surrounding community enjoys, but many recreational leagues and families throughout Howard County. The removal of two of the few remaining natural grass fields in Howard County is concerning and devastating. Why would the County be willing to prioritize the profits of increased rental revenue over the health and safety of children?

Numerous studies have shown that not only do turf fields cause great environmental detriment (water contamination, non-biodegradable materials, etc.) but they significantly increase the risk for soccer and football related injuries in comparison to natural grass fields and are comprised of many hazardous materials. It increases the severity of abrasions, puts additional stress on joints, and can become dangerously hot in the sun. The fields are used by children of all ages, often as young as 3 years old, just learning to play team sports. Parents should be able to enjoy watching their children play sports and not worry that they are being put unnecessarily at risk.

We should not be subsidizing developers with our precious park land in order for the Howard Hughes Corporation to continue with their Downtown Columbia Plan. Our parks are our backyards, where our children learn to ride a bike, play soccer, see birds and white-tail deer, and enjoy a picnic. We know that once given up to development and torn down for a fire station, the park can never be recreated. Let us not lose Howard County's great legacy of parks through thoughtless destruction of irreplaceable park land for short-term expediency and developer profit.

There are also 12 "Blossoms of Hope" trees on that land that were planted in memory of Cancer Patients. Does the county have no concern for them? Is that what this county has become? Just strip all the land with no concern for nature or memorial trees? I would like to know if any of the families have been contacted that their trees will be cut down and plowed over.

Thank you,

Pam Ecker
10728 Cottonwood Way
Columbia, MD. 21044
410 258-1153

District #4

Sayers, Margery

From: Pam Ecker Interiors <interiorsbypam@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 4, 2021 7:28 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Save Cedar Lane Park East!

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Dr. Ball and Council Members,

I have lived in Howard County for 53 years and have owned a home on Cottonwood Way for 28 years. I am writing to oppose the building of a fire station and the proposed park changes in Cedar Lane Park East. This park provides tremendous value to Columbia, MD and all Howard County residents. Not only will placing a fire station cause increased traffic and danger to those that live directly off of this section of Rt. 108, but also negatively impact your constituents that live in the surrounding communities.

This plan goes against Dr. Ball's words stated during the most recent environmental town hall held on April 29th, 2021, "Prioritize protecting green and open space". Not only is the County proposing to place a fire station in such a congested & unideal location, it is proposing to take away 2 natural fields, replace one with ARTIFICIAL turf, and place a significant amount of impervious surface in that area. Overdevelopment throughout Howard County, including the replacement of natural areas with impervious services, is a serious concern and the loss of habitat and impact on the environment would be significant.

I do not support these changes and would hope that you would stand by your words and commitment to protect green, open space in Howard County. Let's place an emphasis on environmental stewardship.

*Thank you,
Pamela Ecker*

10728 Cottonwood Way

Columbia, MD

District #4

Sayers, Margery

From: Janet Schreiberstein <janet@schreibmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 6:34 PM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: I am opposed to the plans for Cedar Lane Park

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am opposed the these plans.

I live in the community of Beaverbrook, just up the road.

Thank you for taking a close look at these plans and withdrawing them.

Best,

Janet

Janet Schreiberstein crigby@howardcountymd.gov djung@howardcountymd.gov

Sayers, Margery

From: Chris Chlumsky <cabassky@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 12:36 PM
To: Ball, Calvin
Cc: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: North Columbia Fire Station - F5976 and N3108 Systemic improvements - Letter of Opposition from Columbia, MD Resident

Importance: High

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Executive Calvin Ball and members of the Howard County Council Board,

Around the end of September 2020, one of my neighbors of the Cedar Manor development that is immediately next to Cedar Lane Park East, was taking a walk in the park and saw trees taped off as if something was about to be constructed or in the early stages of being built. After just a little internet searching, she had discovered that Howard County DPW was targeting Cedar Lane Park East as a proposed location for the "North Columbia Fire Station" and had let the rest of us know what she discovered and if any of us have heard of this? So myself, as someone who recently moved to the area in 2018, was extremely concerned and troubled by the fact that this has not been communicated to us? I had done extensive research to see how public this actually was simply by googling as much as I could. I did find out that the fire station project, F5976 and N3108 Systemic improvements had been going on for some time but was first consider and presented at the Cedar Lane Park Location to the Howard County Planning Board on April 8th, 2020 during the height of the Covid 19 Pandemic.

<https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhowardcounty.granicus.com%2Fvideos%2F4265%2Fplayer%3Fautoplay%3D1&data=04%7C01%7C%7C5537b084b253450dee9008d8f573c234%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637529224972016176%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=KJfS64sUflkvgMmpPdEjVfaY61TmAj%2Ff8%2FT3TRfaEuo%3D&reserved=0>

The project was headed by a gentleman named Mark Stromdahl, whom is the chief bureau of Facilities, Howard County Department of Public Works. If you listen to the meeting, Mark was asked questions concerning communication to the residents of the area and said "we haven't heard anything from them" and assumed that everyone was ok with the project in this area, also continued to say that "there aren't many residents in this area anyway", meaning that was ok. When I heard these words, I was devastated that Howard County was dismissive of its own residents but fact that no one, and I repeat no one had reached out to the residents of this area directly. Some thoughts that came to mind is that the project leads were using the covid environment to sweep a project beneath our feet without us knowing for the simple fact that we would be against this. Fortunately, led by council member Deb Jung, the project was placed into contingency status until further information was communicated to the public, such as a public meeting virtually. Around June 2020, I pulled a public letter from County Executive Calvin Ball to Deb Jung:

The County Executive of Howard County states: “Contrary to characterizations by some, the North Columbia Fire Station project has been supported by a robust and extensive public outreach process” **This is a flat out Lie!** And what is even more so troubling is this is our representative that the community has elected to represent us. I immediately posted on Nextdoor.com stating “concerned residents – North Columbia Fire Station”, more so to get the word out asking if anyone has heard anything remotely to what is going on?? Some posted that a little notification was given with a small posted sign on the opposite end of the park, not even remotely close to where the fire station will be built. Nothing was posted on Cedar Lane Park East and if I may add in the middle of a pandemic, where all of us are asked to stay home and not go out into public as to not catch or spread the virus. After reaching out to my neighbors, I thought it would be good idea to place a petition together (<https://www.change.org/SaveCedarLaneParkEast>) to get as many signatures as possible and I compiled as much information as I could at the time pertaining to the devalue of homes, the loss of a natural resourced park, the extremely dangerous conditions of the traffic along the most narrow strip of 108 where we have experienced so many accidents and traffic congestion, the loss of wildlife where sirens would scare away deer, geese, foxes and families of owls in addition to the toxic materials that are brought back from the residue accumulated on the fire trucks from fighting chemical and hazardous fires that will run off after washing into the neighboring retaining pond located below the park that my house is next to. I myself, as a cyclist was biking along 108 and had gotten both scraped by the side view mirror of a car and then the vehicle had the nerve to honk at me. My neighbors have experienced road rage as they are trying to make a left turn into our development on top of a recent vital accident happened on March 29, 2021 where a SUV rammed right into a telephone poll and knocked it over. Fortunately the driver survived. This is where they want to build the fire station.

I continued to reach out to representatives of the Harpers Choice HOA, emailed the council members, the project leads, etc, you name it, only to get dismissive responses such as “this has been going on for a while and you can’t stop it”. Deb Jung is the representative of our district and her team had gotten back to me saying that the project leads need to do a community outreach that should happen at the end of December 2020. So it actually didn’t happen until March 25th, 2021. At this meeting which was facilitated by Kim Pruium, “Director of Constituent Services and Community Partnerships, Office of Calvin Ball”, Mark Stromdahl and the Fire chiefs whom presented the project to the community, saying how this location would save 2 mins of time and save so many lives. However, we now were told, they are building pickleball courts, an artificial turf field with Stadium Lighting, Press Box for calling games that in turn the lights will be on until 10:30 to 11pm. This completely shocked us, so now we are not only dealing with the Fire Station but Lighting Pollution, even more sound pollution, further destruction of a natural open space park. So our little community park is being turned into a large commercial recreational devastation. At the end of the meeting, they allowed anywhere from 15 to 20 mins for questions. The first question came from the head of the pickleball association of Howard County, in the back of my head, how did he find out about this?? And we, the residents are finding about it on the spot. There were 2 more questions from participants that were clearly designed and programmed by the people who present the project taking away time and questions from those of us who are hearing about this for the first time. Once they finally got to our questions from the community, we asked such questions as, has there been a traffic study done? The answer was “no”, has there been a study done with the lights, etc as the answers continued as “no” So the 2 mins Fire Chiefs and medical responders want to save can easily be negated with the traffic congestions. So after this meeting we found out so much more, as these **artificial (not natural)** fields will now be only 40 feet from the Eliot Oaks houses that will now look onto strangers, have stadium lights in their backyard, glaring into the windows of their children as they are trying to sleep to wake up for school the next day and have an announcer calling plays on a loud speaker directly into the back of their homes. If I may add, we have experienced vandalism, small theft, overflow of parking into our development

and even our neighbors who border the park have had people urinating into their backyards. We even have residents whom have special need children for the which the sounds of sirens, game announcing and lights will trigger epileptic spasms. Please tell me how this is going to benefit our community? We already have fire stations located in the proximity of 1.5 miles to 3.8 miles from this Park?

I've recently made contact with the residents in Elkrige where a fire station went forward that stripped away acres of forest land and erected a commercial Fire station that does not fit into the community causing traffic congestion and was even pointed out to myself that residents have to now sleep with earplugs because of the sirens. There is a generator that is constantly running, not only throughout the day but at night too. They have Food Truck Fridays that causes incredible congestion, a digital sign that disturbs the historical environment of the community and even reported that many residents have moved out of the area due to all this disturbance.

Howard County is not doing the community outreach, us the residents are the ones doing the outreach, the research, finding our own answers to our questions with dismissive responses from the office of Calvin Ball and his team. The petition now has over 800 signers and by the time this gets to you it might even be more. We will continue to fight this.

Petition:

<https://www.change.org/SaveCedarLaneParkEast>

Informational Link:

Savecedarlanepark.com

Regards,

Chris Chlumsky

Proud Cedar Manor and Columbia, MD Resident.

Sayers, Margery

From: Peter Mattejat <pmattejat@mdta.state.md.us>
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 11:39 AM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Ililly
Subject: Project D1164 - EcoWorks Funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am reaching out to you in support for **project D1164** in the Howard County Executive's capital budget for Howard EcoWorks' workforce development and environmental programming. Howard EcoWorks is a vital resource for the County that is dependent on this funding to continue their important work. They benefit our community through the administration of Green Jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public environmental infrastructure, and rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Department. These efforts have direct benefits to our community and represent a cost-effective investment in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations. Based on my experience with Howard EcoWorks, they are providing effective leadership in achieving environmental sustainability. Thank you very much for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Peter Mattejat

7131 Pindell School Road

Fulton, MD 20759

Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy – Advisory Committee member



Peter Mattejat, PE

Environmental Manager

Maryland Transportation Authority

Office of Engineering & Construction

Environmental Division

300 Authority Drive Baltimore, MD 21222

410-537-7874

pmattejat@mdta.state.md.us

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Sayers, Margery

From: Susan Scott <smcgscott@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 2, 2021 9:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: funding for the East Columbia center

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I am a member of the tai chi community at the East Columbia center, and I do live in Howard County, but in the western area and so I am familiar with the center in Glenwood. The disparity between that center and the East Columbia center is quite evident, and I believe an embarrassment to the county. I have also participated in activities in the Ellicott City center, which also is so much nicer than the center in East Columbia. Since the East Columbia center serves more black and brown people than any other facility in the county, it leads me to think that this is yet another example of racial inequity in funding. There is basically only 1 room for classes in East Columbia, and folks have been turned away from taking tai chi there because of lack of space. The room is so small that we can't learn certain forms, such as sword form, because of space limitations. When the pandemic hit, the enthusiasm for tai chi did not abate, and we continued learning on zoom and weather permitting, outside in the parking lot, masked and 6 feet apart. I am certain that when this new center is finally built, classes of all types will be quickly filled.

The East Columbia center is shovel ready, with money available from the state and budgeted by our county. Folks in that area have waited for 20 years for their turn for an adequate center. Please do the right thing and give the citizens in that part of Howard County and our tai chi community funding for this facility.

Sincerely,

Susan Scott

2346 Adam David Way

Marriottsville, MD 21104

Sayers, Margery

From: Katherine Schnorrenberg <kschnorrenberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 1, 2021 7:05 PM
To: CouncilMail
Cc: Ililly
Subject: letter of support for project D1164

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

May 1, 2021

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I am writing this letter of support for project D1164 in the Howard County Executive's capital budget for Howard EcoWorks' workforce development and environmental programming. Howard EcoWorks has a high impact in our community through the administration of green jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public infrastructure, leadership for achieving environmental sustainability, and rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept. These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a cost-effective investment in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development.

I can personally attest to the work of Howard EcoWorks in my role as the Junior Warden at St. Peter's Episcopal Church. We have hired their team to do maintenance projects on our property and the results have been really outstanding. We have also partnered with Howard EcoWorks on a biochar project as part of trying to find new and innovative ways to help with flooding in Old Ellicott City. I believe that Howard EcoWorks has a vital and important role in our Community in continuing to improve our waterways in the watershed. As we approach flood season and the anniversaries of both the 2016 and 2018 Ellicott City Floods recognize that the work of Howard EcoWorks is crucial.

Please continue to fund their very important work.

Regards,
Katherine Schnorrenberg
Junior Warden
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
and Columbia Resident

Sayers, Margery

From: dbgmsw2@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Denise Bruskin-Gambrell <dbgmsw2@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 1, 2021 6:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022 Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Denise Bruskin-Gambrell
10761 Cordage Walk Columbia, MD 21044-3647 dbgmsw2@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: CeCe McCullough <cecemccullough@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 1, 2021 6:02 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: East Columbia 50 + Center

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

Two of your colleagues have expressed their agreement with the construction of a Senior Center in our community. We are asking you to Vote Yes for this project to be fully funded.

No senior citizen should be overlook because of where they reside.

Sincerely,

CeCe McCullough

CeCe McCullough, Realtor

Weichert Realtors, McKenna & Vane

5850 Waterloo Road #140

Columbia , MD 21045

cecemccullough@gmail.com

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.cecesellshomes7.com%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cmsayers%40howardcountymd.gov%7Cd9e6668890da4b93d33c08d90cecb362%7C0538130803664bb7a95b95304bd11a58%7C1%7C0%7C637555033034456661%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQljoiv2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikk1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&data=ANGLISf2E1O5R4NZQL%2B5cqNdQfmIccGfzQsRfmx0BNg%3D&reserved=0>

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(410)294-1582

Sayers, Margery

From: Alison Hickman <alisonhickman@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 11:19 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: East Columbia Senior Center

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear County Council,

Please fully fund the East Columbia Senior Center -as a proud OM graduate, my parents still live in Owen Brown, and my dad in particular enjoys going to the senior centers across the county to use the facilities. It would be great to have one close to him for him and his neighbors to use.

Thank you for considering and for your continued service to our community and willingness to consider this feedback!

Alison Hickman
6454 Red Keel
Columbia, MD 21044

Sent from my iPad

Sayers, Margery

From: trombonegeek07@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Annalisse Daly
<trombonegeek07@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 8:35 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022
Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Annalisse Daly
10603 Delfield Ct Laurel, MD 20723-1270 trombonegeek07@yahoo.com

Sayers, Margery

From: Heather Gaetano <hfgaetano@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 6:40 PM
To: CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jung, Deb
Cc: Lilly
Subject: Please Support Howard EcoWorks

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I write in support of project D1164 in the Howard County Executive's capital budget for Howard EcoWorks' workforce development and environmental programming. I have the privilege of knowing Lori Lilly and a number of her team members and am so very grateful for their passion and energy to take ecological care of this county we all love.

Howard EcoWorks has a high impact in our community through the administration of green jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public infrastructure, leadership for achieving environmental sustainability, and rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept.

These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a cost-effective investment in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development.

I appreciate that there are endless well intentioned requests for county funding and you have the difficult job of weighing them all and making tough decisions. I ask that you continue to fund this exceptional organization and their good work that benefits all of us. Thank you for your good and hard work.

Sincerely yours,

Heather Gaetano
3534 Church Road
Ellicott City, MD 21043
hfgaetano@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: ageary2@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Anne Brinker <ageary2@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 5:45 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022 Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Anne Brinker
18323 Chelsea Knolls Dr Mount Airy, MD 21771-3710 ageary2@hotmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: william.a.beck@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of William Beck
<william.a.beck@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 5:19 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022 Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget. This is an issue that is important to me since facilities that enable safe biking and walking make for a much more livable community.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
William Beck
17719 Foxmoor Dr Foxmoor Drive Woodbine, MD 21797-7935 william.a.beck@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: Sally Stunkel <sstunk@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 17, 2021 9:40 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: East Senior Center funding

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To Members of the County Council,

Please vote to support full funding of the East Columbia 50+ Center project! Our center as does not contain all the people and activities offered there and we often have to spill out into the library, which makes no one happy. There are too many senior citizens in Columbia to deny us a larger Center.

Please take us seriously.

Sincerely,



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.

www.avast.com

Sayers, Margery

From: jtm52480@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Jacquelin McCoy <jtm52480@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 3:27 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022 Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jacquelin McCoy
6224 April Brook Cir Columbia, MD 21045-7400 jtm52480@yahoo.com

Sayers, Margery

From: diborak7@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Vera Kuma <diborak7@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 11:52 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022 Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Vera Kuma
9704 Softwater Way Columbia, MD 21046-1820 diborak7@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: tkpeguese@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tiffani Peguese
<tkpeguese@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 11:36 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022 Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Tiffani Peguese
10362 Lombardi Dr Ellicott City, MD 21042-2150 tkpeguese@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: socworker20783@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Sandra Anderson
<socworker20783@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 10:58 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022
Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sandra Anderson
10511 Tolling Clock Way Columbia, MD 21044-2216 socworker20783@yahoo.com

Sayers, Margery

From: Irina Chirtoaca Chlumsky <i.chirtoaca@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 10:00 AM
To: Ball, Calvin; CouncilMail; Walsh, Elizabeth; Jones, Opel; Rigby, Christiana; Jung, Deb; Yungmann, David
Subject: Concerns regarding North Columbia Fire Station at Cedar Lane Park

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear council members,

My name is Irina Chlumsky, and I am a resident of Cottonwood Way.

I watched the Capital Budget Work session, and I would like to thank you for listening to all of us that testified against the North Columbia Fire Station.

I cannot tell you how grateful I felt that officials (very few at this point) are understanding the severity of the issue that the residents surrounding Cedar Lane Park are facing at this time.

Watching the work session has revived the awful experience that I had while attending the online March 25th, 2021 meeting. The responsible county specialists (Public Works and Fire Rescue) were very vague on the process and I do not have faith that a due process is being followed. I still feel the same even after your pressing questions during the Budget Session were answered just as vague by the Public Works and Fire rescue representatives.

I understand that you are all extremely busy and that this topic is one of many on your extensive list. You might though get a better idea of how frustrating this is for Cottonwood residents if you watch the actual meeting from March 25th, 2021. Reading the notes of the meeting will not convey what transpired in the meeting because most of the notes are just simply incorrect. So, when Howard County officials, specialists, and employees, refer to that meeting as "doing their job and following the process" they are referring to the doctored notes that are now posted online and not to the actual meeting.

I heard several times that the reason why the park was chosen over other locations was because Open Space funds were not involved, but why does the sign at the entrance of the park say: **CEDAR LANE PARK, Assisted by Program Open Space**???. As far as I understand, other parks or locations were not an option for the Fire Station because of these Open Space funds. Why is it ok then to destroy this park? Is this park not financed by taxpayer's/residents' money?

The Fire Station Chief mentioned that he has had experience in the past dealing with 500 unhappy residents, but what is important here is that the number is growing as residents are just now finding out about the plans of location for the Fire Station at Cedar Lane Park. And let us not forget that the unhappy 500 residents and growing-these are 500 hard working residents that are paying very high income and property taxes. Many of us did not spare using their lifetime savings in buying a house here, with me being one of them.

Here is the link to the petition with **over 750 people** now against the North Columbia Fire station current proposed location.

<https://www.change.org/p/county-executive-calvin-ball-prevention-of-cedar-lane-park-east-proposed-fire-station-location>

I immigrated to the United States about 10 years ago and since then my goal was to live the American dream. To me moving to Howard County and being a homeowner was a top priority. I worked extremely hard to save money, and

move to a well-respected, highly desirable, and most important very quiet and peaceful neighborhood. My dream was crushed when I found out that a Fire Station is supposed to be built next to my street and replace our well-loved neighborhood park.

And I do not appreciate when the Fire Station representatives are talking about organizing Block Parties at the Fire Station as a benefit to the residents. I live here, after a long and hard day at work, I want to enjoy the peace of my home and the beauty of my backyard. This peace is being taken away from me. The firefighters are going home after work to rest, where should I go after work???? I am going to be **next to a Fire Station dealing with noise, with the dangers of traffic on Route 108, with the screams of those that are attending the turf field and pickleball courts. How is this FAIR to the hard-working Howard county taxpayer?**

I believe the Fire Chief said that they obey the state law regarding the noise, that really does nothing for the residents in this situation. All it means we are going to hear the loud sirens because of the proximity to the Fire Station which is by the way as loud as a concert at Merriweather. Again, the firefighters go home after work, we the residents live here so saying that the Fire Station must obey the State Law about noise does absolutely nothing for us!!!

I have personally experienced several close calls and road rage from other drivers when exiting or entering Cottonwood Way. **Route 108 is the only exit/entrance for Cottonwood Way.** The spot is extremely dangerous, as there's only one way in each direction, no shoulders and the spot sits on a small hill, so most of the cars are very slow to react when a car tries to make a left to turn into Cottonwood Way. This is even more dangerous on Fridays when there is a lot of traffic due to our neighboring Mosque and on weekends when the grass fields are used at Cedar Lane Park. Where is this going to go when you add Fire trucks, and hundreds of more daily visitors to Cedar lane Park? It is my understanding that additional parking is not being added, so where are all those people going to park when they finally can enter the park after sitting in traffic?

At the March 25th meeting we were being told that the Fire Station needs to be at Cedar lane Park to respond 2 minutes quicker and save lives. **Do our lives not matter?** How are you saving other lives when you are directly endangering so many that must drive up and down Route 108????

The last but not the least concern is that so many trees, animals and birds are going to be permanently misplaced. I would like to invite you to observe the water drainage on a rainy day in our neighborhood. The stream that runs just a couple hundred feet away from where the Fire Station will be, gets a tremendous amount of water. What would happen when you remove the grass fields and add a Fire Station whose trucks will bring hazardous materials back? How are you going to prevent the hazardous material from getting into the neighboring backyards? We as residents just don't know because an environmental study has not been performed and shared with us; and to quote the actual answer that we were given in respect to this matter during the shameful meeting on March 25th, 2021 (you will have to listen to the recording) "It should not be a problem". The Public Works representative mentioned that everything will be built to the code regarding the environment next to the proposed Fire Station, but how do you control the power of the rain and the wind? When the toxins that the trucks bring back are blown into our yards and washed into the stream at the bottom of the Park?

Trees donated in memory of the cancer victims at the park will be replaced. Well in my opinion and seeing someone dying of cancer I think It is very cold hearted to replace a memory of someone that died of cancer.

I am pleading with the Howard County Officials, PLEASE insist on finding another and most important SUITABLE location for the North Columbia Fire Station. Howard County residents deserve a fair, respectful, and most important due process. Please do not allow county employees to bully us into this Fire Station and Park permanent changes.

Sincerely,

Irina Chlumsky

Cottonwood Way,

Columbia, MD 21044

Sayers, Margery

From: s v <savoith@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021 9:09 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Please...

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Please vote FOR FUNDING the new East Columbia 50+ Center now.

Let's get this project's funding finalized. It won't get any cheaper if put off and the senior population will not be getting smaller as time goes by.

Sandra and James Voith

Sayers, Margery

From: carlazelaya@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Carla Zelaya
<carlazelaya@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 9:50 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Preserve \$5.37 Million in County Funds for Bicycle & Pedestrian Projects in FY 2022 Proposed Budget

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I am writing to urge you to protect the \$5.375 million in funding for bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects in the proposed FY 2022 capital budget.

I know the county is facing tough budget decisions this year due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the importance of investing in our public health has never been clearer. We must continue to make progress in our biking and walking infrastructure to build and improve sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, crosswalks and more so everyone in our community has opportunities to bike, walk and access important services.

Without full funding of these important projects that will provide tangible benefits to residents' lives, such as K5035 in Elkridge and K5066 along Oakland Mills Road, Howard County will ultimately fall short of its complete streets vision. Howard County must fulfill its promise to create safer and accessible opportunities for biking and walking and position our community for a multi-modal future. Now is the time to invest in projects that will improve our public health, as well as safety and accessibility.

The proposed funding will make walking and biking in Howard County better, easier and safer, as well as make our community more age-friendly. I urge you to protect this funding in the final budget to improve our bike and pedestrian infrastructure for everyone in Howard County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Carla Zelaya
5356 Iron Pen Pl Columbia, MD 21044-1811 carlazelaya@gmail.com

Sayers, Margery

From: Bill Withers <wwithers@rocketmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 3:12 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Howard EcoWorks

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I currently volunteer as the board co-chair for Howard EcoWorks. We are extremely grateful for the moral and financial support you have given us, and are proud of our contributions to the County through the administration of green jobs programming, support services for the County's Safe and Sound Plan, maintenance of public infrastructure, leadership for achieving environmental sustainability, and rehabilitation programming at the Corrections Dept. These efforts have direct benefits to our community as a whole and represent a cost-effective investment in our local natural resources, public safety, career-readiness for young adults and disadvantaged populations, and overall economic development.

We are still a young organization and while Lori and the team are expert in securing grant funds, the budgeted grant in the County budget is a cornerstone that we count on and build on every year. The ROI of flood prevention and the training and development of Howard County's residents is clear. Thanks again for your continued support.

Please contact me if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

Bill Withers
Board Co-Chair
Howard EcoWorks

443-878-7030

Sayers, Margery

From: YALE STENZLER <stenzler@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 8:04 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support Full Funding of the East Columbia 50+ Center
Attachments: unnamed.jpg

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

4/15/2021

To Members of the County Council,

My wife and I are over 75 years old and have lived in Howard County for almost 50 years. We attend and participate in Tai Chi classes at the 50+ East Columbia Center. Although we live on the West side of Columbia we have taken classes at the East Columbia Center for over three years. There are many individuals in our classes that are from all over Howard County, not just Columbia.

Now that County Executive Ball has put \$5.5 million in his budget and the Maryland State legislature has approved a \$1 million bond initiative toward fully funding the new East Columbia 50+ Center, **we need the support of the entire County Council.**

Please vote to support full funding of the East Columbia 50+ Senior Center, so that work can begin as soon as possible .

Sincerely,

Yale Stenzler
10001 Windstream Drive, Unit # 707
Columbia, MD 21044



Sayers, Margery

From: Carol Powell <carol.powell83@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 8:00 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support Full Funding of the East Columbia 50+ Center

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To Members of the County Council, Please vote to support full funding of the East Columbia 50+ Center project!

Sincerely,

*Carol Powell
6118 Trotter Ridge Ct
Columbia 21044*

Make Today's Dream Tomorrow's Reality

Today



Tomorrow



Fully Fund

The New East Columbia

1/3 of HoCo residents are S

Sayers, Margery

From: PC Segawa <pcsegawa@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 7:55 AM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Support Full Funding of the East Columbia 50+ Center

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Make Today's Dream Tomorrow

Today



Tomorrow



Fully Fund

The New East Columbia

1/3 of HoCo residents are S

To Members of the County Council,

Please vote to support full funding of the East Columbia 50+ Center project!

Sincerely,
Pamela Segawa
Stanley Segawa
6390 Windharp Way
Columbia, MD 21045