

Greater Highland Bike Route Map

Charlotte Williams [lutton@prodigy.net]

Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2016 5:21 PM

To: CouncilMail; Knight, Karen; Clay, Mary

Cc: Dan O'Leary [DanielOL@aol.com]; Sue Scheidt [psscheidt@verizon.net]; Charlotte Williams [lutton@prodigy.net]

Attachments: GHCA bike map.jpg (350 KB)

It has been brought to my attention that the map may not have conveyed to all in my earlier communication. Therefore I am attaching it to this follow-up. I hope this will be helpful in your forthcoming session.

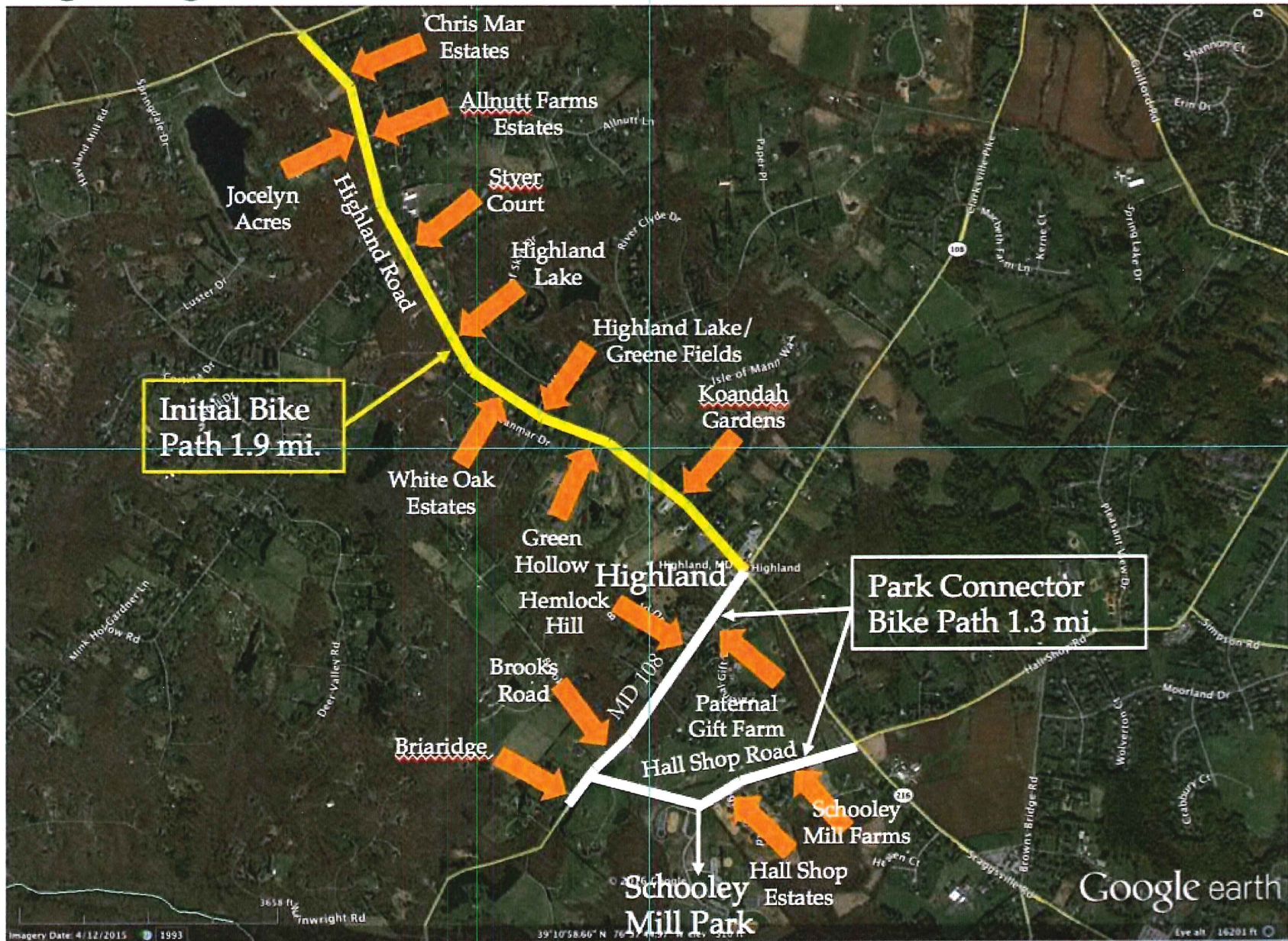
Sincerely,

Charlotte Williams

President

Greater Highland Crossroads Association

The following **fifteen communities** shown below will be safely connected to each other as well as having safe access to shopping and “meeting and greeting” at our Crossroads, and recreational activities at our park:



Comments Regarding GPA 2016-01 - Growth Tiers Designation

krschwa1@verizon.net

Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2016 4:38 PM
To: PlanningBoard
Cc: CouncilMail; Kittleman, Allan
Attachments: MOS P&Z Tiers HowCo.doc (125 KB)

Dear Howard County Planning Board:

Please find attached the detailed comments of the Maryland Ornithological Society and Howard County Bird Club (a chapter of MOS) on the proposed amendment to Plan 2030 known as : GPA 2016-01 - Growth Tiers Designation.

Please enter this letter into the record.

Kurt R. Schwarz
Conservation Chair
Maryland Ornithological Society
www.mdbirds.org
Howard County Bird Club
www.howardbirds.org
9045 Dunloggin Ct.
Ellicott City, MD 21042
krschwa1@verizon.net
410-461-1643

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.



April 7, 2016
9045 Dunloggin Court
Ellicott City, MD 21042
krschwal@verizon.net
410-461-1643

Howard County Planning Board
Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning
3430 Courthouse Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043
planningboard@howardcountymd.gov

RE: GPA 2016-01 - Growth Tiers Designation

Dear Members of the Planning Board:

The Maryland Ornithological Society and its Howard County chapter, the Howard County Bird Club, oppose the Amendment to the General Plan as proposed on February 18, 2016, and modified on March 23. While the revised March proposal represents an apparent big improvement over the proposal of January, this would still open up 2,181 acres currently protected under Tier IV to potential large scale development. Almost 300 more homes would be permitted in western Howard County if this proposal were to be enacted. While it is asserted that areas downgraded to Tier III would still enjoy protection from development under RC and RR zoning and the Adequate Public Facility Ordinance, we have observed that zoning in Howard County is subject to change, and we are not convinced this will serve to adequately restrain development. It should be noted also that some the owners of some properties currently in the Agricultural Land Preservation Program (which fall under Tier IV) have sought to remove those lands from the program. Thus, the amount of land protected by Tier IV designation could shrink even further. The assertion that the county's housing allocations will allow orderly and predictable planning is also suspect, as it turns planning over to the marketplace, which is not sensitive to environmental concerns.

The Amendment contradicts two of the initiatives of Plan 2030, specifically the Environmental Protection initiative and Resource Protection initiative. Under Environmental Protection, implementation of the Watershed Implementation Plan would be compromised by large developments on septic systems. Recent studies have shown that even low density development in rural areas can contribute significant amounts of nitrogen to the Chesapeake Bay.ⁱ According to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), upgraded nitrogen-removing septic systems can cut a system's nitrogen output in half, but over 13 pounds of nitrogen per year per system will still be released into the ground water flowing ultimately into the Bay. MDE provides grants of upgraded septic systems only for systems within 1,000 feet of tidal watersⁱⁱ, which would exclude Howard County. Howard County-based septic systems as a source of nitrogen in the Bay grew by 15,000 pounds between 2012 and 2013, after remaining steady at

about 75,000 lbs. from 2007 until 2012.ⁱⁱⁱ This amount would only grow with the increased development, that would be permitted under the amendment proposed to Plan 2030.

Furthermore, increased impervious surfaces and associated runoff from large developments would further imperil efforts to clean up the Bay. Impervious surfaces covering as little as 10% can lead to stream degradation and loss of fish and larvae.^{iv}

Under Resource Conservation, protecting the land and character of the Rural West would become problematic in the face of large developments, which would be permitted under the proposed expanded area of Tier III. The Plan 2030 Tier IV areas largely fall within the Upper Patuxent Rural Legacy Area, established in 2007.^v The Rural Legacy Program “was created in 1997 to protect large, contiguous tracts of Maryland’s most precious cultural and natural resource lands through grants made to local applicants.” The Upper Patuxent Rural Legacy Area consists of 11,201 acres, and “builds upon established private, county, and state preservation programs. By protecting several groundwater resources and feeder systems, water quality of the Patuxent River is improved. Land protection in the Area creates contiguous tracts of preserved farms and environmentally sensitive lands.”^{vi} Large scale development allowed under the Amendment to Plan 2030 would be incompatible with the Rural Legacy Area, which has been on the books for over eight years now. It could also endanger funding provided by the Rural Legacy program.

Howard County’s seal depicts a shock of wheat, a hand plow, and a harrow, with rolling hills in the background.^{vii} Such landscapes serve as habitat to a suite of birds, such as Vesper Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark, which continue to experience precipitous declines due to loss of habitat, in part due to suburban sprawl^{viii}, which the amendment would encourage. Massive development in western Howard County would be inconsistent with the image depicted on the County seal, and also be deleterious to the continued presence in Howard County of such the above-mentioned pasture birds.

In spite of our opposition to the Amendment, we also feel that a means must be found to compensate property owners for their loss of property value and equity, and encourage developing a means of compensation. But we believe that the rural character of western Howard County should not be sacrificed, nor should pollution in the Chesapeake Bay be allowed to increase, in order to compensate property owners for any loss in value.

For these reasons, MOS and Howard County Bird Club believe the Amendment is not in the best interest of the citizens of Howard County and the Bay. We urge the County to preserve this landscape, deemed precious enough to enshrine in the County Seal, and protect it from massive development of the irreplaceable pasture habitat of many and diverse plants and wildlife.

Sincerely,

Kurt R. Schwarz
Conservation Chair
Maryland Ornithological Society

Robin Todd

President
Howard County Bird Club

CC: Howard County Council (councilmail@howardcountymd.gov), Howard County Executive (akittleman@howardcountymd.gov)

ⁱ Shields, et al, Streamflow distribution of non-point source nitrogen export from urban-rural catchments in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, *Waster Resources*, #44.

ⁱⁱ Maryland's Nitrogen-Reducing Septic Upgrade Program, Maryland Department of the Environment,
<http://mde.maryland.gov/programs/water/bayrestorationfund/onsitedisposalsystems/pages/water/cbwrf/index.aspx>

ⁱⁱⁱ Causes of Nitrogen Pollution, Howard County, Maryland BayStat, 2014,
<http://baystat.maryland.gov/causes-of-the-problems-map/>

^{iv} USEPA Office of Water Recovery Potential Screening Website, Watershed Percent Impervious Cover, 09.01/2011, <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-11/documents/rp2wshedimperv1109.pdf>

^v Upper Patuxent Rural Legacy Area Map, 2007,
<http://dnr2.maryland.gov/land/Documents/RuralLegacy/UpperPatux.pdf>

^{vi} Maryland's Rural Legacy Areas, Maryland Department of Natural Resources,
<http://dnr2.maryland.gov/land/Pages/RuralLegacy/All-Rural-Legacy-Areas.aspx>

^{vii} Howard County, Maryland, Seal, Maryland Manual On-line, September 29 2015.
<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/36loc/how/seal/html/howseal.html>

^{viii} Grasslands, State of the Birds 2014, <http://www.stateofthebirds.org/habitats/grasslands>

Bicycle Master Plan

Charlotte Williams [lutton@prodigy.net]

Sent: Wednesday, April 06, 2016 1:08 PM**To:** CouncilMail; Knight, Karen; Clay, Mary**Cc:** Dan O'Leary [DanielOL@aol.com]; lutton@prodigy.net

April 6, 2016

By EmailMembers of the County Council
Howard County, Maryland**Re: Bicycle Master Plan**

Dear Members of the Council,

GHCA supports the over all intentions of the Bicycle Master Plan and a Complete Streets policy for Howard County with an amendment that this plan should prioritize a safe bicycle/walking path connecting Highland Road to the Highland Commercial Crossroads then on to Schooley Mill Park. This position was affirmed by vote of the membership and by the newly-elected Board of Directors of GHCA

This modest 3.2-mile bike path proposal shown below will connect 15 neighborhoods, (1. Chris Mar Estates, 2. Jocelyn Acres, 3. Allnutt Farms Estates, 4. Styer Court, 5. Highland Lake, 6. White Oak Estates, 7. Green Hollow, 8. Highland Lake/Greene Fields, 9. Koandah Gardens, 10. Hemlock Hill, 11. Brooks Road, 12. Briaridge, 13. Paternal Gift Farm, 14. Hall Shop Estates and 15. Schooley Mill Farms) for: shopping, meeting and greeting at our commercial crossroads, recreational activities for all ages at the Park, and will connect the residents of these neighborhoods to each other.

In a broader sense, the "Bike Howard 2015 Master Plan" shows Highland as a "Key Bicycling Destination". The many bicyclist which pass through our busy Highland Crossroads today will also benefit from this bicycle path. In the future the Bike Howard Master Plan shows this section of the bicycle/walking path will be part of the established Howard County Master Bike Plan.

The GHCA and the Highland community are looking forward to working with you to provide safe bike path transportation for our children and bikers of all abilities. Please let us know how we can further assist the Council in this important initial funding endeavor.

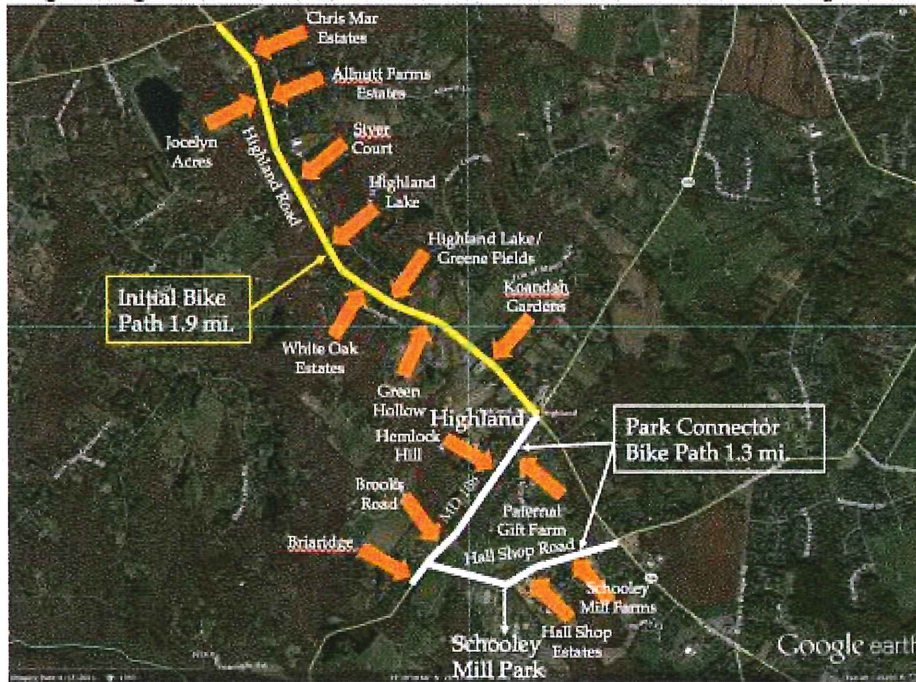
Sincerely yours,

Charlotte Williams

Charlotte Williams
President

Attached: Communities Served Map

The following **fifteen communities** shown below will be safely connected to each other as well as having safe access to shopping and "meeting and greeting" at our Crossroads, and recreational activities at our park:



CR35-2016 Bicycle Master Plan and a Complete Streets policy

Fran Horan [franhoran33@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2016 4:07 PM

To: CouncilMail

Dear County Council Members,

Please approve the Bicycle Master Plan and Complete Streets policy.

We need you to put the county on a path that provides access to active transportation modes to citizens of all levels and abilities. Citizens need this for their personal health and quality of life. Businesses need this to help lower the cost growth curve of their health insurance, to improve worker productivity, and to strengthen their ability to compete nationally in recruiting new hires.

There is no single solution out there that simultaneously addresses such a wide range of problems and goals as active transportation does. Citizens are counting on you to make headway on many issues, and active transportation is a single cost effective tool that makes progress simultaneously on many issues.

Thank you,

Fran Horan
5314 Debbie Ct
Ellicott City

28 years working in the county, and 21 year resident in the county.

Various officer roles in the APL Cycling Club over the past 15 years.

Citizen commenter on the Connecting Columbia project and the county Bike Master Plan development.

Also member of Mid Atlantic Off Road Enthusiasts, and the Ellicott City Morning Ride group.

Re: CR35-2016 Bicycle Master Plan and a Complete Streets policy

Fran Horan [franhoran33@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2016 8:04 PM

To: CouncilMail

Dear County Council,

Thank you !!!!

I'm really looking forward these improvements and the benefits these will bring.

I appreciate your efforts to make life better here for everyone, and how to skillfully hear both sides of issues. I've learned a lot from watching how you do that.

Fran Horan

On Mar 20, 2016 4:07 PM, "Fran Horan" <franhoran33@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear County Council Members,

Please approve the Bicycle Master Plan and Complete Streets policy.

We need you to put the county on a path that provides access to active transportation modes to citizens of all levels and abilities. Citizens need this for their personal health and quality of life. Businesses need this to help lower the cost growth curve of their health insurance, to improve worker productivity, and to strengthen their ability to compete nationally in recruiting new hires.

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5314 Debbie Ct
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28 years working in the county, and 21 year resident in the county.

Various officer roles in the APL Cycling Club over the past 15 years.

Citizen commenter on the Connecting Columbia project and the county Bike Master Plan development.

Also member of Mid Atlantic Off Road Enthusiasts, and the Ellicott City Morning Ride group.

All view bike bridge

Edwin Gould [pottergould@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 5:47 PM

To: CouncilMail

My name is Edwin Gould

I taught ecology over a period of 18 years at Johns Hopkins U. School of Public Health and i worked as a Curator at the Smithsonian Institution for 16 years. I have lived in Allview Estates since 1980.

Year after year development upstream from our neighborhood has enormously degraded the quality of the Little Patuxent River. Failure to deal with down trees and tree trunks have damed the river and caused flooding of houses and the the community.

Because of massive development upstream causing rapid runoff instead of enriching the aquifer..... what was a 50 year flood plain when Allview Estates was created has become a 25 or 15 year floodplain.

Worst of all methods of construction that are compliant with soil erosion control are inadequate either because of standards or because of maintaining those standards. My most recent observation of this was the massive soil erosion flooding off of the development at the corner of Route 32 and Cedar Lane.

Building a bridge across the river will cause devastating back up and subsequent flooding when trees, rocks and stumps pile up at the bridge. I urge you not to build a bridge trail as planned.

Edwin Gould PhD
6505 Carlinda Av.
Columbia Md 21046
310 730 2146