Draft - BICYCLE ADVISORY GROUP (BAG) MINUTES
January 11, 2021 at 3 p.m.
Held via WebEx
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

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BAG Members Present:
1. Emily Ranson, Clean Water Action (CHAIR)
2. Ted Cochran, Free Bikes 4 Kidz, Multimodal Transportation Board (VICE CHAIR)
3. Cpl. Pete Monti (for Lt. Aaron Dombrowsky), Howard County Police Department
4. Jack Guarneri, Bike HoCo
5. Jennifer Biddle, Howard County Department of Public Works
6. Jessica Bellah, Columbia Association (CA)
7. Julie Kwedar (for Kandese Holford) MD Department of Transportation
8. Paul Walsky, Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks
9. Warren Wortman, bike advocate

Absent:
1. Christiana Rigby, Howard County Council (RP), Council Member, District 3
2. Donald Rucker, Patapscio Bicycles, Representative for retailers within the County (DP)
3. Doug Kampe, Howard County Public School System (DP)
4. Kris Jagarapu, Howard County Department of Public Works
5. Larry Schoen, Multimodal Transportation Board

Office of Transportation:
1. Chris Eatough, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
2. Molly Nur, Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner
3. Allison Calkins, Transportation Demand Management Specialist
4. Brooks Phelps, GIS Specialist
5. Jasmin Martin, Administrative Assistant

Other Attendees:
1. Kris Singleton, Department of Public Works
2. John Eckard, DTCS
3. Marian Vessels
4. Marlene Hendler
5. (301) 688-xxxx Call-in

1. Welcome

2. Review and approval
   a. Agenda
b. Minutes from November 16, 2021 – Emily moves to approve the minutes. Ted seconds. No objections. Minutes approved.

3. **Brief updates/discussion**
   a. Staff update – Jasmine Martin has joined OOT as an administrative assistant.
   b. New BAG members from MDOT - Kandace Holford, Julie Kwedar, and Cynthia Spriggs.
   c. Free Bikes 4 Kidz - Huge success. Last year 2,200 bikes collected from the public. 1,811 bikes given away. Now in fundraiser mode. 4,000 volunteer hours. 3 years old. FB4K Maryland is one of top non-profits for bike giveaways in the U.S behind Minneapolis and Detroit. Similar size to Atlanta. Keeps bikes out of landfill and into the hands of kids who need them.
   d. FY23 Capital Budget – No major changes. Budget requests have been submitted. Initial budget hearing was held. Our major requests were K5066 and some design requests in T7107 and T7108.
   e. Complete Streets Design Manual – Now moving through legislative process. Design Manual reviewed at public workshops and presented to Public Works Board and MTB. Submitted to County Council as CR17-2022. Public hearing will be January 18. If you would like to provide testimony and attend the public hearing, you can. Expected vote on February 7. OOT is available to respond to questions from auditors and County Council members.
      1. Will there be a work session? Yes, January 24. Topics to be decided. Need to wait until after public hearing to know if Design Manual will be included.
   f. E-scooters. Update on the status of deployment. Legally they are considered bicycles and have similarities so that is why we are sharing information with BAG.
      1. Prior to pandemic there was a permitting process put in place. Completed with SPIN prior to the pandemic. They did not choose to start during the pandemic.
      2. SPIN plans to start in March 2022. Preparations still being made. Will need to address their permit period.
      3. Free demos were held in November. CA Board as well as the public was invited.
      4. Question on maps on the website – do those show the geo fencing? Those maps will be updated since one section is an area that the CA Board has not approved (Oakland Mills east side of US 29) at this time. CA agreed to Gateway and Merriweather districts. Some of the Village Boards have shown some interest in having the pilot areas expanded.
      5. Question – Can you use the e-scooters all the way to HCC?
         1. Jessica - The pathway along LPP to HCC is not owned by CA so we can’t restrict usage along that pathway.
         6. Does the Bikeshare program extend to Oakland Mills region? Yes, it currently operates in Blandair and Oakland Mills.
         7. Comment from Warren W. – Oakland Mills Board did ask CA to open it up to their village area.
   g. Stevens Road project in Laurel. In 2021 there was a bridge reconstruction project (J4202). The bridge was previously too low and was in the flood plan. The capital project was in the works for several years. DPW did a project to replace the bridge and the
roadway approaches between Whiskey Bottom Bridge to Gorman Road which is now complete. Designed prior to Complete Streets policy so it did not include all the design features that are now included in today’s Design Manual. DPW tweaked the project so that some portions have bike lanes and two sections have “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs. This should not happen in the future because the Complete Streets policy has been adopted and the Design Manual has been completed. For future projects and projects in the early stages of design bike lanes should accommodated.

1. Comment: Is the County still planning on doing the parallel route via North Laurel Connections? Yes, the design is done; grant funded. Still moving forward with construction. Great parallel route.

4. Key Topics
   a. Bikeshare. There are some pending issues. Bewegen’s T Mobile 3G platform will be non-operational as of mid-2022. There is no solution available at this time. Bewegen is not doing well enough financially to be able to make an upgrade. County does not have funds either. Bikeshare is 4-1/2 years into a 6-year pilot program, and it is unlikely that they will be able to resolve the problem. Since it is near the end of the pilot program, we will let the program end.
      1. Now compiling information across years to evaluate success. 5,000 trips per year just prior to pandemic was highest. Numbers dropped considerably during the pandemic.
         1. Coincides with start of e-scooter program.
         2. Will not be extending Bikeshare program past mid-year.
         3. Question: can we put it out to bid again? We could but pretty expensive for modest number of trips. County got a great price at the start of the program. Most is paid by Horizon Foundation. We can look into rebidding it, but it is likely to be costly and the County has to look at the investment. Could possibly modify e-scooter permit to include bikeshare option as well.
         4. Likely end in June 2022.
   b. Public meeting at some time for bike lanes on Harpers Farm Rd through resurfacing. The project is complicated since the road is 4 and 5 lanes wide and will require lane reconfiguration to allow space for bike lanes. County needs to assess potential adverse impact on motor vehicle traffic. Difficult to assess if traffic levels (which were damped by the pandemic) are likely to rebound to normal levels, and if so, quickly or slowly. There will be a public meeting sometime in the next month or two. Have some new information from the consultant on traffic volumes.
      1. Comment – that section is highly used, according to Strava heat map.
      2. Multiple requests to include a pedestrian crossing to connect the trail (see map). Difficult to do with current configuration but would be much easier if there was a lane reduction.
      3. Jessica would like to talk to Chris E. re: CA realignment of pedestrian crossings.
      4. Jessica also inquired if OOT is looking at Twin Rivers and Harpers Farm crossing as there had been a pedestrian fatality at one time. Chris E. said there
has been a change at that intersection. It now has a lead pedestrian interval. Used to have a permissive right lane turn so cars were turning at same time as pedestrians cross. Timing change has been made so pedestrians now cross first; so that situation has been addressed. Free rights are allowed at that intersection. That was not part of fatality, but road resurfacing doesn’t address changes like that, only minor ones (e.g., signage, signal timing, striping). If you have minor changes, please suggest those.

5. Ted - suggest slip ramps from Harpers Farm Road to northbound path if going west and to southbound path if you are going east. To access the lake, the choices are very bad for bicycles. Chris added they are heavily used by both bikes and pedestrians. Curb ramps are usually part of road resurfacing efforts so that is a great suggestion.

6. Jessica – You should also look at Columbia Athletic Club. Many people access the trail from there. Suggest looking at signage especially in light of Cedar Lane project. Columbia Athletic Club had a renovation. No reductions planned for that facility. Once of most CA’s popular sites.

7. Chris mentioned that HCC traffic (just south of project) volumes are less than 2 years ago. Unsure what impact HCC volumes are on the area.

c. Guilford Road, Gerwig Lane and Patuxent Woods Drive
   2. Public meeting was held November 10, 2021.
   3. On Gerwig there is lots of truck tractor parking so we are looking to retain parking on one side, but have bike lanes on both sides.
   4. Everything concerning the project and meetings are posted on BikeHoward website.

d. First Bike Box in Howard County
   1. DPW did a 2021 resurfacing and remarking on both Centre Park Drive and Columbia 100 Parkway which added bike lanes.
   2. Site will get a traffic signal in 2022, so the traffic volumes warrant a full traffic signal, a pedestrian crossing, and a bike box to help the cyclists turning left (when the signal is red). Cyclists advance first when the light turns green, followed by motor vehicles.
   3. Currently under design by DPW, construction expected later in 2022.
   4. Question - Will it be tied into Howard High School (access to high school through side of Exxon property)? It is private property, but many students pass from the High School through Exxon. HCPSS may be interested in approaching Exxon to inquire about access for students as it is a short connection.
   5. Would the County approach Exxon about formal access? Kris S. said yes, it’s on our radar. It has been discussed with HCPSS in the past. Short connection. Some topographic challenges. Could be acquired through a public easement through Exxon’s property.
6. How will you educate drivers to stop before the bike box? It is marked on the road. There is a stop bar on the road for cars. Some information will be put out by the County and posted to BikeHoward. Hopefully the information will be amplified by others.

7. Some localities use green paint to draw more attention to the site. Experimental in Howard County but has been used for at least 10 years in other localities.

8. New road resurfacing/bike lanes projects for FY2023 – Received a draft list from DPW. Will not be finalized until the Capital project approved. Will determine which projects can be grouped for public meetings. Will have list by next BAG meeting.

e. Howard County Strategic Road Safety Plan – Will review at next BAG meeting. An update will be coming soon. David Cookson will speak to the Plan’s status and data for that process.

f. MDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Plan – They are asking for people to provide input on prioritizing pedestrian corridors in Maryland. This is an opportunity for advocates and members of the public to give input; requested by January 17.

5. Upcoming events

- MDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Plan survey – input requested by January 17
- Priority Letter - Public Meeting with County Executive - to register www.howardcountymd.gov/transportation/priority-letter on January 27 (6pm)
- Active Transportation Open House 2022 (only virtual) - February 12 -18 (4pm) at www.howardcountymd.gov/ATOH2022
- Harpers Farm Road Bike Lanes public meeting - TBD (Rescheduled)
- BikeAround Spring 2022 - May 14-15 (in-person event May 14)
- Bike to Work Week - May 16-20 (B2W Day event afternoon of May 20)

Question from Ted C. - Will there be another Open Streets event in 2022? Horizon has done Open Streets events in past. Oakland Mills Road may be a great opportunity. Oakland Mills Road will have some ribbon cutting/bike ride event. No schedule yet.

Free Bikes 4 Kidz 2022 - October 1 will be the official collection day, but bikes will be accepted before that if needed. Giveaway days will be December 10 and probably 17 as well.

7. Open Discussion Period

- Question for Ct. Monti – does Howard County have a policy for submitting bike cam footage for egregious motor vehicle incidents? He was having technical difficulties and unable to respond. OOT will send email to Cpl. Monti and Lt. Dombrowsky and cc: Emily and Ted. Cpl. Monti later wrote in the chat to contact the non-emergency HCPD number at 410.313.3100. He will have an officer review the video to see if there was a violation. If there was a violation, the officer will recover the video, apply charges, or notify the driver of the violation.
• Emily – What is the impact of Race Pace is being sold to Trek? Race Pace has been very supportive of County bike events. Alex Obriecht is retiring and sold his franchise to Trek (their main vendor). OOT will cultivate relationship with new owners. Race Pace had two locations in Howard County.

• Jack G. – The sale of Race Pace will be final in March. They do repairs for HCPSS bike fleet and bike check for FB4K for reduced rates. Bike HoCo reaching out to Patapsco Bikes to see what their interest is. Possible to reach out to new owners to include in BAG. Chris will reach out to Alex and Kevin Dolan to support local community efforts. Jessica – CA has started installing slippery when wet signs as discussed in previous BAG meetings. As there are 280 bridges it will take a while. Some are getting vandalized. Contact Jessica for now if you see damaged signs. She will find out who should be contacted. (Note: Damaged signs can be reported to Open.Space@ColumbiaAssociation.org)

• Barbara Kellner, a founding member of BikeHoCo and who started Bike About Columbia, will be moving to Williamsburg and sorely missed in the area. She is leaving this month.

8. **Next meeting** – Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 3:00 PM (virtual)

9. **Adjournment**