

Bicycling Advocates of Howard County

Bike Maryland 17th Annual Bicycle Symposium
***Key Components (and
Strategies) to Form a
Successful Local Bicycling
Advocacy Group***

February 11, 2014

BAHC Board

Jack Guarneri: Chair/President

Bill Kelly: Vice President

**Members: Sadj Bartolo, John Brandt, Alan Davis,
Howard Feldmesser, Mike Goins, John Hughes,
Barbara Kellner, Dan Kelly, Robin McClave, Larry Schoen,
Chris Tsien, Rob Vigorito, Rick Wilson, Al Yergey**



A Coalition of the
**Cycling Clubs and Bicycle
Riders of Howard County**

APL Cycling Club

Baltimore Bicycling Club
(Glennel Gang)

HoCo Cyclists
(Howard County Cycling Club)

Mid Maryland Triathlon Club



Why A Local Advocacy Group?

**“*All politics is local*” –
and personal**

Tip O’Neil

Former Speaker of the House

- 1. Most of the roads we ride are maintained and improved by Counties/Cities.***
- 2. Most enforcement of laws that protect us is done by local police.***
- 3. Local transportation planning and funding is key to improved safety and growth of cycling.***



BAHC Timeline

- **November 2007 meeting of representatives of ~1000 cyclists from:**
 - **APL Cycling Club**
 - **Baltimore Bicycling Club – ‘Glenelg Gang’**
 - **Howard County Cycling Club**
 - **Mid Maryland Triathlon Club**
- **Decided to formally become an advocacy coalition as Bicycling Advocates Howard County (BAHC) in February 2008**
 - **Primary concerns/initial objectives – Safety and Visibility of the Howard County bicycling community**
 - **Address ncreasing density of traffic on rural roads**
 - **Roads (design) unsafe for cyclists – shoulders, intersections, lack of bike lanes, etc.**
 - **Improved communications with County Government**
 - **Improve PR with the community – unintended consequence of event/cyclists proliferation**
- **Established a Bicycling Advisory Group (BAG) with County government in March 2009**
- **Incorporated in November 2009 and approved for 501(c)4 non-profit status in February 2010**
- **Bicycle Master Plan funded and developed June 2013 – March 2014**

Vision:

BAHC Charter Precepts Support Cycling and the Entire Cycling Community



- *Near-Term Objective: To improve the visibility and safety of the bicycling community in Howard County.*
- *Mid-Term Objective: To foster and support bicycle commuting as an alternative to automobiles within Howard County for both work and school transportation.*
- *Far-Term Objective: To promote a vision of bicycling as part of an energy efficient transportation system to help achieve a sustainable future for Howard County and the region.*

Cyclists fall in several categories: health/exercise, racers/event competitors, commuters, and 'green'/environmental alternative transportation proponents.



Strategy

Consistent

Persistent

Reasonable

and most of all PATIENT

Never attribute to malice what can be more easily explained by fiscal and legal constraints – and can be countered by education and ideas



HC Bicycling Advisory Group

- In March 2009 commenced holding quarterly HC BAG meetings with County Government - to address longer-term issues and to educate representatives from:
 - County Executive's Office
 - County Council
 - Public Works
 - Planning and Zoning
 - Transportation
 - Recreation and Parks
 - Police
 - Columbia Association (governing body of Columbia)
- We have invited guests to support our goals/open dialogue from:
 - MDOT
 - SHA
 - Bike Maryland
 - Baltimore Metro Council

BAG provides a forum to address longer term issues and get immediate feedback



Accomplishments

- **Electronic Community (listserve/web page/Facebook)**
- **Share the road signage (major bike/triathlon routes)**
- **Camera actuated stoplights (see bikes at intersections)**
- **Bike routes (let PW/Police know where we ride)**
 - **Partial Bike Lanes where feasible**
- **Training (hold Road Biking 101, e-mails, and worked with LBS and triathlon groups)**
- **Road Condition Surveys (used free 'survey monkey')**
- **Maintenance Priorities (worked to reduce chip and seal)**
- **Road Work Communication (e-mails on road issues)**
- **Events (group rides and local bicycle advocacy forum)**



Cooperative Efforts

- **County Executive/Council:** Created and Lead Quarterly Bicycle Advisory Group meetings with representatives from HC Government, SHA, and Columbia Association
- **PW:** 'Share-the-Road' signs, re-striping/bike lanes, communications on road repairs and plans, road surveys/critiques, and development of bicycle design guidelines
- **P&Z/Transportation:** Local B2W Day rally/routes, planning and zoning bicycle subject matter expertise, support/help to develop a County *Bicycle Master Plan*
- **Rec & Parks/MORE:** Mountain Bike Skills Park at Rockburn Branch Park opened in October 2012
- **HC Police:** Guidance on reporting incidents, conduct training on accident reports and enforcement
- **SHA:** Develop inter-County bike route to Fort Meade

Summary



- **You can get local Government to work with you to support bicyclists' needs since:**
 - bicyclists are a significant constituency/interest group;
 - we can provide alternative transportation expertise; and
 - potential benefits exist for local business, county quality of life/ PR, health, transportation, and environment from supporting bicycling
 - strive for accomplishments that matter to both cyclists and to local Government
- **There needs to be an active group of participants and cooperation from local Government to be successful**
 - It takes commitment 4 – 20+ hours per month for leaders
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