

Amherst Avenue Bikeway Public Hearing  
Written Testimony

## Please widen the Amherst Avenue Cycletrack

Brian Robinson <briantherobinson@gmail.com>

Wed 1/3/2024 8:18 PM

To: Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Hi,

Thank you for your work on the Amherst Avenue Cycletrack. I'd like to ask that it please be widened to 10 feet. I travel frequently by bike, often with my 3-year-old daughter, and I feel much safer when there's 10 feet for 2-way traffic as compared to 8 feet.

The extra width should come from narrowing the other lanes to 11 feet and 10.5 feet. Narrow traffic lanes [save lives](#).

I'd also like to associate myself with the comments that Peter Gray of WABA sent in recently on these points.

Thanks,  
Brian Robinson  
Bethesda, MD

**FW: Amherst Ave Bikeway looks great**

Johnson, Matt <Matt.Johnson@montgomerycountymd.gov>

Fri 1/5/2024 5:18 PM

To: Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

FYI

--

Matt Johnson, AICP

Bikeways Coordinator

**Division of Transportation Engineering**

**Montgomery County Department of Transportation**

[Matt.Johnson@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Matt.Johnson@montgomerycountymd.gov)

240.777.7237 (desk)

Pronouns: he/him



Stay connected



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**From:** Gordon Chaffin <galexanderchaffin@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Friday, January 05, 2024 5:06 PM

**To:** Johnson, Matt <Matt.Johnson@montgomerycountymd.gov>

**Subject:** Amherst Ave Bikeway looks great

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

It will be great to have a parallel north-south route further west/up the hill from Sligo Creek trail that also continues further north to Arcola.

When I lived in DTSS, I would frequently extend a Sligo Out and Back by getting to Arcola from University and then doing a little loop of Kemp Mill and Arcola for that Kemp Mill hill climb coming back southbound.

--

**Gordon Chaffin**

[Infrastructure Expert](#) and Community Volunteer

[gordonchaffin@gmail.com](mailto:gordonchaffin@gmail.com)



**For more helpful Cybersecurity Resources, visit:**  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cybersecurity>

## Amherst bikeway project YES but please have 10 foot lanes

Alison Gillespie <alisonupstairs@gmail.com>

Sat 1/6/2024 2:57 PM

To:Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

### [EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hello I am very excited about the Amherst bikeway project and look forward to this expansion of our bike lane network. I often ride my bike here, as I live in the Forest Glen area and often come to Wheaton to attend meetings, meet with friends and shop at the Safeway for groceries using my bike.

I ride Amherst a lot. Many commercial trucks park there for days and even months on end and it is such a waste of infrastructure! They seem to belong to commercial properties nearby and I often wonder if they are parked there/stored there illegally. Being able to bike to Wheaton and beyond safely is really important and will serve the community better than truck parking for businesses like Best Buy!

I would like to request, however, that you please have the lanes be 10 feet, not 8 feet. Eight feet is just not enough for two way bike traffic.

I like that the lanes will be buffered -- at least from what I can see on your site it looks like they will be buffered with curbs which is GREAT.

Thanks for your time and attention.

Alison Gillespie  
1826 Brisbane Court  
Silver Spring 20902

## Fwd: Amherst Avenue bike-way (end of comment period)

Eric Brenner <ericlewisbrenner@gmail.com>

Mon 1/8/2024 8:25 PM

To: Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

### [EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Sorry that I mis-typed your e-mail address, just wanted you to see who else I sent this to (I did get the comments in the right box in the official comment section).

Thanks for working on this: I went back and biked Amherst end-to-end today, and while it's already OK for biking it's about to get a lot better.

Eric Brenner

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

From: **Eric Brenner** <[ericlewisbrenner@gmail.com](mailto:ericlewisbrenner@gmail.com)>

Date: Fri, Jan 5, 2024 at 4:07 PM

Subject: Amherst Avenue bike-way (end of comment period)

To: Peter Gray <[peter@waba.org](mailto:peter@waba.org)>

Cc: <[angel.cheng@montgomerycounty.com](mailto:angel.cheng@montgomerycounty.com)>, Anspacher, David <[david.anspacher@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:david.anspacher@mncppc-mc.org)>, Anspacher, David <[david.anspacher@montgomeryplanning.org](mailto:david.anspacher@montgomeryplanning.org)>, Seth Grimes <[seth.grimes@waba.org](mailto:seth.grimes@waba.org)>, Douglas Chang <[dtchang@me.com](mailto:dtchang@me.com)>, Alcon, Alejandro <[Alejandro.Alcon@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Alejandro.Alcon@montgomerycountymd.gov)>, gail melson <[lgmelson@gmail.com](mailto:lgmelson@gmail.com)>

Peter (though any of the cc's can respond if you know the answer):

I just submitted the following to Angel Cheng, the project manager for the Amherst Ave. bike way project.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-dte/projects/amherstave/index.html?org=1836&lvl=100&ite=3141&lea=6836289&ctr=0&par=1&trk=a10Rm000000X233IAC>

However this segment ends up, it will be great (and heavily used) so my comments were beyond the scope (which only covers Amherst between Arcola and Windham) pointing out the relatively easy improvements on the south end, that we both already use, and giving an option/idea on-or-above Arcola that takes in a right-of-way already used by walkers going between the Wheaton Rec Center and Wheaton Regional Park.

I'm mainly wondering if any "next-steps" are underway for when this section of the Amherst bike way is completed.

Unlike the Univ. Blvd activity (to pick one example) the Amherst project seems to have only supporters, no enemies...he says, optimistically.

Eric

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(my submitted comments)

Recognizing that this is beyond the scope of this project, I still want to comment on a few easy (?) things that could happen on either end of Amherst to make these improvements even more valuable for a larger number of people.

Whatever you come up with on the Arcola-Windham stretch will be great/appreciated, but once hitting Arcola, please find a way to connect to the Wheaton Library & Rec. Center. This could be a wider side-path on Arcola, or paving the already existing (unpaved) pedestrian right-of-way that is used by walkers between Parker-Henderson-Armitage-Arcola. The neighbors on either side of this cut-through might object, but it's not their land, and it's already used by walkers going between the Wheaton Rec. Center and Wheaton Regional Park.

And on the south end of Amherst, below Windom, past the Evans Parkway Neighborhood park, this route is already used by a lot of bikers/walkers to get to the Forest Estates neighborhood, but the passage would be made much easier with an improved connection between the two medical buildings that exist between Dennis and Medical Park Drive. Everyone now goes around the dumpster, after going up on the curb at the back of the parking lot...so just make it easier/more-official. The county health building also could be part of the solution as their/your property abuts the medical building on Dennis.

Similar improvements between Medical Park Drive and St. John's (school). There are now steps and a curb on the path that is heavily used to get to the rest of Amherst. Just make this a cleaner cut that doesn't require getting off of a bike.

I know (think?) that the long-term bicycle plan envisions this longer connection, just hoping that the momentum from the current work on Amherst leads to some of the easier fixes just beyond the scope of the current project.

## Amherst Avenue Cycletrack: Support

Daniel Marcin <[dsmarcin@gmail.com](mailto:dsmarcin@gmail.com)>

Mon 1/8/2024 11:07 PM

To: Cheng, Angel <[Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov)>

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

I support the Amherst Avenue Cycletrack and I support whatever comments WABA has made regarding it. Thank you for your service.

--

Daniel Marcin

Economist

[dsmarcin@gmail.com](mailto:dsmarcin@gmail.com)

[Homepage](#)



## Amherst Avenue Cycletrack

Paul Daisey <pdaisey1331@gmail.com>

Tue 1/9/2024 8:52 AM

To: Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

### [EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Angel Cheng  
Project Manager, Amherst Avenue Cycletrack

I am a lifetime resident of Montgomery County, grew up in Four Corners, attended Northwood High School, and have been driving and cycling in the Silver Spring / Wheaton area for 50 years. I've been a member of the Washington Area Bicyclists Association (WABA) for over 30 years, contributed to the last two Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plans and the Montgomery County DOT Bicycle Action Group, served as the second Treasurer of the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail, and served for 3 years as the Montgomery County representative to the State Highway Administration Bicycle Action Committee.

I am writing to submit my comments regarding the 90% design of the Amherst Avenue Bikeway Project. I think this project will make it significantly safer to bike and walk in and near the Wheaton CBD. However, the 8 foot wide facility as shown in the 90% design is insufficient to provide adequate safety and low cyclist stress, given that this two-way cycletrack will be part of a future bicycle breezeway / long haul protected bike facility that will eventually have heavy cyclist traffic. That traffic will include people using larger bicycles and bikes that may require more space, including cargo bikes, bikes with trailers, and adaptive bikes.

So I ask that the project team reallocate additional space to the cycletrack from space currently allocated to car travel lanes, car parking, and the buffer between the bike lanes and parking.

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Paul Daisey

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Paul Daisey

## Amherst Avenue Bikeway

Linda Keenan <linda@lindakeenan.org>

Tue 1/9/2024 1:49 PM

To: Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

### **[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Hello Ms. Cheng,

Regarding the Amherst Avenue Bikeway Project, it will be great to improve it as a more bike-friendly street, as opposed to Georgia Avenue, which is very bike-unfriendly.

If this planned bikeway is supposed to be two-way, then I must say that 8 feet in width is insufficient. Can you examine the street configuration again to see if it's possible to establish 9-10 feet in width for the length of the bikeway?

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Linda Keenan  
Silver Spring  
linda@lindakeenan.org

## Amherst Ave thoughts

Daniel Treadwell <dtread@verizon.net>

Tue 1/9/2024 7:44 AM

To: Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

### [EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Angel, I provided comments previously on Amherst Ave and am submitting a few thoughts before the comment period ends on January 12, 2024.

FYI, for some background I am retired now, but years ago I worked as a city bus driver for 5-1/2 years for Alameda/Contra Costa Transit District in the Bay Area of California. I also drove motorcycles for years but eventually gave them up as being too dangerous. With the free time that I have with retirement I got into bicycling and go out riding practically every day, year round. I average over 5000 miles a year on the bike (which is about 14 miles per day). At any rate I am familiar with traversing streets on from multiple perspectives, including on a bicycle.

I am a member of:

- Bike Maryland
- Bike Rockville
- League of American Bicyclists
- Washington Area Bicyclist Association

I live in the Leesborough Condominium complex, so I ride my bike on Amherst Ave practically every day, and am familiar every pothole and quirk in the road.

My take from a bicyclists perspective:

The section from Arcola to Elkin/Franwall is not much of an issue. It's wide enough that bicycling is usually not an issue, although if cars are parked on the east side it can be an issue when you're going northbound.

The section between Elkin/Franwall and Blueridge should be widened. Not sure why the street was narrowed at that point. There looks to be adequate space that it possibly could be widened and still allow the properties on either side to still have adequate buffers. Restricting parking on one side or the other might possibly be an option, although I would guess that option is probably unlikely. Perhaps knock out some of the artificial curb extensions and widen the street. This section is the worst, both northbound and southbound.

The section from Blueridge to University is not that great due to amount of cars and people going in and out of the post office and 7-11. Lots of jaywalkers, people double parking, people making U-Turns, people opening car doors, etc. Unfortunate that the post office was allowed to build right out to the edge of the sidewalk, with no buffer at all. Slightly more hazardous going northbound due to car doors and double parking, etc. with folks going in and out of the post office and 7-11.

The rest of Amherst to Windham and beyond is really not much of an issue due to the fact that it is so wide. Not much difference going northbound or southbound.

As I suggested previously widening the sidewalks looks from a real estate perspective like it might be possible.

Thus: Improving the section from Elkin/Franwall to Blueridge should be the major priority. Next would be Blueridge to University. The rest of Amherst is not much of an issue IMO.

Regards, Dan Treadwell

## Prioritization of bicycle projects

Daniel Treadwell <dtread@verizon.net>

Thu 1/18/2024 8:18 PM

To: Cheng, Angel <Angel.Cheng@montgomerycountymd.gov>

Cc: Johnson, Matt <Matt.Johnson@montgomerycountymd.gov>

### [EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Angel, so, thinking about \$6M cost on Amherst. From a bicyclist perspective I'd rather see the money spent on:

- Fixing the section between Gridley and Gaynor on Veirs Mill. That is really bad, particularly going towards Rockville. BTW, when I ride from Wheaton to Rockville, I usually ride Dawson to Veirs Mill **sidewalk** all the way to Parklawn Cemetery where I pick up the Rock Creek Trail to Aspen Hill Rd, then Veirs Mill **sidewalk** to Twinbrook Pkwy to Grandin
- A pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Northwest Branch somewhere in the vicinity of Lamberton Dr on the west side and Quaint Acres Dr on the east side. Connections between Silver Spring/Wheaton and White Oak/College Park are really limited.

I still think that if the section between Blueridge and Elkin/Franwall was widened it would pretty much make Amherst bicycle-friendly, without spending \$6M on a cycle-track. Most of Amherst is wide enough I consider it bicycle-friendly already.

-Dan



To: Angel Cheng, Project Manager

Re: Amherst Avenue Bikeway Comments - December 15, 2023

On behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and our more than 1,000 members in Montgomery County, I submit the following comments regarding the 90% design of the Amherst Avenue Bikeway Project.

Overall, this project is an excellent addition to making it safer to bike and walk in and around the Wheaton CBD. However, the 8 foot wide facility as shown in the 90% design recently presented can and should be improved. A width of eight feet is not sufficient, safety or comfort-wise, especially for a two-way bicycle facility that is part of a future bicycle breezeway or long haul protected bike facility that will eventually have large numbers of cyclists using the proposed bike lanes here, and to accommodate people using larger bicycles and bikes that may require more space, including cargo bikes and adaptive bikes. Therefore, WABA encourages the project team to reallocate additional space from space currently allocated to the buffer between the bike lanes and parking, the parking itself and the car travel lanes.

Specifically, Display C-1 (of the powerpoint slides shown at the December 12th public meeting), the section of the project between Windham Lane and Pritchard Road, shows an allocation of 3 feet for the buffer between the bike lanes and the parking on the West side of Amherst Avenue. Yet, the buffer is reduced to 2 feet in Display C-2 for the section from Pritchard Road to Reddie Drive. WABA therefore urges MCDOT to narrow the buffer between the bike lanes and parked cars and add that one foot of width to the bike lane itself, resulting in at least a 9 foot wide bike lane facility.

Furthermore, the slides presented show varied widths for parking from 7.5-8 feet wide allocations for parking on each side of Amherst. Existing conditions show 7 foot wide parking spaces on some blocks of Amherst. This shows that, at the very least, on all of the blocks where parking exists, MCDOT could shave a minimum of .5 feet on both sides from parking to add an additional foot of width for the cycletrack, resulting in a 10 foot wide protected bike facility throughout the length of this project.

In addition, there are sections of the project where the car travel lanes (thru lanes as denoted in the slides presented) are 10.5 feet wide (C-1 & C-2) and other sections where the lanes are 11 feet

wide (C-3 & C-5). By narrowing those thru lanes to 10.5 feet, that one foot width could be added to the cycletrack as an alternative to narrowing the width allocated to parking.

Finally, slide C-4 showing the intersection of University Boulevard and Amherst Avenue has a 3 foot buffer between the bike lanes and the car travel lane, which could be narrowed to a 2 foot buffer and the NB thru lane could be narrowed to 11 feet from 12 feet, thus preserving the 10 foot width for the cycletrack at that intersection.

WABA appreciates the hard work that has gone into creating the 90% design, and hope that every possible effort can be made to widen the cycletrack itself so that it can be a truly safe facility for the people biking on it.

Peter Gray  
Montgomery County Organizer  
Washington Area Bicyclist Association  
1814 Brisbane street  
Silver Spring, MD 20902

To whom it may concern,

I wish to submit the following as my official comments to the Wheaton Bikeway Public Presentation which took place on December 12, 2023. The following comments mostly refer to the stretch of Amherst Ave. between Prichard Road & Reddie Drive.

In my opinion the most important thing which needs to be considered is the addition of mid-block pedestrian crossings. In fact this should be included in all segments of the proposed bikeway redevelopment plan as these blocks are "super blocks", meaning they are extremely long by pedestrian standards. Illegal pedestrian crossings are an extremely common and a prevalent issue especially between Prichard and Reddie. Please include mid-block crossings in the final design for safety and to meet Vision Zero goals.

Secondly a very pressing issue on the aforementioned block of Amherst is speeding. Cars continually treat this stretch of Amherst as a drag strip as the lanes are way too wide and on a hill. During the meeting other members of the public reiterated the dangers of speeding on this block along with their fear of safety when crossing due to excessive automobile speeds. Albeit the proposed narrowing of the travel lanes will reduce speed somewhat I believe in this case due to the topography of the street that more measures need to be taken to reduce speeding. Specifically I would request speed humps, or as another commenter noted, perhaps speed tables could be used. In that case the tables would integrate very well with the mid-block pedestrian crossings I mentioned earlier.

Lastly I would like to respond to some of the comments which were made by members of the public during the meeting. First off, my down-the-street neighbor's concern about permeable paving flooding his basement. Although I am not certain which permeable system is being proposed for this project, permeable paving is generally designed to allow just as much water thru as vegetation. Since the landscape buffer is being replaced with permeable paving there should be minimal affect on the amount of ground water present on the properties where this paving is proposed. The larger issue here is that permeable paving requires special and constant maintenance to function properly, so the county needs to implement a maintenance plan for this paving if it has not already done so.

Furthermore during the meeting there were some comments made about the owners of the stretch of houses on the east side of Amherst between Reddie and Prichard. I did not arrive at the meeting with a written statement, as some did and was caught off guard to learn there was hostility towards us residents in this project. With that being said, I have no intent to delay this project, however we only get one chance at this, there are no re-do's so it is important to get this right the first time to address everyone's concerns as these public meetings are intended to do.

As for the comments that Downtown Wheaton has an over-saturation of parking I completely agree. My Architectural Thesis was on the redevelopment of downtown Wheaton, and focused heavily on addressing the parking issue. However, with that being said, our houses are not in the CBD and are zoned differently than downtown. We are single family homes, which generally have a landscape buffer and on-street parking per code and zoning. The over-saturation of parking in Downtown Wheaton is out of the scope of this portion of the bikeway project.

As I mentioned in the meeting on-street parking is essential for safety. Multiple homes here, mine included, have young children and/or elderly residents with health and mobility issues. Parking on the other side of Amherst will only lead to an increase in illegal pedestrian crossings. There is no way I am comfortable with my 5 year old son or elderly mother having to cross Amherst Ave. every time they arrive. The suggestion which was made that we park in the Metro Garage is just profoundly unrealistic. Dragging young kids along with all their property from the Metro Garage is not even close to practical, not to mention the impracticality of doing that with people with mobility issues.

As to address the comment made about not owning a car and instead biking everywhere, as happy as I am for those who can do that, I am not about to strap my 5 year old son to a bicycle seat and bike him around for miles daily. It's just not practical, and ride-sharing all the time is neither



affordable nor practical either. So for better or worse on street-parking for these homes is pretty essential for a multitude of reasons.

Our stretch of Amherst is by far the one being most affected by this project. In essence we got the short end of the stick. It's easy to sit in the back seat and be content with other people's property being negatively affected by a public project and then complain about delays and so forth when at the end of the day their properties are not being directly affected. We are just trying to maintain the beauty and safety of our homes. At the end of the day compromises were made, we lose our landscape buffer and keep our on-street parking. Compromise and communication are key to successful public projects.

In closing while I really wish the bikeway was situated on the East side of Amherst as this would alleviate a lot of problems, however at 90% design, I doubt that option is still on the table, but if it is please strongly consider that option. Regardless, I would like to state that in general I am in support of the idea of creating an integrated bikeway throughout Wheaton and eventually the rest of Montgomery County and beyond into DC. However I believe there are still some changes which could be made to this design as mentioned above.

I appreciate you taking the time to read thru and consider my comments and suggestions.

Regards,

Andrew (Jedrzej) Bzdega

Proud Owner and Resident of:  
11009 Amherst Ave.  
Wheaton, MD 20902

P.S. I realize that this is a bit of a pet-project, and in the overall scope this bikeway design is a very minor issue, however I ask that all who read this please support me on saving the tree in front of 11009 Amherst Ave. which is located in the current landscape buffer. It is an established, healthy tree (over a decade old) and preserving it will help in the County's goals of green streetscapes and sustainable design.

## Amherst Avenue Bikeway Public Hearing - Online Comments

| First Name: | Last Name: | Address:   | Email Address:          | Your comments on this project:   |
|-------------|------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Soraya      | Grieser    | 11802 Saddlerock Rd                                  | Ghujks@gmail.com        | What happens to the post office parking? The 3 - 4 spots directly in front of it are not nearly enough. Most people park on the opposite side of the road - where the proposed bike lanes would go through. There's already predatory towing in that area with very few public parking spots. Will you be creating a dedicated parking lot next to the post office? Also, what about the people living in all the apartment/condos that line that road? Both sides of Amherst have bumper to bumper parked cars. Most of these tenants are working class immigrants. You would literally be taking away their livelihood if you didn't give them a reasonable alternative (and the paid metro parking garage is not close nor is it reasonable to expect struggling individuals to suddenly start paying a monthly parking fee for something that used to be free). This plan is elitist if you expect these people to simply give up their cars and ride bikes. |
| Soraya      | Grieser    | 11802 Saddlerock Rd                                  | Ghujks@gmail.com        | Is there any way to put the bike lane between the car lanes (protected with those plastic things of course) as opposed to being on the side of the car lane? That way no parking will be lost. Other cities have put bike lanes between lanes, and it hasn't been a problem. If the bike lanes don't result in lost parking, you would have much more support from the community that actually lives here.   |
| Rochelle    | Wilder     | 509 e indian spring drive<br>silver spring, MD 20901 | rochelleswilder@aol.com | There isnt enough bike traffic to warrant bike lanes. Get rid of them.   |
| D           | Blarcom    | 10811 Amherst Avenue,<br>Unit A                      | dblarcom@yahoo.com      | It would be great to have a SAFE passage between Windham and Arcola as I bike to the community center Monday, Wednesday and Friday to play pickleball. I would not have to use the car and would get more exercise. The Amherst Avenue Bikeway would be a quality of life addition to the neighborhood.  |
| Jess        | Bravin     | Inwood Ave.  | jess.bravin@wsj.com     | This is an excellent project. Would it be possible, however, to extend the bikeway further south to Evans Park? That would provide kids a protected way to ride between two of their major destinations--Evans Park and the Wheaton Library.   |
| Tony        | Byrne      | 9110 Warren St, Silver<br>Spring, MD 20910           | tonybyrne444@gmail.com  | Our household is very much in favor of this plan. We would bike more often to and through Wheaton -- rather than by car -- if these sorts of safer, dedicated lanes were available. Thanks for your work on this initiative!   |
| Nina        | Koltnow    | 2314 Parker Ave                                      | ninack@mac.com          | I fully support the Amherst Avenue Bikeway Project. Georgia Avenue is far too dangerous for bikes and pedestrians. The Bikeway will provide an essential N/S route between downtown Wheaton and the northern neighborhoods. Our entire neighborhood (Wheaton Regional Park Neighborhood Association, just N of Arcola and E of Georgia) also supports extending this project by improving the existing DOT right-of-way and heavily used N/S path that extends from the northern terminus of the Amherst Bikeway through to Henderson Ave, thereby giving off-Georgia rolling access to people on Shorefield and north. It is heavily used already, but not accessible for strollers, bikes, wheelchairs, etc.   |
| Timothy     | Ernst      | 10616 Dunkirk Drive                                  | tpernst@hotmail.com     | My family lives in neighborhood near Windham & Amherst. We fully support Amherst Avenue Bikeway. This project has many benefits. It will make pedestrians, bicyclists, rollers and drivers safer as they travel to Wheaton Metro, Safeway, Post Office, Library & Community Center. It will also narrow the roadway, which will have the immediate effect of SLOWING DOWN VEHICLES driving on Amherst Ave. As MCDOT knows, most traffic injuries and deaths are related to speeding. We need to educate our community that making roads safer for pedestrians, bicyclists & rollers also makes roads safer for people driving motor vehicles.  |

## Amherst Avenue Bikeway Public Hearing - Online Comments

|        |           |   |                           |   |
|--------|-----------|---|---------------------------|---|
| Adam   | Carlesco  | 10904 Bucknell Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20902 | carlescoas@gmail.com      | <p>My name is Adam Carlesco, I live in apartments on Amherst and rely upon walking, biking, and transit to get around the region. I am here to express my deep concern and, frankly, disbelief at the current state of the Amherst Ave cycletrack project in Wheaton. What began as a progressive step towards sustainable urban development has devolved into a farcical display of inefficiency and waste, all in the service of a mere 13 parking spaces.</p> <p>Let's be clear: these are public spaces that are being updated with public money, to accommodate a handful of low-density homeowners in a downtown area only a couple hundred feet from the metro and a massive under-utilized public garage. The county's plan to retain on-street parking by undertaking extensive and costly utility work, removing green buffers and street trees, and installing pervious paving, is not just wasteful; it's a gross misallocation of public funds and contradictory to the County's environmental and sustainability goals.</p> <p>One must wonder, why are we bending over backward, spending taxpayer money, and sacrificing environmental aesthetics to appease a mere 13 homeowners in a town of 20k - half of whom are forced to be renters? This feels like a taxpayer-funded makeover for a few homeowners, while the many wait for a cycletrack that's stuck in bureaucratic limbo. There's a public garage comically close that's being conveniently ignored and each of these 13 homes has a private driveway. This project has turned from something that should have cost a couple of grand for paint, flex posts, and concrete, into a delayed bloated major infrastructure project that is designed to increase private real estate values for a few single-family homes in a small stretch that frankly should not be zoned for such low density in the first place given its proximity to the metro and major amenities.</p> <p>This cycletrack isn't just a path; it's a lifeline in the heart of Wheaton's downtown for many who do not own cars, cannot drive, or simply wish to run their errands more enjoyably. It's our ticket to a safer, cleaner, and more connected community in line with MoCo's expressed climate and transportation goals. It's a direct link to the metro, the mall, groceries, libraries – the arteries of our urban life. But instead, we're being told to wait and shell out hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars extra because a handful of people don't want to walk a few extra steps to their cars despite living right next to a commercial and transit hub.</p> <p>Moreover, this plan's drawn-out, six-year saga is nothing short of a bureaucratic circus. If the County's DOT continues to take such a lackadaisical approach to transportation updates, this county will never meet any of its stated goals in its Bike Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, or Thrive 2050 – both because of perpetual foot-dragging as well as an overly accommodative attitude towards automotive-dominance in our urban cores. All this despite Thrive 2050 explicitly stating that there must be an effort by the county to deprioritize personal automobiles while prioritizing pedestrians, micro-mobility, and public transit.</p> <p>What we need is a reality check, not another year of dithering. This stretch of Amherst between Reddie and Prichard, especially at the Prichard intersection is already too wide and incentivizes constant speeding. I have been nearly hit on several occasions by drivers speeding down this stretch. The infrastructure must be modified to slow drivers down – not to maintain the auto-normative status quo. Remove the street parking – it's public land, not private property. Implement traffic calming measures like raised crosswalks and curb humps out, because believe it or not I'm not going to come to the meeting but you should just build the bike lane and do it quickly.</p> |
| Daniel | Marcin    | 1910 Westchester Drive                      | dsmarcin@gmail.com        |   |
| Jordan | Day       | 1401 Blair Mill Road apt 1606               | jordandayaia@gmail.com    | <p>The concrete curbs need to be moved closer to driveway intersections--as designed, it looks like a car can enter the bikeway (eg. at the Extra Space Storage) and park there. MCDOT should make sure that can't happen with at minimum a bollard/flexpost at both sides of every driveway intersection with the bikeway to ensure cars/trucks can't enter it</p>   |
| Jerry  | Kickenson | 1701 Ladd Street, Wheaton MD 20902          | jerry.kickenson@gmail.com | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How did you land on Windham as the terminus of the bikeway?</li> <li>2. It is important to provide adequate intersection protection at University Blvd and Reddie Drive. The pictures in the presentation (and in the 90% design plan) imply an adequate setback, and what looks like what may be corner islands with a bike queuing area. All good - but these elements are not explicitly stated, nor included in the legend. Can you be more explicit? More generally, will the bikeway align with the NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials) "Don't Give Up the Intersection" guidelines (<a href="https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NACTO_Dont-Give-Up-at-the-Intersection.pdf">https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NACTO_Dont-Give-Up-at-the-Intersection.pdf</a>)?</li> <li>3. The presentation doesn't mention modifyig traffic signals, for instance to prohibit right turn on red when bikes have a green light to cross. Will this be included?</li> <li>4. Will there be rumble stripes on bikeway before intersections to alert riders?</li> <li>5. From Reddie to Blueridge, the parking lanes are only 7.5 feet wide. Isn't 8 feet the standard minimum?</li> </ol>   |

## Amherst Avenue Bikeway Public Hearing - Online Comments

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| Daniel   | Obrzut    | 11018 Cone Ln, wheaton,<br>MD 20902                | obrzut@hotmail.com            | I am in favor of the proposed bikeway. I currently use Amherst as both a pedestrian and cyclist, and this project should make both walking and bicycling safer. I will regularly use the bike lanes to access the Wheaton Library, Wheaton post office, and Wheaton Regional Park from Wheaton Forest Neighborhood.   |
| Maddy    | Walczak   | 44 Maryland Ave Rockville<br>Apt 1509              | maanwalczak@gmail.com         | Step in the right direction! bike lanes protected from car lanes are better for both drivers and bikers! My only concern is that there is that unless the bike lanes are more protected with bollards unruly drivers may drive into the bike lane and make it dangerous for everyone.   |
| Helen    | Heinrich  | 11512 Bucknell Dr #202,<br>Silver Spring, MD 20902 |                               | I wholeheartedly support this project. There should not be any on street parking on Amherst, especially not with the parking garage and multiple lots right there. I cycle that route almost daily to get to doctor's appointments and other errands, and cars go at whatever speed they feel like, so a protected bike lane will calm the traffic AND provide a safe area. I do request that both the sidewalks and the bike lane be made wide enough for wheelchairs (as power chair users use both, and the sidewalks do not comply with the ADA at all).  |
| Brigid   | Howe      | 1900 Ladd St, Wheaton,<br>MD 20902                 | brigid.howe@gmail.com         | <p>I am in support of this project. I think it will provide valuable connections from the metro to neighborhoods, the Wheaton rec center, the upcoming cultural arts center, as well as providing a safer alternative for non-motorists than Georgia Avenue for several blocks in downtown Wheaton. I would like to understand how this fits into the upcoming MHP construction, though.</p> <p>I write from my perspective as a Wheaton resident of almost 15 years and a lifelong county resident. I also frequently travel on Amherst as a pedestrian and a driver, and feel that it is designed for higher speeds than are safe - especially the segment between Reddie and University where the sidewalks on the east side of the road are narrow and blocked by poles and meters. A bikeway will serve as a road diet and make the road safer for all road users.</p> |
| Jennifer | Fernandez |  | jenniferfernandez88@gmail.com | I am a Wheaton resident who regularly drives this stretch to bring my child to elementary school. This project would vastly improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists, including children. There is always ample parking in the neighborhood, so the loss of one lane of parking for bike safety is fair trade   |

## Amherst Avenue Bikeway Public Hearing - Online Comments

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| Eric   | Brenner | 1610 Sanford Rd.                                 | ericlewisbrenner@gmail.com | <p>Recognizing that this is beyond the scope of this project, I still want to comment on a few easy (?) things that could happen on either end of Amherst to make these improvements even more valuable for a larger number of people.</p> <p>Whatever you come up with on the Arcola-Windham stretch will be great/appreciated, but once hitting Arcola, please find a way to connect to the Wheaton Library &amp; Rec. Center. This could be a wider side-path on Arcola, or paving the already existing (unpaved) pedestrian right-of-way that is used by walkers between Parker-Henderson-Armitage-Arcola. The neighbors on either side of this cut through might object, but it's not their land, and it's already used by walkers going between the Wheaton Rec. Center and Wheaton Regional Park.</p> <p>And on the south end of Amherst, below Windom, past Evans Parkway Neighborhood park, this route is already used by a lot of bikers/walkers to get to the Forest Estates neighborhood, but the passage would be made much easier with an improved connection between the two medical buildings that exist between Dennis and Medical Park Drive. Everyone now goes around the dumpster, after going up on the curb at the parking lot...just make it easier/more-official. The county health building also could be part of the solution as their/your property abuts the medical building on Dennis.</p> <p>Similar improvements between Medical Park Drive and St. John's (school). There are now steps and a curb on the path that is heavily used to get to the rest of Amherst. Just make this a cleaner cut that doesn't require getting off of a bike.</p> <p>I know (think?) that the long-term bicycle plan envisions this longer connection, just hoping that the momentum from the current work on Amherst leads to some of the easier fixes just beyond the scope of the current project.</p> |
| Eric   | Nenon   | 1939 Westchester Dr.,<br>Silver Spring, MD 20902 | epnenon@gmail.com          | <p>During the hearing on December 12th, a projection of anticipated usage of the Amherst Ave Bikeway was requested. Although the County's response to the question admitted that some modeling had been done, no numbers were provided and building new bikeways was justified in general on a "build it and they will come" rationale. Until there is a bikeway between downtown Silver Spring and Wyndham Lane, it seems highly probable that usage of the Amherst Ave Bikeway will be low. The County would be better off building the planned bikeways going north out of downtown Silver Spring first and only building the Amherst Ave Bikeway once the bikeway projects in between downtown Silver Spring and Wyndham Lane are completed or nearing completion.</p>   |
| Eric   | Nenon   | 1939 Westchester Dr.,<br>Silver Spring, MD 20902 | epnenon@gmail.com          | <p>A significant portion of the budget for the Amherst Ave Bikeway seems as though it will be consumed by the construction of parking bays along Amherst Ave in between Reddie Drive and Pritchard Road in order to preserve street parking for homeowners and sufficient auto lane width on Amherst for buses. Has the County considered issuing an RFI for developers to buy out property owners on the east side of Amherst between Pritchard Road and University Boulevard (or at least Pritchard and Reddie) and construct high density housing (and street level retail if appropriate)? The requirements for the winning developer would need to include parking that would accommodate the Amherst Ave Bikeway and lane width on Amherst for buses.</p>  |
| Amelia | Freund  | 1801 Brisbane St                                 | ameliafreund17@gmail.com   | <p>This project is a great idea, and is a good step towards making biking a viable alternative to driving in the Wheaton/Silver Spring area.</p>   |

## Amherst Avenue Bikeway Public Hearing - Online Comments

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| Mary Grace Hebert | 2109 Bucknell Terrace,<br>Wheaton, MD 20902       | gracehebert@gmail.com   | This is a great idea. However, I would urge you to consider adding some speed bumps on Amherst in addition to the bike lanes. I live just a few blocks from Amherst and walk in the area regularly. People drive way too fast down Amherst to get around Georgia. The addition of a bike lane is great and will probably make the road safer for cyclists, but people really need to slow down. Please consider adding a few speed bumps along the road, like there are on similar roads such as Plyers Mill. People also tend to speed down Pritchard and Reddie, but I think that's out of scope for this project.  |
| Aaron Droller     | 10001 Tenbrook Drive,<br>Silver Spring, MD 20901  | aaron.droller@gmail.com | I do not support the addition of any bike lane to Amherst. This area is almost never used by bicyclists in any fashion, and adding a bike lane will not induce them to this area. This will serve no purpose other than to increase traffic congestion and inconvenience residents. This area is meant for vehicular travel, which should be prioritized over a few dozen bikes (at most) that MIGHT come through the area. The addition of bike lanes on Old Georgetown Road has been a complete disaster for traffic, and anyone who drives on that road almost never sees bicyclists throughout the day. This type of social engineering needs to stop. Montgomery County a car-centered, whether people like it or not, and the government should not seek to ruin the quality of life for the loud bicycle lobby that won't even use the bike lane anyway. Find another place for a bike lane that doesn't inconvenience residents.  |
| Rob Fox           | 10804 Drawbridge Court,<br>Silver Spring MD 20902 | rob.env.fox@gmail.com   | <p>I am strongly in favor of this project. Our urban community needs to have support for multiple modes of transportation for traveling. This is doubly so in light of the county's goals for reducing our contributions to climate change. This project should move forward with the utmost speed. The lanes should be protected, and be on both sides of the street to allow for easier travel in both directions. DC has installed bike lanes across the city, and while there have been some reductions in parking, it has not made people unable to park their vehicles or transit their neighborhoods by car. We can achieve the same - some loss of parking is not equivalent to a tragedy, particularly in light of the fact that motor vehicles can sacrifice some of their conveniences in order to truly share the road with other users. We all pay county taxes, both those who wish to use motor vehicles to go about our lives, and those who use other means that would be supported by these lanes. Those of us who prefer to navigate our communities by bicycle pay taxes and deserve services the same as those who prefer to use cars. The roads becoming slightly less friendly to motor vehicles isn't an injustice, but is instead moving us towards allowing equal protection for all.</p> <p>Beyond that, I hope that in the future, this project is able to connect with improved cycling infrastructure on the McComas Ave Greenway and for getting from Amherst to the Library via Arcola. Our community deserves an ecosystem of this infrastructure to support lower impact and more vulnerable modes of transportation.</p> |