

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 09-0173R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Clarke, Holton, D'Adamo, Spector, Middleton, Henry,
Conaway, Curran, Welch, Kraft

Introduced and read first time: November 23, 2009

Assigned to: Community Development Subcommittee

REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES: Department of Public Works, Department of
Transportation

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

1 A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

2 **Informational Hearing - Mountain Biking on City Reservoir Watershed Property**

3 FOR the purpose of inviting representatives of the City agencies concerned with mountain biking
4 on City reservoir watershed property and the mountain biking community to discuss how to
5 allow mountain biking on City reservoir watershed property without harming water quality.

6 **Recitals**

7 The City of Baltimore owns and maintains 17,580 acres of watershed property surrounding
8 the 3 city-owned reservoirs that provide water for 1.8 million people in the Metropolitan
9 Baltimore area. This property is used as a natural buffer to ensure that the region's water supply
10 is kept clean, pure, and safe. While the sole purpose of the watershed buffer property is the
11 maintenance of an ample supply of the highest quality water, the City has striven to allow
12 recreational uses consistent with this purpose on these park-like lands.

13 The mountain biking community has been especially eager to take advantage of the
14 recreational possibilities afforded by the City reservoir watershed property. In an effort to
15 continue to allow mountain biking on the reservoir watershed property without negatively
16 impacting the water supply, the City and representatives from the biking community agreed on a
17 plan for mountain biking on City reservoir watershed property in January 1998. This
18 cooperative plan allowed limited mountain biking in certain designated areas, called on the
19 biking community to assist in maintaining the allowed trails and policing its members' activities,
20 provided for improved trail signage, and laid out a path for the opening of more trails to
21 mountain bike use in the future.

22 Recently, a renewed focus on watershed quality has led to increased enforcement of all
23 regulations governing the watershed buffer properties, including those restricting mountain
24 biking. This, in turn, has drawn attention to the shortfalls on all sides in implementing the 1998
25 agreement. While cycling groups have been among the most active stewards of the watershed
26 property and the trail systems on these properties, mountain biking has become widespread
27 outside of the designated areas. Concerns have also been raised about both a continuing lack of
28 proper trail signage and a lack of progress towards officially opening up either more areas for
29 mountain biking or the type of "singletrack" trails that have become more popular in the sport
30 since 1998.

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

Council Bill 09-0173R

1 Accordingly, it is apparent that the City and the mountain biking community should revisit
2 the 1998 plan to determine what elements have and have not worked for all concerned. It is
3 hoped that renewed dialogue can facilitate the kind of mutually agreeable cooperative
4 understanding that led to the original plan for mountain biking on City reservoir watershed
5 property.

6 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
7 Head of the Bureau of Water & Wastewater, the Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Committee, the
8 President of the Maryland Association of Mountain Bike Operators, and the Department of
9 Transportation’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner are invited to appear before the Council for a
10 hearing to discuss how to allow mountain biking on City reservoir watershed property without
11 harming water quality.

12 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
13 Director of Public Works, the Mayor’s Legislative Liaison to the City Council, the Mayor’s
14 Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Head of the Bureau of Water & Wastewater, the President of
15 the Maryland Association of Mountain Bike Operators, and the Department of Transportation’s
16 Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner.