

# The Annapolis Boating Center

*An Idea to Meet a Public Need 1/5/18*

Anne Arundel County is considering the creation of an Annapolis Boating Center to provide an additional public boat ramp and facilities for Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) and the Anne Arundel Paddling & Rowing Community (PARC) and other potential partners.

Anne Arundel County has documented a serious deficiency in public water access through the Land, Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan [http://www.aacounty.org/departments/recreation-parks/forms-and-publications/LPPRP\\_2017\\_Draft.pdf](http://www.aacounty.org/departments/recreation-parks/forms-and-publications/LPPRP_2017_Draft.pdf). Planning for improvements is underway. A County Water Access Commission has been established to offer recommendations for improvements, <http://www.aacounty.org/boards-and-commissions/water-access-commission/index.html>. Among the deficiencies is an extreme shortage of public trailered boat launch facilities (three in a county with more trailered boats than any county in Maryland). Locations for additional launch sites are currently under evaluation. <http://www.aacounty.org/boards-and-commissions/water-access-commission/boat-ramp-location-study/index.html>

As additional water access projects are planned, the opportunity to address inadequate facilities for two organizations, Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) and the Anne Arundel Paddling & Rowing Community (PARC) has been identified.

Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) is a non-profit founded in 1991 to bring the thrill, freedom, and therapeutic value of boating to persons with disabilities, wounded warriors, and children from at-risk communities. CRAB has a fleet of six Beneteau First 22A's (A for adaptive) sailboats and they take close to 1,000 people sailing every year. CRAB is looking to acquire a pontoon boat to take persons boating who do not wish to leave their wheelchairs. As demand has increased for CRAB's services, the accessibility to Sandy Point State Park during high season is becoming a limiting factor. CRAB is currently considering other options for a base of operations that will eliminate any restrictions on their guests' ability to reach CRAB's facilities. The Anne Arundel Water Access Commission has made a recommendation for County support for a new CRAB facility. For more information go to: <http://www.crabsailing.org>

PARC includes the Annapolis Rowing Club Masters and Juniors, Dragon Boaters, Irish Rowers, and the Stand-up Paddleboarders (SUPs), and Kayakers. Many of these groups are 501C non profit organizations many of which have been in operation since the 1980's and 1990's. These groups comprise several thousand rowers and are rapidly outgrowing their spaces. The Annapolis Masters and Junior Rowing Clubs are currently located on the South River. The Dragon Boaters and the Irish Rowers are located on Spa Creek. Each of these organizations has active websites. The Juniors rowing program offers excellent opportunities for college scholarships. Junior women rowers are now the number one scholarship for college admission.

The potential to establish a public boating center that combines CRAB, PARC and a public boat launch facility is an exciting opportunity that warrants serious consideration. Quiet Waters Park as well as other potential locations should be evaluated.

We are seeking your thoughts on this idea. Please share your ideas with us:

Mike Lofton, Chair AA Water Access Commission; [msl49@aol.com](mailto:msl49@aol.com)

PARC, Chris Poulsen; [cnpoulsen@gmail.com](mailto:cnpoulsen@gmail.com)

CRAB, Paul Bollinger; [ed@crabsailing.org](mailto:ed@crabsailing.org)