

**SEVERN RIVER COMMISSION**  
**Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
**March 3, 2011 – 4:00 P.M.**  
**Severn Room, 2664 Riva Road, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

	<b>Attendance Record</b>
<b>Members Present:</b> Sally Hornor, Vice Chair	3/3
Kurt Riegel	2/3
Mike Robinson	1/1
Jeff Schomig	3/3
Bob Whitcomb	3/3
Veronica Jagoe for Councilman Benoit (Ex officio)	1/3
 <b>Guests and Staff:</b> Albert Johnston, Greater Severna Park Council	
Margaret McHale, Critical Area Commission	
Ren Serey, Critical Area Commission	
 <b>Members Absent:</b> Lina Vlavianos, Chair	2/3
Joel Dunn	1/3
Joe Rubino	2/3
Scott Hymes, MD DNR (Ex officio)	1/3
Fred Paone, City Council (Ex officio)	0/3

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Hornor called the regular monthly meeting of the Severn River Commission (SRC) to order at 4:10 p.m. in the Severn Room, 2664 Riva Road, Annapolis, MD. A quorum was declared present.

**GUEST SPEAKER**

Ms. Margaret McHale, Chair and Mr. Ren Serey, Executive Director, of the state Critical Area Commission (CAC) were introduced and welcomed. Schomig noted they had been invited back as a follow-up to the informative discussion of Critical Area issues started with SRC in December 2009. He also indicated if all agree it would be desirable to have this become an annual event. Schomig pointed out that today's focus is on two issues: vegetative management plans and shoreline hardening.

The discussion was opened by Ms. McHale and Mr. Serey explaining that the CAC has been working with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on a set of joint regulations which will streamline the process of getting any kind of permit for any sort of shore erosion control measure but at the same time make sure that every agency that has a

stake is part of the process. The regulations will be put out by MDE but includes much input from CAC. Development of a buffer management plan will be part of the MDE permit process and the work cannot proceed under the permit until the local buffer management plan has been approved. This new and improved process will hopefully make the logistics easier. It was noted that the buffer regulations adopted a year ago are clear and strict and require a buffer management plan for disturbance. CAC thinks the vegetative management standards have been tightened completely.

Ms. McHale noted that when dealing with state and local regulations, CAC tries to work as a partnership and to work more cooperatively to negotiate something that is a reasonable compromise. Mr. Serey noted that HB1253 has a requirement that all of the Critical Area state-wide be remapped based on current, accurate information and to make it accessible to everybody through the internet. The state is required to do the initial map and then the local governments will have two years to get those maps through their local zoning process, incorporated into their local procedures. The maps should be available by the end of the year for Talbot and Baltimore Counties.

Several Board of Appeals (BOA) issues were addressed. Ms. McHale is continuing to meet with County Council members to discuss concerns. Expert testimony has been addressed at the state level from the standpoint of getting the authorization to all local Boards of Appeals to accept testimony and recognize it as expert and rely on testimony as it sees fit. The definition of an expert witness from COMAR has been added to the BOA Rules.

Mr. Serey suggested that the CAC and SRC meet regularly, twice a year, simply to discuss critical area issues. Due to the legislative schedule, Ms. McHale asked if the meeting could be scheduled just after November and May of each year. SRC members thanked Ms. McHale and Mr. Serey for the most informative discussion.

**PUBLIC INPUT / AGENDA ITEMS** – There was no public input.

## **MINUTES**

The Minutes for the February 3, 2011, regular monthly SRC meeting were presented for approval. The minutes were approved as written.

**MOTION: A MOTION, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 3, 2011, REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE SRC AS WRITTEN, WAS MADE BY WHITCOMB AND SECONDED BY RIEGEL. THE MOTION WAS PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE AND THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE**

Mike Robinson was introduced and welcomed as the newest member of SRC. He was appointed by the County Executive to a 3-year term which expires January 31, 2014 and filled the vacancy left by Charlotte Lubbert, whose term expired January 31, 2011.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Election of Vice Chair**

In the absence of the Chair, this item will be moved to the April agenda.

**Comprehensive Rezoning**

Whitcomb noted that Lina Vlavianos will be representing him at a Severn River Association (SRA) meeting on Monday with Councilman Benoit and would be the SRA's expert witness relating concerns about the rezoning applications in the Jabez.

**Critical Area Legislation (CA)**

Schomig observed the CAC appears to be addressing coordination with MDE and local governments regarding vegetative management plans and other buffer disturbance such as shoreline hardening.

Commission members were pleased that CAC offered to visit every six months to discuss critical area issues/concerns. Schomig pointed out that this shows a regular discourse between county government and the state. Vlavianos will extend an invitation to CAC.

**Annapolis** – No one was present to report.

**Oyster Restoration Activities in the Severn River / Slag**

Hornor noted she has nothing new to report on slag. Concerns were still raised about the similarities in composition between the slag presently in the Severn and the slag causing problems in New Jersey. There has still been no response from the Corps of Engineers. SRC is not sure who can answer this question.

Whitcomb reported he had attended the Oyster Forum with all the top players in the state dealing with oyster restoration and sanctuaries. He attended a session on aquaculture and what the state is doing to try to train, work with it and provide financial incentives. Areas were identified where DNR would be investing in restoration this year. Unfortunately, last year's investment in the Severn will not be repeated this year. Whitcomb expressed concerns about funding to monitor the projects for growth and survival. He pointed out regardless of funding, the Severn oyster reef will continue to be seeded and grow.

Hornor announced that Dick Carey, the Magothy River Association (MRA) dive safety officer and dive coordinator, will be running the MRA diver training workshop at the Naval Academy pool on April 9. MRA's Earth Day Oyster Dive is April 16, 2011. Hornor recommended that Whitcomb contact Mr Carey about monitoring of oysters in the Severn since he will have 16 midshipmen trained to do such work after April 16.

### **Septics**

Whitcomb stated he received a response from the County Health Department dated January 28, 2011 showing that 74 retrofitted septic systems have been installed for the period from October 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010 in the Severn River watershed. Funding is limited to residents with failing septic systems in the Critical Area and financial need.

### **Website**

Robinson agreed to respond to questions/comments received through the website and to update the site as needed with help from other commission members. He will call Lubbert about county contacts.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **HB 415**

Whitcomb reported that Vlavianos and he had discussed this bill. Vlavianos was the only person who spoke in opposition to the bill before the Environmental Matters Committee. This bill, originally introduced by Prince George's County, has been requested to be remanded to the Anne Arundel County Delegation. In a conversation with Delegate Costa, Whitcomb explained that there is no basis for a relaxation of regulations on the Severn and that this is not a good bill. Delegate Costa agreed. Mr. Al Johnston will attend the County Delegation meeting on March 4, 2011, in opposition to the bill.

**PUBLIC INPUT/NEW ITEMS** – There was no public input.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m. The next SRC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2011, at 4:00 p.m. in the Severn Room (4<sup>th</sup> Floor), 2664 Riva Road, Annapolis, MD.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Weeks  
AACo. DPW, Bureau of Engineering  
Watershed, Ecosystem & Restoration Services