

SEVERN RIVER COMMISSION
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2011 – 4:00 P.M.
Severn Room, 2664 Riva Road, 4th Floor

		Attendance Record
Members Present:	Lina Vlavianos, Chair	9/10
	Sally Hornor, Vice Chair	9/10
	Mike Robinson	7/8
	Joe Rubino	7/10
	Jeff Schomig (via conference call)	9/10
	Bob Whitcomb	9/10
Guests and Staff:	Brenda Reiber, County Executive's Office	
	Brenda Weeks, AACo. DPW/WERS	
Members Absent:	Joel Dunn	4/10
	Kurt Riegel	8/10
	Scott Hymes, MD DNR (Ex officio)	4/10
	Fred Paone, City Council (Ex officio)	0/10

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Vlavianos called the regular monthly meeting of the Severn River Commission (SRC) to order at 4:15 p.m. in the Severn Room, 2664 Riva Road, Annapolis, MD. A quorum was declared present.

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

MINUTES

The Minutes for the August 4, 2011, regular monthly meeting and the August 15, 2011 special meeting were presented for approval. Both sets of minutes were approved as written.

MOTION: A MOTION, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE AUGUST 4, 2011, REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING AND THE AUGUST 15, 2011, SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SRC AS WRITTEN, WAS MADE BY HORNOR AND SECONDED BY WHITCOMB. THE MOTION WAS PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE AND THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE

- (1) Ms. Sonal Sanghavi, State Highway Administration (SHA), will be attending the October 6, 2011 SRC meeting to discuss SHA related issues.
- (2) Received a letter from MD Department of Transportation (Aug. 23, 2011) regarding SHA excess property on the Jabez.
- (3) Received an e-mail from Councilman Benoit (Aug. 9, 2011) announcing his resignation from SRC and reasons given.
- (4) Sent a letter to Councilman Benoit (Aug. 22, 2011) explaining the roll of SRC and disagreeing on his assertion SRC has become activist rather than advisory.
- (5) Sent a letter to the County Executive (Aug. 9, 2011) regarding slag dumping in the Severn River.
- (6) Received a letter of invitation from the Center for Agro-Ecology announcing the Fall 2011 Phase II WIP workshops. The workshop for the Lower Western Shore will be September 22, 2011 in Mechanicsville, MD. The workshops are designed to provide information regarding costs, a variety of best management practices, and answer remaining questions during the final stages of the WIP process.

OLD BUSINESS

Jabez/SHA Excess Property

Vlavianos reported that Robinson and she attended the September 6, 2011 County Council meeting where Councilman Benoit introduced Resolution 52-11 endorsing transfer of SHA property to Anne Arundel County for recreational purposes. Supposedly the adjoining Gordon Trust property is being proposed for recreational purposes as well with the SHA's property to be used for a road. (This is purely speculative). SRC has had no input from Councilman Benoit or anyone else on what is being proposed for that property.

Vlavianos provided Brenda Reiber with materials and information so the Administration would be aware of the extent of SRC's involvement since 1996 with SHA to preserve the property and receiving assurances that it would be preserved. Ms. Reiber is setting up a meeting with the property owner and Recreation & Parks (R&P) to determine what is planned. She assured SRC the Administration is interested to have SRC fully informed and involved.

Vlavianos expressed grave concern that Councilman Benoit, despite being an SRC ex-officio member and knowing fully well SRC's opposition to denuding mature woods, proceeded in private discussions with SHA and R&P to advocate a recreational facility for West County in this natural environment. It was SHA's inquiry about SRC's position that alerted SRC to what was being proposed.

Comprehensive Rezoning

Brenda Reiber reported the county is very pleased that the veto of South County zoning issues was sustained. Hopefully the point was made that the county is against spot zoning.

Critical Area

Schomig is finalizing SRC's letter to Bob Hubbard, Director of Anne Arundel County Inspections & Permits, with examples of questionable permitted clearing in the Critical Area (CA).

Annapolis

Vlavianos reported progress is being made for the Annapolis appointments and she is awaiting a confirmation letter from the Mayor.

Oyster Restoration Activities

Whitcomb stated that new sets of spat will be arriving next week at distribution points on the river. The Bay Ridge Community is the newest sponsor for a total of four sponsors involved. In response to questions, it was noted the spat is planted in rows on natural substrate created by the Corps of Engineers, and the slag substrate is not touched.

Whitcomb reported the first year diving survey showed excellent results. Visibility was good, survival rate was very good, and growth (measurements) were good. After the oysters were measured they were returned to the Bay. Also observed was an emergence of an entire sanctuary of active marine life in an area that was void before. EXCITING NEWS!

Vlavianos noted that all of this is a result of Whitcomb's coordination and efforts over the last two years and commended Whitcomb and Hornor for all their hard work and success.

Slag

No response has been received from the County Executive to SRC's August 9, 2011 letter. SRC is concerned about additional placement of slag in the Severn River or the Chesapeake Bay region without further studies to determine if it's safe.

Septics

Whitcomb has learned that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources is installing a demonstration advanced septic system in Jonas Green Park but no details are available. He will follow up and keep SRC updated.

Priest Point – For the present, this item will be removed from the agenda.

Website

Robinson reported that the SRC's website had 983 hits in July. He is continuing to do minor editing.

NEW BUSINESS

No Discharge Zone

Whitcomb suggested that the Severn River become a No Discharge Zone based on information available and EPA's press releases for Long Island Sound. During discussion it was noted a letter was written to the Mayor with that suggestion in June 2010 with no response. This letter will be provided as a reference. "No Discharge Zone" will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting to continue discussion.

Letter to County Council

Schomig proposed drafting a letter of introduction and purpose asking County Council to help expedite the appointment of an ex officio member and to invite Council members to attend a monthly commission meeting. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the County Executive.

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

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m. The next SRC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 6, 2011, at 4:00 p.m. in the Severn Room (4th Floor), 2664 Riva Road, Annapolis, MD.

Respectfully submitted,

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