

SEVERN RIVER COMMISSION
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2011 – 4:00 P.M.
Severn Room, 2664 Riva Road, 4th Floor

	Attendance Record
Members Present: Lina Vlavianos, Chair	10/11
Sally Hornor, Vice Chair	10/11
Mike Robinson	8/9
Kurt Riegel	9/11
Joe Rubino	8/11
Jeff Schomig (via conference call)	10/11
Bob Whitcomb	10/11
Scott Hymes, MD DNR (Ex officio)	5/11
 Guests and Staff: Sonal Sanghavi, Maryland State Highway Administration	
Brenda Weeks, AACo. DPW/WERS	
 Members Absent: Joel Dunn	4/11

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Vlavianos called the regular monthly meeting of the Severn River Commission (SRC) to order at 4:05 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.

GUEST SPEAKER

Vlavianos introduced Ms. Sonal Sanghavi, Director of the Office for Environmental Design, Maryland State Highway Administration. She was invited to the meeting to address the SHA excess property and runoff concerns.

Ms. Sanghavi began her presentation by explaining that the Office for Environmental Design is comprised of four divisions: (1) Environmental Programs Division handles all of the mitigation, permitting (related to wetlands, trees, and wildlife aspects), and construction compliance (related to sediment control or any other resource impacts during construction). (2) Environmental Compliance Division handles all of the multi-media inspections or oversight related to maintenance operations. (3) Landscape

Architecture Division supports the planning and design phases of a project, as street tree planting. (4) Landscape Operations Division handles all of the existing landscape, reforestation requirements, and critical area mitigation.

Ms. Sanghavi responded to numerous questions regarding the SHA's property in the Jabez watershed. She noted that at the present time no decision has been made by SHA or Maryland Department of Transportation about the transfer of the property. Earlier this year Neil Pedersen, then with SHA, met with the County and Councilman Jamie Benoit to discuss the potential for transfer and development of this property. Ms. Sanghavi believes the last official word between the county and the councilman is, if the development proposal is to move forward, what is the Commission's position in supporting the development. She understands the Commission ultimately wants to see how the Jabez watershed can be protected and still maintain its environmental quality. Up to now the County has had no dialogue with the Commission. The property was originally acquired by SHA as part of the MD-32 realignment project but Ms. Sanghavi was not sure for what purpose.

SRC was informed that the administration has no plans to purchase the SHA property. Open Space funds are not available for the purchase. The reversal of County Council's vote on acquisition of SHA's excess property was discussed. Vlavianos will request a meeting with the Secretary of the Department of Transportation and a separate meeting with the County Executive to discuss the intentions of each on the subject property.

Robinson presented pictures and described the specifics of three problem areas off I-97 affecting Jabez Branch with large areas of erosion and discharges coming from outfalls. Whitcomb added a fourth site further down I-97 towards Annapolis. It was agreed a meeting will be arranged to visit the sites with SHA personnel. Ms. Sanghavi expressed appreciation that serious problem areas are identified by citizens because SHA staff is limited to identify all problems associated with SHA responsibilities.

The Commission members thanked Ms. Sanghavi for her excellent presentation.

MINUTES

The Minutes for the September 8, 2011, regular monthly meeting were presented for approval. The minutes were approved as written.

MOTION: A MOTION, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2011, REGULAR MONTHLY 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) Doug Hollmann, Anne Arundel County Administrative Hearings Officer, will be the guest speaker in November.
- (2) Letters were sent to County Council Chair Ladd and members requesting he work with the County Executive to fill the County Councilman's ex-officio vacancy.
- (3) A letter was sent to the County Executive requesting he work with County Council Chair Ladd to fill the ex-officio vacancy on the Commission.
- (4) Since there has been no response, Vlavianos will write a letter to the Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing as a follow up to the Aug. 4 meeting where representatives from the Board of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors came to the SRC meeting requesting change to sediment/erosion plans in the Severn River watershed. Before taking further action, SRC had requested information on specifics of training for each category of professionals and the source of who introduced the law change request in the past General Assembly session.

OLD BUSINESS

No Discharge Zone

This issue will be discussed at the November meeting when all members, especially the Annapolis representative, will be present. A copy of the June 4, 2010 letter to Mayor Cohen regarding this issue was distributed to SRC members.

Septics

Whitcomb is following the progress of a new, improved, upgraded nitrogen-reducing septic system being installed at Jonas Green Park. It is reported that 500 such systems have been installed successfully in Maryland. He will keep SRC updated.

Slag

SRC has had no response from the County Executive to their August 9, 2011, letter addressing slag issues/concerns.

Oyster Restoration Activities

Whitcomb reported the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) will be planting 400,000 three-month old spat under the old Route 450 Bridge near Jonas Green Park.

Annapolis – There is nothing new to report at this time.

Critical Area

Schomig will finalize the letter to be sent to Robert Hubbard, Director of County Inspections and Permits, regarding examples of County-approved buffer clearing.

Comprehensive Rezoning

Al Johnston's (Greater Severna Park Council) letter to the County Council challenging the Council's interpretation of House Bill 297 was briefly addressed; no action will be taken.

Jabez/SHA Excess Property

This item was addressed in the presentation at the beginning of the meeting.

Website

Robinson reported that the SRC's website had 950 hits in September. He is continuing to do minor editing.

NEW BUSINESS – There was no new business.

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

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. The next SRC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 3, 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