

SEVERN RIVER COMMISSION
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2011 – 4:00 P.M.
Severn Room, 2664 Riva Road, 4th Floor

	Attendance Record
Members Present: Lina Vlavianos, Chair	11/12
Sally Hornor, Vice Chair	11/12
Mike Robinson	9/10
Joe Rubino	9/12
Jeff Schomig	11/12
Bob Whitcomb	11/12
Scott Hymes, MD DNR (Ex officio)	6/12
 Guests and Staff: Douglas Hollmann, AACo. Administrative Hearings Officer	
Brenda Reiber, AACo. Community & Constituent Services	
Brenda Weeks, AACo. DPW/WERS	
 Members Absent: Joel Dunn	4/12
Kurt Riegel	9/12

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. Dunn and Riegel were not in attendance.

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

GUEST SPEAKER

Vlavianos introduced Mr. Doug Hollmann, Administrative Hearings Office (AHO), Anne Arundel County and a former member of the SRC. He was invited to the meeting to discuss his job responsibilities and answer questions of interest to the SRC.

Mr. Hollmann began the discussion by describing the history of zoning in Anne Arundel County which began in 1952 and was followed with the Critical Area overlay in the 1980s. The AHO came about in the 1970s and its original intent was to be a buffer between angry citizens and the county executive on zoning decisions. The office now conducts public hearings on petitions for zoning reclassifications, special exceptions and variances. If someone wants to change the use of a property, establish a use not

normally permitted or be granted relief from following the letter of the law, he would apply to the AHO. Mr. Hollmann related several cases to explain how decisions are made based on the law. He pointed out that the county cannot pass a law which conflicts with a state law. If a request is denied by AHO, one may appeal to the County Board of Appeals or the Circuit Court. During the discussion, Mr. Hollmann responded to numerous questions regarding disturbance to steep slopes, pervious and impervious surfaces, unwarranted hardship, right to a view, water-dependent structures, Critical Area, stormwater management, non-tidal wetlands, and hardening shorelines.

The Commission members thanked Mr. Hollmann for his most informative presentation.

MINUTES

The Minutes for the October 6, 2011, regular monthly meeting were presented for approval. The minutes were approved as written.

MOTION: A MOTION, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE OCTOBER 6, 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) Chair Vlavianos may not be present for the December 1, 2011 SRC meeting. In such case, Hornor will chair the meeting which may start a little past 4:00 p.m.

(2) Hornor, Schomig and Riegel's terms on the SRC expire January 31, 2012. Because of several absences in the past year, Dunn wishes to be removed from the Commission as a representative of Annapolis.

(3) Received a letter from the County Executive appointing Councilman John Grasso as ex officio member to SRC. Mr. Grasso was introduced and welcomed by commission members. He spoke about his environmental efforts for water quality improvements in his district, and was briefed on SRC's concerns about county-approved buffer clearing.

(4) The letter to Robert Hubbard, Director, AACo. Inspection & Permits, regarding approved buffer clearing has been finalized and will be sent.

(5) A follow-up letter was sent to the Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing about discussions with SRC regarding qualifications of land surveyors and landscape architects to develop sediment and erosion control plans equal to professional engineers.

(6) A thank-you email with a list of items to be executed by State Highway Administration (SHA) was sent to Ms. Sonal Sanghavi, Director of the Office for Environmental Design, SHA.

OLD BUSINESS

Jabez – There was nothing new to report.

Comprehensive Rezoning – There is nothing new to report.

Critical Area

Vlavianos signed the letter to be sent to Robert Hubbard, Director of County Inspections and Permits, regarding examples of county-approved buffer clearing. SRC's concern is what is actually approved by the county in terms of buffer clearing. Schomig briefed Grasso on the buffer clearing situation.

Annapolis

The Commission is still waiting for a response from the City regarding the appointment of a representative.

Oyster Restoration Activities

Whitcomb noted that the aerators are working effectively and spats are growing.

Slag

For Grasso's benefit, Hornor gave a brief history of slag dumping in the Severn River and elsewhere in the United States. There has been no response from the County Executive to SRC's August 9, 2011 letter to him on the topic. Grasso said he would follow up.

Septics

Whitcomb reported he has been working closely with DNR about putting up educational signs in Jonas Green Park and other areas where new nitrogen reducing septic systems have been installed in public places.

No Discharge Zone (NDZ)

Whitcomb reported that Long Island Sound is designated as a NDZ because of very strong citizenry involvement and demand for installation of pump-out stations throughout the region. Since the Chesapeake Bay region has not established such organized commitment, Whitcomb suggested it would be more productive to address one small creek at a time starting with Annapolis especially since establishment of a NDZ was suggested by the transition team to the Mayor of Annapolis. Riegel, having served on the team, could take that lead.

Website – There was no update to report.

NEW BUSINESS – There was no new business.

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

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m. The next SRC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 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