

**COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT MINUTES**  
**Commissioners Conference Room**  
**Minutes of October 3, 2007**

COE Members present were Barne Wheeler, Chairman; Marta Kelsey, Frank Allen, Troy Hansen, Larry Hartwick, Caroline Miller, Sandy Neville, and Bill Shreve.

COE Members absent were Daryl Calvano.

WPTF Members present were Dennis Roth.

Others present were Chris Burch and Michael Wyman.

**I) Call to Order:** Mr. Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

**II) Discussion & Approval of August meeting minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of September 5, 2007 as presented. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote.

**III) Continuing Business:**

a. Dennis Canavan, Director of LUGM, Discussion of Comprehensive Water & Sewer Plan Update and Other Upcoming Studies and Initiatives.

Mr. Wheeler introduced Mr. Canavan stating Canavan would be giving updates on the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan (CWSP), Adequate Public Facilities (APF), and the Critical Area Study (CAS). Mr. Canavan stated this is the first major revision to the 1993 CWSP. Mr. Canavan stated the current version of the CWSP should have been updated once every three years, which has not been done. Mr. Canavan stated for the benefit of the citizens of St. Mary's County staff has been working to collectively work on a new document and bring it up to current standards. Mr. Canavan stated METCOM, Health Department and LUGM have been working on this document together for over a year. Mr. Canavan stated the Planning Commission held a public hearing in August of 2007 where they left the record open for two weeks for additional correspondence. Mr. Canavan stated after receiving additional public comment METCOM, Health department, and LUGM have been working to address the comments. Mr. Canavan stated the CWSP would return to the Planning Commission on October 22, 2007, it will then go to the Board of County Commissioners for public hearing for additional comments. Mr. Canavan stated after consolidating all the comments the Board of County Commissioners will approve the 2007 CWSP and we will hold to the three year increments of updating the CWSP.

Mr. Canavan stated the adoption of the CWSP revision will have accurate 2007 data and will reduce the number of piecemeal amendments. Mr. Canavan stated this document is also a valuable resource because METCOM and the County are moving forward with several projects for future expansion of a designated growth area. Mr. Canavan stated if the COE has any input on the CWSP they could forward it to him prior to the second week in November. Mr. Canavan stated this would give the COE the opportunity to read the comments given to the Planning Commission and to review their recommendation. Mr. Canavan stated he would forward the technical report to the COE and then advise the COE of the Planning Commission date. Mr. Canavan stated he would forward the Planning Commission's recommendation to the COE.

Mr. Wheeler stated we have potential reservoir sites and asked if they are applicable today. Mr. Canavan stated they have visited this very paragraph and where some of the former sites have been affected by surrounding developments they are no longer suitable for reservoirs however, there are still sites that are suitable.

Please see IV b. for discussion concerning Critical Area, Adequate Public Facilities and Water Plan.

- b. Discussion of COE web page on the Greensomd web site: format & layout, content, other: Ms. Blake asked about the opening statement on the web page. Mr. Wheeler confirmed the statement came from the County's web page. Ms. Blake asked if the forum date and time could be placed on the site and stated there is a misprint on the current issues page.

Mr. Wheeler stated COE has received a reply from Senator Dyson which he would like to put on the website. It was the consensus of the Commission to post this on the web site. Mr. Wheeler stated he would like to get people in the county to volunteer to work on stuff with the COE. Mr. Wheeler asked how to structure this. Ms. Neville asked if we could partner with the college. After discussion of possible options it was decided to work on a form on the web page on which volunteers could select several different categories. Mr. Wheeler said he would work with Mr. Burch to develop this page and the page where citizen concerns could be raised.

- c. Discussion of upcoming COE forum: attendees, naming, outline of jobs to be done, milestones & responsibilities: Mr. Wheeler asked if the COE wanted to stick with the sustainable living forum. Ms. Neville stated she spoke with Sean the name he recommended for the forum was "Go Green, Save Money" dedicated to Nancy. Discussion regarding items for the public such as light bulbs, plants, raffle of a free home energy survey was entertained. Mr. Wheeler offered to contact SMECO for coupons for the energy survey. Mr. Hartwick volunteered to contact Wal-Mart for coupons for light bulbs and Ms. Miller volunteered to look into obtaining plants. It was the consensus of bring these and additional suggestions to the next meeting. Vendors to be invited were discussed. Ms. Blake stated this year we should limit the number of school vendors because they took up so much space last year. Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Kelsey will measure the airport space. Ms. Blake and Mr. Allen will send out invitations to last year's vendors and come up with a list of new vendors.
- d. Update on Large Industrial Potable water user issue: Mr. Wheeler stated he sent the large industrial potable water use letter. Mr. Wheeler stated he would bug them for a proper response.

Mr. Wheeler stated the State Adjutant General has responded to Mr. Hansen in a rather strongly worded letter basically saying the State is handling water correctly and don't tell us we're not. Mr. Wheeler stated he believes we are owed a meeting from MDE based on Dyson's reply to the Commissioners. Mr. Wheeler stated the State's reply to Mr. Hansen specifically talks about their legal requirement not to allow the management level to be exceeded however how they plan to accomplish that is not specified.

- e. Networking – individual & organizational. Not discussed.

#### **IV) New Business**

- a. Re-approval of Mission & Major Goals: Mr. Wheeler stated having not received any formal BOCC feedback, we can do one of two things: one, ask again for feedback; or two, assume that no feedback means that the BOCC basically has no problem with our direction. The group agreed that the COE should go with the second option until notified otherwise.
- b. Approval of COE study issues: CWSP, Critical Area, Adequate Public Facilities, Water Plan.  
Critical Area. Mr. Canavan stated the Critical Area amendments are being worked on internally by LUGM staff. Mr. Canavan stated once a conclusion on the amendments have been reached he will broaden the opportunity for comments. Mr. Wheeler asked if this review would include the wording for the granting of variances. Mr. Canavan stated it

would. Mr. Canavan stated his target date for the first draft of the Critical Area amendments is December of 2007.

Adequate Public Facilities Proposal. Mr. Canavan stated the County Commissioners appointed an Adequate Public Facilities Task Force (APFTF) and their primary purpose was to look at the school capacity which was currently virtually halting approval of any new major subdivisions. Mr. Canavan stated last year the APFTF put together recommendations and are scheduled for County Commissioner review on November 13, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. Mr. Canavan stated the 2.25% is an annual growth rate that was first recommended at the end of the last calendar year and went forward to the Planning Commission who concurred with the proposed initial 2.25% growth rate. Mr. Canavan explained how the 2.25% growth rate worked. Mr. Wheeler asked where the COE input into the process would come in. Mr. Canavan stated this focuses primarily in schools right now however this may change in the years to come. Mr. Wheeler asked how the growth rate would be rationalized. Mr. Canavan stated every year permits issues for new dwellings will be reviewed which will help formulate the growth rate recommendation to be sent to the County Commissioners. Mr. Canavan said that he did not foresee any substantial input requirement from the COE.

County Water Resource Plan. Mr. Canavan stated when we update our Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the County in calendar year 2008 we have to now expand discussion on a water resource element. Mr. Canavan stated the water resource element is required in the Comprehensive Plan by House Bill 1141 which was passed in the 2006 legislative session. Mr. Canavan stated we now have to update and address: a water resource element, ; a storm water management element; a workforce housing element, etc. by October 2009. Mr. Wheeler asked what role the COE could play in regards to this issue. Mr. Canavan stated part of the work effort by the consultant is to tell us what areas in the Charlotte Hall area could be used for rapid infiltration or drip irrigation. Mr. Canavan stated once this information is gathered he would pass it along to the COE.

- c. Electronic staffing of COE matters – approvals, suspense dates, edits: Mr. Wheeler stated he would like to adopt and agree on a verbal policy that says if you haven't responded to an email prior to the suspense date given then the assumption would be that the "non-responder" concurred. Ms. Blake requested when replying to emails not everyone needs to receive the little comments. The group agreed that: 1) if comments haven't been received by the time requested (minimum 5 working days) they concurrence could be assumed; and 2) that each member should consider her/his replies to see if everyone needs to receive it our only the person receiving input – the primary consideration being (Troy's input) the substantive nature of the comment i.e., non-concurrence or strong disagreement going to all.
- d. Discussion of two (2) potential new Water Policy Task Force members: Mr. Wheeler stated Michael Wayman had applied for membership on the Water Policy Task Force. Mr. Wheeler stated he has been (cc) the WPTF on all the COE information. A motion was made and seconded to accept Mr. Wayman as a member of the WPTF. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote.

A second interested party was discussed. A motion was made and seconded to accept Bob Curry as a member of the WPTF. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote.

**V) Announcements:** None

**VI) Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Mr. Canavan stated he would forward the technical report to the COE and then advise the COE of the Planning Commission date.

Mr. Canavan stated he will forward the Planning Commission's recommendation to the COE.

Mr. Wheeler offered to contact SMECO for coupons for the energy survey.

Mr. Hartwick volunteered to contact Wal-Mart for coupons for light bulbs or plants, etc

Ms. Miller volunteered to investigate plant/flower/vegetation contributions by nurseries/other.

Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Kelsey will measure the airport space.

Ms. Blake and Mr. Allen will send out invitations to last year's vendors and come up with a list of new vendors.