

**Baltimore County Commission on
Environmental Quality
Minutes of Meeting November 17, 2010 (draft 1)**

Attendance

The meeting was convened at 7 PM by chair Brian Fath in the Planning Conference Room of the Jefferson Building.

CEQ members Present: Brian Fath, Nell Strachan, Linda Davis, Russell Donnelly, Lois Jacobs, Mike Pierce, Joan Norman, Jerry Jurrick

CEQ members absent: Kathy Reiner-Martin, Carri Beer, Rex Wright, Ray Davis, Willie Greer, Tom Moore

County Staff: John Alexander, Don Outen

Others, Bridey Gallagher, Katie Beachum, Courtney Peed

Minutes

The minutes from the September and October meetings were approved.

Oregon Ridge Park Update

Courtney Peed, head naturalist at the park, provided an overview of the park, its origins, and the present situation with the deer population. Since the park area was heavily harvested in the mid 1800's, all of the forest is new growth. A small area of about 17 acres was completely killed a few years ago by a gypsy moth infestation. The state now does spot spaying when infestations are discovered.

A 2009 count found 113 deer in the park in a half hour. This is about 5 to 7½ times the number that such land is normally considered as able to support. Courtney said that she often sees emaciated deer in the park.

Deer

The potential changes to the County Code to allow hunting in County Parks, when approved by Rec & Parks, was discussed. The changes to allow exceptions to the prohibition are quite simple, but it was felt that there may be additional changes needed to describe or proscribe the development of a forest management plans. It was agreed that contact should be made with Rec & Parks to obtain their ideas, and any proposed action would need to be reviewed by DEPRM. In the end, the CEQ itself could propose the changes to one or more Councilpersons.

Salt

The State Highways Administration might be starting a pilot program this winter in the Loch Raven Reservoir area to reduce the road salt usage. It is unknown if it will be coordinated with the county.

New Council and Staff

Due to the number of new County Council members and the potential for new department heads, the CEQ should resurrect the district tours that were originally organized for Jonas Jacobson and complete planning for the others. Tours are ready for the 5th and 7th Districts.

There is also a need for the CEQ members to meet with their corresponding Council member to explain the work of the CEQ, and to make sure that they are aware of the studies completed in the past. It is

especially important to ensure that they understand the importance of the Deer and Salt issues. There was discussion of whether to plan a single get-together for all, or to try to meet with them individually.

DEPRM

Don Outen informed the group that forest health assessments will be done at Cromwell Valley (420 acres), Marshy Point (492 acres), and others, similar to the one done in Oregon Ridge (1036 acres).

Don also informed the group that salt and deer are on the list of top issues for DEPRM going into the next administration.

Baltimore Water System

CEQ member Jerry Jurrick gave an overview of the water system, how everything is connected, and where there are uncovered, treated water reservoirs. A notice recently went out to water users and is online at:

baltimorecity.gov/Government/AgenciesDepartments/PublicWorks/PublicNotices/PublicNotification.aspx.

It describes, in somewhat complicated language, that the city has been ordered to take corrective action and is technically in violation. There are presently five uncovered reservoirs at Towson, Montebello, Guilford, Druid Lake, and Ashburton. The engineering to cover Towson is complete, bids should go out soon, and completion is expected in 2013. The others will be corrected over the next 10 years, with some left open but corrected by the installation of UV purification systems. Druid Lake can not be covered due to its importance as a scenic lake to the nearby communities.

The overall program will cost about \$100M.

There is also a new filtration/treatment plant being constructed at Fullerton.

Jerry stated that Baltimore has one of the nation's best water sources with the Gunpowder River (Loch Raven reservoir), which clearly indicates the importance of the salt and deer studies and further action on both.

Sustainability network

The group will meet next Monday, November 22.

Plastic Bag Study

The draft will be heavily reworked before next meeting.

Action items

Brian to write letter to Rec & Parks regarding a potential modification to the County Code to permit hunting in parks.

Linda to prepare list of talking points for discussions with County Councilpersons.

Mike to provide draft of Annual Report

Lois to redraft Plastic Bag study.

Future Meetings

Since the CEQ will not meet in December, the next meeting will be January 26.