



**2016 ANNUAL REPORT TO
BALTIMORE COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND
BALTIMORE COUNTY COUNCIL
March 27, 2019**

Contents

BACKGROUND	1
CEQ MEMBERSHIP.....	1
CEQ MISSION STATEMENT	1
PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS.....	2
Deer Over-Population and Management.....	2
Maryland Forest Conservation Act.....	2
Stormwater Fee Cancellation Impacts	2
Road Salt.....	2
Baltimore County TMDL Reduction Goals.....	3
EPS Development Review and Water Quality Restoration Projects	3
Solar Power - Presentation by Commissioner Wright	3
CEQ Major Report on Solar Facilities.....	3
CONTACT WITH CITIZENS.....	3
CONTACT WITH COUNTY	3
COMMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNICATION	4
ONGOING CEQ MEMBER CONCERNS	4

BACKGROUND

The Baltimore County Advisory Commission on Environmental Quality (CEQ), which was established by legislation in 2003, met nine times throughout the 2016 calendar year. Steven Morsberger, Chair, set the agendas and presided at the meetings. Secretary, Andy Miller, took minutes at the meetings.

This Baltimore County Advisory Commission on Environmental Quality (CEQ) 2016 Annual Report to the Baltimore County Executive and Baltimore County Council fulfills the requirement specified in Baltimore County Code Subsection 3-3-2106 and provides a summary of CEQ activities during 2016.

CEQ MEMBERSHIP

The CEQ enjoyed active membership during 2016. The 2016 CEQ membership included the following individuals:

Name	Appointed By
Linda Davis	County Executive at Large
Brian Fath, PhD	County Executive at Large
Steve Morsberger, CEQ Chair through 9/16	County Executive at Large
James Derui	County Executive Home Builders Representative
Glenn Elseroad	County Executive Agricultural Representative
Andy Miller, PhD	County Executive Educator and Scientist
Rex Wright, PE	County Executive Business Community Representative
Valerie Androutsopoulos	Council District 1
Lois Jacobs, Acting Chair Oct. thru Dec. 2016	Council District 2
Bill Breakey, MD (to October, 2016)	Council District 3
Position open	Council District 4
Carol Newill, MD, PhD	Council District 5
Mary Gruver-Byers	Council District 6
Russell Donnelly	Council District 7 (to 9/16/16)
Karen Wynn	Council District 7 (9/16/16 on)
Brian Lindley	County Government Liaison, EPS
Amelia Atkins	County Government Liaison, EPS Alternate
Kui Zhao	County Government Liaison, Planning

CEQ MISSION STATEMENT

The CEQ activities in 2016 furthered the mission previously established for this Commission.

The purpose of the CEQ, through its duties and responsibilities as described in the Baltimore County Code, Subsection 3-3-21, is to encourage protection and preservation of the natural environment in

Baltimore County and its waterways, including the Chesapeake Bay, by educating the community to make environmentally sustainable decisions and by enlightening, advising, and initiating dialogue with County officials. It facilitates communication between the County government and its residents on environmental needs, programs, and legislation.

As a group of dedicated volunteers for environmental integrity, the members understand the need for following and monitoring environmental plans.

PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS

Deer Over-Population and Management

Managed hunts for deer at Oregon Ridge and Cromwell Valley Park were reported to occur in March. Baltimore County studies on this issue indicate that the hunts may not significantly address over-population. Deer overpopulation in Baltimore County detrimentally impacts forest health and regeneration. An earlier CEQ report (link to it) demonstrated these impacts and as a result the County Council agreed to modify existing county ordinance against harming an animal in a park for managed hunts in Loch Raven Reservoir and Oregon Ridge Park. Farmers on private land can get permission to take a certain number of deer if crop damage due to deer can be demonstrated – Brian Lindley, EPS liaison to CEQ.

Maryland Forest Conservation Act

Commissioner Deriu reported that revisions to the Forest Conservation Act, including a roadside tree preservation measure, did not pass the State Legislature; there is ongoing discussion of a revised version, and rules related to compensatory mitigation projects. The legislature passed a bill modifying mitigation hierarchies and removes challenges by using mitigation banks as a first effort. This will allow maintenance and monitoring activities to be centralized – 4/27 meeting.

Stormwater Fee Cancellation Impacts

As a result of rescinding the Stormwater Remediation Fee, restoration and remediation projects are being cancelled or delayed. However, watershed management programs must still meet the State's TMDL. The part of the Council budget passed on to MDE must have a satisfactory financial assessment plan showing how required elements will be paid for – EPS liaison B. Lindley.

Road Salt

The CEQ had earlier completed a report on the impact of road salt application in Baltimore County. No action had been taken by the county in response to the act so the CEQ continues to pursue new information about the topic. Commissioner Donnelly attended the Maryland Water Monitoring Council Workshop. Presenter David Wong, a Massachusetts Marine Ecologist, identified four major impacts; aquatic environment concentrations, decline in macro-invertebrates, sensitive freshwater species, saltwater succession (plants and animals). Sixty-eight (68%) of chloride in Massachusetts State waters was from road salt – similar across nation. They are compiling a large database on soil and water conductivity. Applications of brine in advance of storms can reduce the amount of salt needed. New TMDLs will require implementation plans for load reduction.

Baltimore County TMDL Reduction Goals

EPS Director Vince Gardina gave a presentation and led a discussion on required treatment of the County's 6000 acres of impervious surface. Implementation measures include education, outreach, stormwater management, stream restoration, and tree planting projects. Major progress toward TMDL reductions include upgrades to the County's two wastewater treatment plants. TMDL funding is adequate for FY2017, but future funding is likely to be impacted by the loss of the stormwater remediation fee.

EPS Development Review and Water Quality Restoration Projects

EPS Director Vince Gardina returned to CEQ in October for a presentation on these two major responsibilities of EPS. EPS must ensure compliance for Stormwater Management Projects and the Forest Conservation Act, and deal with critical area and buffer issues as well. Baltimore County has the most enforced forest buffer rules of all Maryland jurisdictions. Mandated Watershed implementation and water quality issues are more difficult due to revenue loss (loss of stormwater fee). Requirements do not end in 2025 – only current TMDL Projects. There are also existing TMDLs for nutrients and sediment. Additional TMDLs are expected for trash, chlordane, PCBs, and bacteria in waterways. The state is working on chloride – which will influence the road salt issue. Mercury is hard to address but is measured and monitored (from coal burning power plants in the Midwest).

Solar Power – Presentation by Commissioner Wright

Commissioner Wright explained the difference between net metering on home energy, and aggregate metering available to counties and non-profit entities. One home can use excess energy produced by another. This is different than the solar farm feeding directly into a distribution system. A county can build this and go straight to the grid. They can be used on parking lots, landfills, schools, and other places – 10/19/16.

CEQ Major Report on Solar Facilities

Councilman Kach asked CEQ in October to come up with a detailed Solar Facilities Report to help the County draft a Bill on this topic by the end of the year. A CEQ subcommittee was formed and chaired by Commissioner Davis. Research results were incorporated into a draft report which was presented at the November 30th meeting. The report was delivered on Friday, December 2nd. Legislative Counsel, Tom Peddicort, used this report in drafting a Council bill.

CONTACT WITH CITIZENS

Various citizen inquiries came to the CEQ via its website. The requests were referred to the proper County agencies. Frequent issues focused on trash disposal, stream erosion and water quality, stormwater management and maintenance, and open space.

CONTACT WITH COUNTY

During 2016, CEQ members:

- Met with Council members to update them on CEQ activities and to discuss current environmental concerns and priorities in their districts.

- Attended Council Work Sessions and testified at the November 10, 2015 session in opposition to Bill 85-15: Elimination of the Stormwater Remediation Fee
- Welcomed the ongoing, regular attendance of County government staff who attended meetings and provided advice and support to the Commission:
 - Brian Lindley, Supervisor of Environmental Enforcement, EPS.
 - Amelia Atkins, Natural Resource Specialist, EPS.
 - Kui Zhao, Demographer & Master Plan Coordinator, Department of Planning

COMMISSION INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNICATION

The CEQ members discussed questions, concerns, and priorities in their districts and areas of environmental expertise. CEQ members:

- Updated the CEQ website.
- Prioritized topics for future CEQ consideration.
- Attended various environmental lectures, hearings, workshops and events around the County.

ONGOING CEQ MEMBER CONCERNS

The Commission will continue to review environmental issues confronting the County in the coming year, and will be particularly interested in pursuing questions or issues referred by Council members. During the course of CEQ discussions, individual members raised the following issues for possible later action by the commission:

- 2016 Comprehensive Zoning Map Process
- Effects of climate change in Baltimore County
- Recycling and waste reduction
- Invasive species
- County property mowing schedules
- Alternative energy generation/production in Baltimore County
- Deer management
- Canopy cover and street trees