



CHESAPEAKE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. Box 117, Galesville, Maryland 20765

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2006-07

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gary Antonides, Co-President, 2007



In my first message as a Co-President, I'm proud to report that CEPA continues to be involved in several important environmental issues. Please read the account of the forum on "Urban Sprawl and the Bay" which was sponsored by CEPA on Nov. 11th. With so much imminent development in Anne Arundel County, we must take advantage of the latest information we have

about the effects of various types of development on the quality of our streams, rivers, and the bay. As an example, CEPA Trustees are pleased with the environmental aspects of the horse park proposed for the old Naval Academy dairy farm, and that is also covered in this issue.

We continue to be impressed and grateful for the area's riverkeepers. They are gaining influence with our local politicians, and the press now seeks them out for their perspectives on local environmental issues. They sponsor forums, wade-ins, shore restoration projects, etc. as well as patrol our waterways and report violations of the critical area laws. We are happy to include Bob Gallagher's "Riverkeepers Report" for the West and Rhode Rivers in our newsletter, and encourage everyone to support the riverkeepers' efforts.

At the request of the Harwood Civic Association, CEPA has applied for a grant from the County for the the purpose of monitoring the groundwater in the vicinity of the PST Landfill in Harwood, which was recently closed. There is more than the usual concern that toxic material will leach into the groundwater because this landfill was not required to have a liner. One nearby resident has complained about his well water having the same odors as the landfill did when it was active. The status of this project is given in this newsletter, and further developments will be covered as they occur.

Note: Photos in this newsletter are by Rich Romer.

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CEPA ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Gary Antonides & Rich Romer

CEPA sponsored a forum on "Urban Sprawl and the Bay" dealing with the consequences of urban sprawl, such as the spread of impervious surfaces, and the detrimental impact this is having on the Chesapeake Bay, as well as methods to remediate current impacts and minimize future ones. It was held at the South River High School Auditorium on Saturday, Nov. 11, and was chaired by CEPA Trustee Richard Romer.



The Keynote Speaker was Jason Sartori, President of Integrated Planning Consultants. He is the Statewide Project Manager for Reality Check Plus/Maryland. He holds a MS in Community Planning from the University of Maryland.

Sartori said that Maryland is the fifth most densely populated state, and may now be the fastest growing. In 2000, the population was 5.3 million and in 2030 it is projected by the Census Bureau to be 7.0 million. (Current state estimates are 500,000 below this.) This level of growth could have adverse consequences without better coordinated, long-range planning, say the approximately 850 Marylanders who participated in "Reality Check Plus," a unique series of growth visioning exercises held around the state in May and June 2006. This broad cross-section of Maryland residents

said we need a community vision for the future, comprehensive plans that codify that vision, and zoning that faithfully follows those plans. And, they said the state must provide much of the financial support to meet critical local infrastructure needs. Reality Check participants in all four regions of Maryland (Central, Western, Southern and Eastern Shore) expressed strong and consistent support for a pattern of development that is different from that which exists in Maryland today and vastly different from the pattern that current local zoning policies would permit.

Already, much of the new growth and development in Maryland is occurring far from Baltimore or other older cities and towns or even distant from the first tier of suburban counties. Instead, it has migrated to formerly rural counties in Western Maryland, Southern Maryland, and the Eastern Shore and even across the state line into neighboring Delaware, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. This dispersed pattern of development is consuming large amounts of farm and forest land, requiring significant financial outlays for infrastructure and services, and promoting sharp increases in commuting times and traffic congestion.

The alternative to such sprawl is for our existing cities and towns to absorb the increases in population and jobs. RealityCheck participants throughout the state supported efforts to re-direct some of the new growth to Baltimore in particular, which has lost about a third of its population over the last half century. Whether or not this can be done instead of turning farms, forests and other natural areas into an endless series of houses, stores and offices will have a profound effect on the already troubled Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, as well as the quality of life in all of Maryland. For more information on this project, see www.realitycheckmaryland.org.



U.S. Geological Survey Research Geographer Peter Claggett used satellite photography and GIS data to depict the spread of urban sprawl in our area, and described the detrimental impacts on the health of the Bay. Claggett holds a BS from the University of California and two MS degrees from Miami University of Ohio.

From 1990 to 2000, the population in the Chesapeake watershed increased by 8% and impervious surfaces, like parking lots, roads and buildings, increased 41%. As water moves across the land, the runoff carries pollution into local creeks, streams, rivers and eventually the Bay. Sixteen times as much water runs off a parking lot as would run off a meadow of the same size. The Bay's watershed extends into several states, as far north as New York. An estimated 17.6 million people will live in the watershed by 2020, almost three times the population of Maryland alone. How the other states manage their development greatly affects the health of the Bay and our quality of life.

Aggravating the problems associated with new growth, about 20,000 people move from Baltimore and D.C. to suburbs

annually. Jobs are moving away from city centers like Richmond and Baltimore to the surrounding suburbs. Also, between 1970 and 2000, average house size increased from 1,500 to 2,265 square feet, lot sizes increased by 60%, and average household population decreased.

Sprawling residential development normally does NOT increase tax revenues enough to pay for new schools, roads and other infrastructure. When the cost of providing services to new residential development is higher than the tax revenue they generate, many local governments must choose between commercial development and raising taxes. This often leads to competition between communities for commercial development, which may cause communities to compromise important natural resources.

There are potential economic benefits to using Bay friendly development practices, but their application has been limited. Development plans that are different from the usual take longer to review and this time costs developers money, discouraging them from using Bay-Friendly methods. Facilitated discussions with builders, watershed groups and government planners are being held to create recommendations for code and ordinance revisions to better accommodate Bay-friendly practices, and at the same time improve services, create jobs, lower costs and conserve open space, forests, and farmlands. Tools are available to help community planners evaluate land use decisions. See www.placematters.com.



The third speaker was Greg Bowen, Calvert County's Director of Planning and Zoning, who argued that urban sprawl and growth can be controlled if there is the political will to do so. Calvert County has over 30,000 acres of forested and farm land permanently preserved and was recently praised by Maryland's Secretary of Planning for having one of the most environmentally friendly Comprehensive Plans in the State. Bowen has a Bachelors Degree in Mathematics from St. Mary's College of Maryland and a Masters Degree in Urban Planning and Policy Management from Johns Hopkins University.

The 1980, 1990, and 2000 US Census documented that Calvert County was Maryland's fastest growing jurisdiction with an annual population growth rate that reached 7%. Calvert is on a 40 mile long peninsula surrounded on three sides by the Chesapeake Bay and the Patuxent River, so development has an inevitable impact on the Bay and its tributaries. The County's growth was mostly residential with as much as 70% of the workforce commuting to Washington, Annapolis, and Baltimore. The demand exploded for roads, schools, and governmental services. A new school was built every year. With the decline in traditional agriculture, particularly tobacco, pressure mounted on farmers to sell their property to developers. The rural character which attracted people to Calvert was endangered.

In 1998, Calvert's voters elected a bipartisan Board of County Commissioners who were committed to getting

residential development under control and preserving the County's rural character. This commitment to growth management was ratified in the elections of 2002 and 2006 when the winners overwhelmed a group of candidates well funded by developers. Over the 8 year period, through the use of a wide ranging set of measures, Calvert County reduced its growth rate from almost 7% to well under 2%. In 2006, for the first time in more than a decade no new school was built. The buildout projection of 47,000 was reduced to 37,000. More than 30,000 acres of agricultural and forested land have been permanently preserved.

Calvert County has a strong Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance which is strictly enforced. Approval of a proposed subdivision can be delayed for as long as seven years if existing schools, roads, or governmental services will not support the projected gain in population. Residential housing and commercial development are concentrated in designated town centers. Impact fees and excise taxes have been increased so that approved new development will bear the increased cost of services needed.

Calvert County has become the model for the rest of Maryland in developing strategies for the preservation of land. They are focused around Transfer Development Rights (TDRs) which the County grants to landowners depending on the preservation value of the property. TDRs can be purchased from other landowners and used to increase the approved density in approved subdivisions, where development will already be taking place. TDRs are currently bringing as much as \$9000 per acre and are openly traded between land owners and developers. The County can also purchase particular TDRs and retire them rather than let developers have them.

Bowen expects continuing support from the recently elected Board of County Commissioners. He made it clear that enforcement of Adequate Public Facility Ordinances, zoning restrictions, and environmental protection measures is possible in any jurisdiction if the professionals are supported by their elected officials.

RIVERKEEPER'S REPORT

Bob Gallagher, West/Rhode Riverkeeper, Inc.



Keeping Track of the Seasons Last fall our ospreys postponed their migration to South America by several weeks. Then the tundra swans that usually appear by

Thanksgiving didn't show up until early December. From mid-December into early January, when both rivers are normally about as clean as they get, both were stained reddish brown by an algal bloom called a mahogany tide. Such tides are common in June but almost unheard of in January. In early January when our watermen are normally drift netting white perch in the bay, the perch were ganging up in shallow creeks like John's Creek and Smith Creek as if they were about to spawn weeks ahead of their normal schedule.

Most of us now believe that we are experiencing global climate change caused at least in part by human activity rather than merely experiencing a natural cycle. Now we have to learn more about what can be done about it.

If you haven't seen "An Inconvenient Truth", see it. It isn't a political sermon. It is a well-done effort to make scientifically complex information accessible to all of us. To learn more, attend one of the slide show presentations by former delegate Dick D'Amato or Annapolis mayor Ellen Moyer. If you missed the one we sponsored at the Shady Side Kiwanis Club and would like to go to another presentation, call us and we will find out where it will be presented again.

There will be a number of bills before the general assembly this session that, if enacted, can help mitigate climate change. Those bills include the Clean Cars bill. For more information on these bills and how to express your support for them visit the website of the Maryland League of Conservation Voters: www.mdlcv.org.

The Board of Appeals – Your Voice Counts. In the administrative process for getting permission to build in the critical area buffer, the Anne Arundel County Board of Appeals is the last level of protection for the environment. If an application from an owner or developer to build in the buffer is denied by the Board of Appeals, the only other avenue is to go to court. Despite the plainly stated goal of the critical area law to protect the environment by limiting development in the buffer, the Board of Appeals in Anne Arundel County has rarely seen a variance application they didn't like. The Board has approved a large majority of the applications submitted to it, including, in late December 2006, the application of the owners of the house illegally built on Little Dobbins Island, by a vote of five to two.

In December of 2006, it was the duty of the seven newly elected members of the County Council to appoint, or reappoint, the seven members of the Board of Appeals. The Council had developed the practice of each council member selecting one member of the Board of Appeals, essentially an agreement that "you vote for my guy and I will vote for yours."

Prior to the date of the formal appointments, it appeared that most, if not all, of the five who voted in favor of the developer of Little Dobbins Island would be reappointed and one or both of those who voted against would not be reappointed. West/Rhode Riverkeeper, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and other groups asked their supporters to let council members know by letters, phone calls, e-mails and by appearing at council meetings that this was unacceptable.

Approximately 30 people attended the next Council meeting. Councilman Ed Reilly said he couldn't remember whether he had ever received more constituent comments than he did on this subject. At the following Council meeting the Council announced the appointment of four new members and the reappointment of Billy Moulden, one of the two members of the Board of Appeals who had voted against the developer of Little Dobbins Island. It remains to be seen whether the decisions of the new Board of Appeals will be significantly better than the decisions of the old Board, but, without your help, we would never have the hope of better decisions.

Second Annual Wade-In and Kayak Race. The Smithsonian Environmental Research Center will again host our Wade-In at the SERC waterfront in Edgewater. It will be on Saturday May 12th and will be followed by the SERC Open House. This

year, the day's events will begin with a kayak race from Discovery Village to SERC, beginning at 9:00 on Saturday morning and a fun paddle beginning at Camp Letts at 10:00. Consult our website in early April for more details.

See you on the river, Bob Gallagher

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E-mail: riverkeeper@comcast.net

Website: www.westrhoderiverkeeper.org

WEST/RHODE RIVER COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER

The Riverkeeper program has announced a community fundraising event to be held on **Saturday, March 17 from 7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.** at the West River Sailing Club in Galesville, MD. The event will be a casual cocktail party with live music, and is hosted by Galesville resident Ava Hill.

The Galesville party is one of a series of events sponsored by West/Rhode River residents to broaden support for the Riverkeeper program.

"Foundations have been very generous in supporting our work but they want to see community support," notes Bob Gallagher, West/Rhode Riverkeeper. "This event continues our effort to grow that support."

The waters of the West and Rhode Rivers and their tributaries are as polluted as they have ever been. The best, if not the only, chance for saving our rivers lies in direct action by the community. The most important thing is getting the community behind us," says Gallagher. "We can do all the projects we want, but we won't save our rivers or the bay without a community that cares."

If you are interested in sponsoring an event in your West/Rhode River community or in learning more about the March 17th party please contact Amy Colhoun, Program Director at 410-507-6028 or amy@westrhoderiverkeeper.org. Tickets for the March 17th event are \$100/person or \$120/couple.

CEPA APPLIES TO MONITOR PST LANDFILL IN HARWOOD

At the request of the Harwood Civic Association, CEPA has applied for a grant from the County for the the purpose of monitoring the groundwater in the vicinity of the now closed PST Landfill in Harwood. There is more than the usual concern that toxic material will leach into the groundwater because this landfill was not required to have a liner. One nearby resident has complained about his well water having



Councilman Ed Reilly



Delegate Bob Costa

the same odors as the landfill did when it was active. The present owner, Waste Management, Inc. is required to monitor the groundwater for at least five years, so the grant will initially be used to evaluate the adequacy of their monitoring. After that, CEPA would be responsible for the monitoring, which could last for five or more years.

At the December CEPA Trustees meeting, County Councilman Ed Reilly and State Delegate Bob Costa, who are members of a special committee to consider this grant, discussed some of the details involved. Delegate Costa is particularly interested in setting a precedent of independent testing in situations like this.

The County funds were collected as user fees at the landfill and held by the County to remedy any problems the landfill caused. CEPA would use them solely for technical support and expenses. CEPA has submitted the necessary papers and is waiting for a response from the County.

CEPA SUPPORTS PROPOSED HORSE PARK ON NAVAL ACADEMY PROPERTY IN GAMBRILLS



At the January CEPA Trustee meeting, Stuart Pittman Jr. and Erin Peterson presented the Maryland Stadium Authority's proposal for a horse park on the old Naval Academy dairy farm property.

Currently, much of the 875 acre tract is in crops, which are fertilized with nitrogen in the form of chicken manure, and the runoff goes into the Jabez Branch and the Towsers Branch. The horse park proposal includes a number of improvements to the site that would benefit the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The State's proposal would replace tilled cropland with turf and planted trees. Grass and forest buffers would maintain the integrity of topsoil. The grass meadows that would cover much of the horse park acreage would be maintained as turf for cross country equestrian competitions and would not require the kind of fertilization that is needed for hay.

The published plan for the horse park goes into some detail outlining a commitment to environmental considerations in the site design. It proposes that parking areas be constructed of semi-permeable materials with trees planted between the parking rows. It proposes a storm water drainage system that divides the property into five drainage areas, each of which includes a storm water retention pond. This design collects and holds runoff on the site. The ponds would be constructed to allow re-use of water for irrigation and watering of sand riding arenas. The buildings on the site would be constructed in accordance with the very stringent U.S. Green Building Council LEED guidelines for sustainable design. While the design includes construction of 800 stalls to be used for events, we understand that fewer than 30 horses would actually reside on the farm. Manure from the

visiting and resident horses would be stored in containers and removed from the site daily.

We feel that the other proposals that we know about for the property (gravel mining and conventional farming) are not as environmentally friendly as the horse park. Also, the economic viability of raising crops is questionable, and will probably become more so in the future, making the property vulnerable to development at a later date. After establishing the proposed horse park, further development is unlikely.

Other nature oriented activities such as bird watching and a nature trail could be incorporated with minimal impact to the equestrian activities and natural surroundings. CEPA has sent a letter to County Executive Leopold asking him to support the horse park.

PROFILE OF A TRUSTEE

Jerry Hill, Co-President 2007



George (Jerry) Hill was recently elected Co-President of CEPA's Board of Trustees along with Gary Antonides. This is his second time serving as Co-President since joining the CEPA board in 1994.

Jerry was born in Washington and resided in Bethesda, Maryland through high school. He went to American University in Washington for a bachelor's degree in Business and then went on to the University of Maryland for a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering.

He later went back to College Park for a masters degree in Mechanical Engineering.

He has worked in the field of ship design and navy ship survivability for most of his engineering career. He is currently employed by Alion Science and Technology in Alexandria, Virginia (formerly John J. McMullen Associates, Inc.), a firm of naval architects and marine engineers. He is responsible for a group that designs the structures of ship hulls to meet operational strength requirements. He also oversees a second group that provides aircraft carrier design and maintenance services to the U.S. Navy. Earlier in his career he worked in test and diagnosis of ship structures, propulsion systems, and machinery along with CEPA trustee and current Co-President, Gary Antonides.

Jerry's affiliation with CEPA goes back to his parents. After moving to the area from Bethesda in 1971, his father, James Hill, joined the CEPA board as a Trustee. Jerry's mother, Nancy, served as recording secretary for many years. Over the years Jerry has been active in a number of committees including serving as Chairman of the Planning Committee for the past three years. Recently, he was active in planning the Stormwater Runoff Forum sponsored jointly with other local environmental organizations. He has recruited a number of the trustees currently serving on the board.

Jerry is an active pilot and shares ownership of a single engine airplane based at Lee airport in Edgewater. He knows no better way to conceptualize and appreciate the

Chesapeake Bay watershed than to fly over it in a small plane. He has flown Bob Gallagher, the West/Rhode Riverkeeper, over the watershed several times to check on reports of violations. Jerry and his wife, Ava, use the plane on vacations, both short and long. They made trips to New York, New England, and Canada during the past two summers. They kept the plane in Orlando the previous winter and made several trips across Florida and Key West.

Ava serves on the West/Rhode Riverkeeper Executive Board. Jerry and Ava live on Lerch Creek in Galesville, where they keep a boat and a canoe for experiencing the beauties of the Bay from sea level as well as from above.

HOW TO GET ON CEPA'S MAILING LIST

CEPA distributes its newsletter primarily by electronic means, but if you prefer to get it by mail, just let us know. Either way, to get on our mailing list, please contact Gary Antonides (410-956-6378, garyantonides@comcast.net or go to www.cepaonline.org and click on Contact Us. The newsletters are posted on www.cepaonline.org in a .pdf file. This requires Adobe Acrobat Reader, which can be downloaded free. We send emails when a new newsletter is available and provide the link to go directly to it.

2007 CEPA MEMBERSHIP AND/OR RIVERKEEPER CONTRIBUTION

To support CEPA or the West/Rhode Riverkeeper, please use the form below. Donations to both are tax deductible. A CEPA membership for 2007 is \$20., and entitles you to our newsletters, and to vote for our Trustees.

Mail to: CEPA, PO Box 117, Galesville, MD 20765

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ (Optional)

Email _____ (Optional)

Occupation _____ (Optional)

Enclosed is: [] \$20. for my CEPA membership.

(Or other amount: \$_____)

[] \$_____ Contribution to the

West/Rhode Riverkeeper.



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