



Welcome to our Newsletter!

[AEC Web Site](#)

December 28, 2012

Attend the AEC's Next Meeting!

The Annapolis Environmental Commission's (AEC) meetings are open to the public. We hope you'll join our upcoming discussion about environmental issues facing our city on Wednesday, January 2, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the third floor conference room at 145 Gorman Street, Annapolis, MD 21401. Our meeting dates have changed! AEC meetings are now held on the first Wednesday of every month.

Update on the Crystal Spring Project

The AEC is currently in discussions with the developers of the Crystal Spring development that seeks to combine commercial, retail, townhomes, assisted living and entertainment facilities on 110 acres off of Forest Drive, near Annapolis Middle school. While the AEC and other environmental groups are thrilled that the developers are willing to protect additional forest and plant trees offsite to mitigate some of the damage caused by cutting down so much Priority Forest on the site, they will not agree to preserve important nontidal wetlands on site. In addition to many continuing care units around the property, they would like to build the main facility, a six story, CCRC building with underground parking, in an area containing several nontidal wetlands. The Mayor, the AEC, and the developer believe that to apply a minimum buffer of 25 ft. around the nontidal wetland would destroy the nontidal wetland in question. While we would rather not see any of the hydrology of the site altered nor any of the nontidal wetlands destroyed, in the spirit of compromise we have agreed in principle that at least five of the wetlands could be impacted if there is agreement to preserve the vernal pool, intermittent stream and at least one nontidal wetland that is currently under the southernmost wing of the main, six story, U-shaped CCRC building. To preserve them, there must be adequate buffers and the minimums required by MDE are not nearly adequate. Luckily, the City has the discretion to insist on adequate buffer of 100ft. or more. We think there is room for compromise and hope that the developers will agree to continue to discuss alternatives for preserving these important natural features on site. It should be noted that the city has not yet received a formal development application from the developer and therefore the city has not officially ruled on any of these issues. The city did receive the Forest Stand Delineation (FSD) this week and the AEC looks forward to receiving and reviewing it when it is made public sometime next week.

Update on the Reserve at Quiet Waters

Even though the Zoning Board of Appeals has not issued its written opinion about its rejection of the planned unit development known as the Reserve at Quiet Waters, the Building Board of Appeals has issued the following statement indicating that a hearing to discuss the appeal filed which challenged the DNEP's acceptance of the RQW Forest Conservation Plan, will be considered on January 22, 2012. See December 12, 2012 letter giving notice of that hearing, below. The AEC questions why the Building Board of Appeals would hear this matter in light of the fact that the Board of Appeals has rejected the planned unit development. We have not received any response other than we must attend the hearing if we have any concerns. We also question why, after being promised that a full public hearing would be held to give the AEC, the public and environmental groups the opportunity to be heard on the merits of the Forest Conservation Act issues, the City will instead hold a hearing in the middle of the day and limit participation to only those with legal standing to testify. Again, this seems to be a little too little and a little too late, in our view and in conflict with what the Mayor and others have promised in previous statements regarding the city's commitment to enforce the Forest Conservation Act, to its full extent rather than at a minimal level, adhering to the Act's intent.

ANNAPOLIS BUILDING BOARD OF APPEALS

SCHEDULING NOTICE

The Appellants are hereby notified that the above captioned matter is scheduled for hearing on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at 1:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 160 Duke of Gloucester Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401. The hearing will convene to consider any preliminary matters concerning the case (i.e., jurisdiction, standing and whether it is appropriate for the Board to hear this matter at this time). Any and all written submissions regarding a preliminary matter are required to be filed with the Building Board of Appeals no later than January 8, 2013.

The Appellant(s), the owner of the property which is the subject of the matter appealed and the City of Annapolis, Department of Neighborhood and Environmental Programs shall each have an opportunity to address the Board at the hearing. Each presentation shall be limited to twenty (20) minutes. Other parties with legal standing shall also have an opportunity to address the Board on the preliminary matters. The merits of the Appeal will not be discussed at this hearing.

After the conclusion of the January 22 hearing, the Building Board of Appeals will determine whether it will proceed to hear the merits of the appeal. If the Board decides to proceed with the merits of the appeal, it will schedule the matter for hearing no later than its regularly scheduled March, 2013 meeting.

ANNAPOLIS BUILDING BOARD OF APPEALS

The AEC has had no discussion with the developers for the property since the Board of Appeals rejected the developers' application on September 19, 2012. However, we are open to discussing options for the site that preserves the site's natural features but allows for

smart growth and the “model project” from an environmental perspective, that the Mayor promised for both the RQW and CS projects. See the Capital's article about the RQW news [here](#).

Legislative Session Approaching

The Maryland General Assembly is scheduled to begin its annual session on Jan. 9 at 12 p.m. Environmental laws and regulations are expected to be under attack, especially from some rural counties. In addition to defending against those attacks, concerned lawmakers and citizens will push for new laws to reduce trash from bottles and retail bags, to increase funding for local pollution reduction efforts, to encourage wind energy and to protect Western Maryland from gas drilling technologies before studies on the technologies are finished, among other initiatives. The annual Legislative Summit at which environmental activists will organize for the legislative session will be held Tuesday, Jan. 29 from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Miller Conference Room, Miller Senate Building, 11 Bladen St. in Annapolis. Go [here](#) to R.S.V.P. and for more details.

EPA Discharge Site

The Environmental Protection Agency has a free, user-friendly searchable database that will show what pollutants are being discharged in your river and which facilities are responsible for the discharge. Check out the Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR) Pollutant Loading Tool [here](#).

Water Citizen News

Our friends at the [Anne Arundel County Watershed Stewards Academy](#) shared the link for a new website called [Water Citizen News](#) "Everything Water for Every Citizen." Read stories on water from a number of viewpoints: business, policy, culture, and more.

Winter Energy Tips

Winter is upon us. Here are some tips for saving energy (and lowering your heating bills) this winter. Colder temperatures make your heating system work harder to keep your home feeling comfortable. Now is the time to make a WinterReady checklist, with the following energy-saving improvements that can make a difference in your winter heating bill.

- Schedule a Quick Home Energy Check-up with an energy efficiency professional.
- Have your heating system tuned up, and save with rebates from approved participating contractors.
- Lower the temperature on your water heater, and conserve hot water when you can.
- Install efficient-flow faucets and showerheads to reduce water heating costs year-around.
- Seal holes and seams in your ductwork.

- Caulk and seal gaps around doors, windows and even electrical outlets.
- Save an average of 2 percent on your energy bill for every degree you lower your thermostat.
- Let the sun in. Keep window shades and drapes open during winter months to let in the sun's radiant heat.
- Install a glass screen or insert in your fireplace to prevent the loss of warm air through the chimney.
- Close off vents in unused rooms.
- Make sure that drapes, plants or furniture do not block registers for supply or air return.
- Clean or replace your furnace air filter regularly.
- Consider replacing your furnace. If your furnace is more than 10 years old, it's likely only about 60-70% efficient. New furnances are up to 96% efficient.

Visit bge.com/winterready, where you can take a virtual home tour and find the tools and resources to prepare for the cold weather ahead.

Events Calendar

Legislative Summit - January 29th - 4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m..

Environmentalists will meet and organize for the Maryland Legislative Session. Miller Conference Room, Miller Senate Building. 11 Bladen St. in Annapolis.

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Suggestions or Comments? Email us at annapolisenvcom@gmail.com

Attend the AEC's Next Meeting!

January 2, 2013 7:00 p.m.

145 Gorman Street, 3rd floor conference room

*The AEC is an independent board consisting of nine City residents who are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Aldermen to be concerned with the protection and improvement of the natural health and welfare of the environment.
The views portrayed by the AEC are not necessarily shared by the City of Annapolis, staff or elected officials.*

www.annapolis.gov/environment
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