

Chatham County Environmental Review Advisory Committee (ERAC)

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: July 11, 2013

Location: Conference Room, Dunlap Building

Committee Members Present:

Victor D'Amato

Robert Soots

David Mattison

Joanie McLean

Delonda Alexander

Jerry Cole

Dan LaMontagne County Director of Environmental Quality

No attendees from the public were present

1: **Selection of recording secretary** – Robert Soots

2: **Approval of April 11, 2013 meeting minutes** – Draft minutes were reviewed and approved. Motion for approval by Robert Soots and seconded by Dave Mattison. Motion passed unanimously. (Need to check who made motion and seconded)

3: **Annual report to Board of Commissioners (BOC)** – Discussion continued on the contents of the form used by the ERAC to provide its annual report to the BOC (attached). Dan LaMontagne pointed out that the ERC will present its 2012 report during the August 19, 2013 BOC meeting. The discussion focused on the RECOMMENDED CHANGES section of the form. The draft version of the report expressed a desire for more guidance from the BOC on assignment of special projects. However, The general consensus among the participants was that topics for consideration should be provided to the BOC. Following a lengthy discussions on lack of a County position on fracking, concern about loss of local authority due to pending State legislation, conflicts between legislators and rules and procedures of the Mining and Energy Commission, need for clarification of the role of the BOC liaison person regarding the ERAC and a need for feedback from the BOC on ERAC recommendations the following suggestions were added to this section:

- Continued involvement in the activities of the Mining and Energy Commission with feedback/direction from the BOC
- Assist the BOC with the development of a policy statement in defense of local government control of environmental protection.

- Involvement in Land Use Plan discussions.

4: **Public Input** - None

5: **Update from County Staff** – Dan LaMontagne gave an update on the status of legislation being considered in the General Assembly regarding reduction of local government authority. He specifically reported on HB 94 and SB 112 and thinks the legislation will pass. A discussion of the impacts of the legislation on the County, Dan’s office and the ERAC followed. If the legislation is passed, local environmental requirements cannot exceed those required by the State. The impact on Chatham County would be significant because of its stricter requirements.

Adjournment – Joanie McLean motioned to adjourn, which was seconded by Delonda Alexander and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Name of Committee:	Environmental Review Advisory Committee
Date of Presentation:	August 2013
Time Period Covered:	January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012
# of Meetings Held During Period (including any special meeting or community input)	6
MISSION & GOALS – Summarize concisely the committee’s mission (charge), key goals, objectives and measures below. You also may attach as a separate document, but limit to no more than one page single-spaced.	
<p>The mission of the Environmental Review Advisory Committee (ERC) is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise the Board of Commissioners on environmental policy and related county ordinances, including the watershed ordinance. • Conduct special projects, as assigned, to protect the environment. • Assist County staff with review of required state and federal environmental permits for projects in the county. • Partner with towns in the county and other interested governmental agencies on mutual concerns related to the environment. <p>NOTE: The Environmental Review Advisory Committee also serves as the Watershed Review Board.</p>	
ACCOMPLISHMENTS & ACTIVITIES – Summarize concisely below the committee’s major accomplishments and activities of the past year. This should include reports, research, projects, public input, etc. Be sure to identify how they relate to specific goals, objectives or measures. You also may attach as a separate document but limit to no more than one page single-spaced.	
<p>The Environmental Review Advisory Committee (ERAC) met six times last year. Most of those meetings focused on orienting members to related county ordinances. Members saw presentations on the Watershed Protection Ordinance, the Stormwater Ordinance, the Sedimentation and Erosion Control Ordinance, and the Floodplain Protection Ordinance.</p> <p>The Committee also provided recommendations to the BOC on changes to the Watershed Protection Ordinance buffer requirements and on adoption of nutrient management changes to the Stormwater Ordinance.</p> <p>Jerry Cole was asked by the BOC to follow and report back on activities of the Mining and Energy Commission.</p> <p>As the Watershed Review Board, the committee delegated the approval of “Allowable” uses in buffers to Environmental Quality staff.</p>	

BARRIERS & CHALLENGES – Identify any barriers or challenges that make it difficult for the committee to achieve goals or objectives. Limit to the space provided below.

The Committee experienced changes in its make-up with the addition of a number of new members over the past year including: David Mattison, Bob Soots, Joanie McLean, and Mary Beth Koza.

Another challenge for the Committee is the current State legislative activity that threatens to remove local government control with regard to environmental protections.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES: Please list any recommendations to the Board of Commissioners related to the changes in the advisory committee’s membership, mission, goals, objectives or other related issues.

The committee would like more guidance from the BOC on the assignment of special projects.
Suggested topics:

- Continued involvement in the activities of the Mining and Energy Commission with feedback/direction from the BOC.
- Assist the BOC with the development of a policy statement in defense of local government control of environmental protection.