

AGENDA

Baltimore County Commission on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
September 27, 2023 at 7 pm in-person at the Jefferson Building at 105 West Chesapeake Avenue in Towson in the Chesapeake Conference room on the first floor.

CEQ webpage: www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/ceq/index.html

I. Welcome to our first in-person meeting in over 2 years. Masks are optional. Anyone who feels unwell is asked to stay away. We will increase ventilation by opening windows, and use the room air filter. If the local Covid-19 hospitalization rate becomes too high then we will resume meeting on-line. Interested Commissioners please volunteer to form a committee to manage this.

II. County Councilmember David Marks requested that CEQ provide information related to County Code on Weed Control, especially Prohibited Acts. Citations have been issued for pollinator gardens and meadows while public support in Low-Impact Landscaping has been growing.

Kirsten Hoffman will speak on "Proposed Changes to the Baltimore County Weed Ordinance." She will address the recent change in MD State Law including that law's definition of Low Impact Landscaping, the law in other counties and municipalities, and a recommendation for updating County Code. Ms. Hoffman is an experienced architect who is active on the Executive Committee of the Green Towson Alliance and the Legislative Affairs Workgroup of the Maryland Native Plant Coalition.

CEQ Commissioners, please volunteer to join a workgroup on this topic.

III. 8 pm: Minutes of 5/24/2023 meeting, correct and approve.

IV. Update on Plastic Bags bill. Valerie, Karen, Lynda.

V. Update on Oregon Ridge Master Plan. Park Nature Council members and County staff from Recreation & Parks and DEPS are exploring better control of deer in order to allow regeneration of the forest's trees and understory.

- July 2023 visited Catoctin Mountain National Park and toured with the Ranger and manager who is spearheading deer control and forest regeneration efforts.

- 9/21/2023 met online with Dr. Jacob Bowman, the Chairman of the Department of Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. Discussed best practices for measuring impact of deer on the forest and for decreasing the number of deer.

VI. Update on Forest Conservation code changes. No changes since CEQ meeting of 5/24/2023. State law (SB 526 /House bill 0723) Forest Preservation and Retention, addressed several concerns that were raised by speakers at CEQ's Symposium in 2022, except not the time period for maintaining newly planted trees. BCGA is following up with County Councilmembers Marks, Patoka and others.

VII. Closing comments: Carol Newill

CEQ meeting dates: 9/27, 10/25, 12/6/2023.