

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**Department of Land Use and**  
**Growth Management**



**Commissioners of St. Mary's County**

James Randy Guy, President  
Eric Colvin, Commissioner  
Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner  
Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner  
John E. O'Connor, Commissioner

William B. Hunt, AICP, Director  
Harry Knight, Deputy Director

---

To: Commissioners of St. Mary's County  
Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, County Administrator

From: William B. Hunt, Director *WBH*

Date: May 18, 2021

**Public Hearing Staff Report**

**Public Hearing:** To receive public comments on the proposed amendment to the Official Zoning Maps to delete the existing 1000-foot Critical Area Boundary line and replace it with the new Critical Area Boundary line from the Statewide Base Map as required by HB 1253.

**Date of Public Hearing:** March 2, 2021    **Time of Public Hearing:** 9:05 am to 9:30 am  
(approximately)

**Summary of Public Hearing and Correspondence During Open Record Period:** A public hearing was held by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County on March 2, 2021, to obtain public comment on a proposed ordinance to amend the Official Zoning Maps to delete the existing 1000-foot Critical Area Boundary line and replace it with the new Critical Area Boundary line from the Statewide Base Map as required by HB 1253.

Before the public hearing a chart of questions and answers was prepared and made available to the Commissioners and the public through BoardDocs. A second chart and report on comments received was made during the open records period after the public hearing. This information has been added to BoardDocs. The one person spoke at the public hearing also submitted an email with questions.

**Meeting with Critical Area Chairman and Staff:** At the public hearing the Commissioners discussed the possibility of requesting approval from the Critical Area Commission to allow some grandfathering or other exception for projects that could be undertaken and completed using the current Critical Area Boundary. Staff sent a letter with this request to Critical Area Commission Chairman Charles Deegan. Chairman Deegan replied with a letter containing an example from Queen Anne's County that might be of use. The letter from Chairman Deegan has been added to BoardDocs.

On March 9th Chairman Deegan, Critical Area staff, Commissioner Hewitt, County Administrator Dr. Rebecca Bridgett, County Attorney David Weiskopf, and Land Use and Growth Management Director Bill Hunt discussed the limited exception included in the letter from Chairman Deegan. Chairman Deegan and CA staff suggested that the County make a request at the April 7th meeting of the Critical Area Commission to delay adopting the maps to

allow time for a text amendment to include language similar to that used by Queen Anne's County for pending applications.

Recommendation: As a result of the meeting with Chairman Deegan, staff is requesting the decision to adopt the new Critical Area maps be postponed. This postponement will enable staff to make its request at the April 7th meeting of the Critical Area Commission. If an extension for a text amendment is granted by the Critical Area Commission, staff would contact the owners impacted by the new Critical Area Boundary and let them know of the limited ability for project approval using the current Critical Area Boundary. The new Critical Area Boundary maps and the text amendment would be returned to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County for adoption on May 18, 2021.