



# PATUXENT RIVER COMMISSION

301 W. Preston Street, Suite 1101  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2305  
Phone: (410) 767-4500  
Fax: (410) 767-4480  
Internet:

<https://planning.maryland.gov/Pages/OurWork/PaxRiverComm/PatuxentRiverCommInfo.aspx>

**Councilman Michael Leszcz, Co-Chairman**  
**Christopher Perry, Vice Chairman**

*We, the Patuxent River Commission, envision a Patuxent River ecosystem as vital and productive in 2050 as it was in the 1950s. We therefore commit to be stewards and advocates for the Patuxent River and to lead and inspire actions to protect, enhance, and restore living resources and the natural, cultural, economic, and recreational values of the Patuxent River and its watershed.*

☀ Please call Daniel Rosen at MDP 410-767-4577 if you have any questions or comments.

## MEETING SUMMARY

**January 12, 2022**

**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.**

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- Members:** Michael Leszcz, Chair; Chris Perry, Vice-Chair; Frank Allen, Jim Caldwell, Martin Chandler, Rachel Dean, Stacy Clements, John Denniston, Luis Dieguez, Mary Dolan, Jason Dubow, Margaret Everson, Kim Finch, Jennifer Greiner, Morgan Hall, Jr., John Hartline, Bill Hubbard, Scott Knoche, Ronald Marney, Erik Michelsen, Thomas Miller, Diep Nguyen-van Houtte, Byron Petrauskas, Paula Proctor, Brian Riddle, Matt Rowe, Alison Armocida Santoro, Steve Shofar, Joanna Smith, Mark Symborski, Hiram Tanner, Jr., John Tarr, Jason Van Kirk
- Attendees:** Caryn Brookman, Shawn Eum, Jeff Folden, Frank Galosi, Janina Jones, Chris Judy, Katey Leban, Steve Pattison, Barbara Sollner-Webb, Fred Tutman, Tiffany Wright
- Staff:** Debbie Herr Cornwell, Daniel Rosen, Jason Dubow

### **Introduction of New Members, Approval of November 2021 Minutes and Updates**

The meeting was opened with introductions of the following new members: Margaret Everson, Hiram Tanner, Jr., Brian Riddle, Frank Allen, John Tarr, Diep Nguyen-van Houtte. The November 10, 2021 meeting minutes were approved. Chairman Leszcz recognized the passing of Senator Fowler. An update was provided on the Federal Infrastructure Bill and the Commission will ask Amy Guise, US Army Corps of Engineers to present on the funding opportunities at the next Commission meeting.

### **Solar Oyster Project Presentation**

Steve Pattison, EcoLogix Group presented the Solar Oyster Project. It is a floating, high-density shellfish aquaculture production system that will be powered by solar energy. For the large system, they would need to be in water that is at least 20' deep. For the smaller system, a minimum of 18' depth is needed. The pilot project will require a DNR lease for approximately 7 ½ acres and will be approximately 4,700' from the closest shoreline.

The benefits of the floating system are the increased number of oysters that can be produced in a

relatively small footprint, reduced labor and an automated system, stewardship of the environment and improved water quality.

Rachel Dean provided thoughts and concerns from the waterman's perspective. John Hartline suggested the EcoLogix Group reach out to local oyster growers and offered the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Committee to host a meeting. Diep Nguyen-van Houtte asked who the project was targeted towards, and Mr. Pattison indicated the focus was on commercial growers and the restoration market.

#### **I-495 and I-270 Managed Lanes Study Presentation**

Jeffrey Folden, Director of I-495 & I-270 P3 Office at Maryland Department of Transportation provided information on the new American Legion Bridge, noting that the project plans for 20+ years out. The bridge improvement project is included in the MDOT regional plans and Montgomery County plans. The project will include new and expanded transit with commuter buses and an expanded transit center.

The portion of the original project within the Patuxent River watershed is no longer part of the project. If the project is expanded in the future to include that portion, then a new NEPA process would occur.

Karen Brockman presented the managed lanes study and the NEPA process for the project. The preferred alternative in the final environmental impact study avoids displacing business and residential properties as well as natural, cultural and parkland resources. Additional enhancements above mitigation will be provided for direct impacts. The project will reduce congestion and overall delays. A fall 2022 Board of Public Works approval for Phase I is anticipated.

#### **Bear Branch and Other Stream Restoration projects in Prince George's County**

Presentation was tabled until the next meeting.

#### **Update on Eagle Harbor Flooding**

Presentation was tabled until the next meeting. Margaret Everson noted that a PRC infrastructure task group that looked at federal funding opportunities could include consideration of Eagle Harbor projects. Joanna Smith noted that the stream restoration project proposed will help with the town's flooding, and they are looking for grant opportunities.