



**CHATHAM COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ABSTRACT**

ITEM NUMBER:
MEETING DATE:
11-19-07

PART A

Subject:

Discussion about request for a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners about revisions to the Chatham County Watershed Protection Ordinance by establishing additional riparian buffers along streams, seeps and springs and wetland areas of Chatham County.

Action Requested:

Please see Recommendations.

Attachments:

1. Purpose and Intent (*new*)
2. Section 304: Riparian Buffers Required (*revised*)
3. Section 109: Definitions (*revised and placed in new section*)
4. Field Procedures for Classification of Streams and Waterbodies (*new*)
5. Environmental Assessment Triggers
6. Crosswalk for New and Old Section 304

Submitted By:

Fred Royal, Environmental Resources Director

Date

County Manager Review:

Charlie Horne, County Manager

Date

This abstract requires review by:

County Attorney

Date Reviewed

Finance Officer

Date Reviewed

Budget Officer

Date Reviewed

PART B

Introduction / Background / Previous Board Actions:

During the beginning of 2007 the Board of Commissioners requested that the Environmental Review Board provide riparian buffer (revisions to Section 304 of the Watershed Protection Ordinance) and Environmental Assessment minimum triggers recommendations to the Board of Commissioner's.

Issues for Further Discussion and Analysis:

The following list shows the key events leading up to the Board of Commissioners' action to pursue action on the Watershed Protection Ordinance identified in Attachments 1- 4 and Environmental Assessment Triggers in Attachment 5.

- January 16, 2007 –The Board of Commissioners holds a Public Hearing on Proposed Text Amendments to the Watershed Protection Ordinance.
- February 19, 2007 – The Board of Commissioner's holds a Work Session and adopted the establishment of the Environmental Review Board.
- March 8, 2007 Environmental Review Board holds its first meeting
- June 21, 2007 Environmental Review Board submits recommendations for Section 304, Definitions and Purpose and Intent to the Board of Commissioner's
- July 1, 2007 Environmental Review Board submits recommendations for Environmental Assessment Thresholds to the Board of Commissioner's
- August 20, 2007 Public Hearing held for both the riparian buffer and environmental assessment triggers recommendations
- October 3, 2007 Special Planning Board Meeting (includes ERB) to discuss riparian buffers and EA triggers.
- October 8, 2007 Environmental Resources Director position is filled.
- November 1, 2007 ERB Meeting to discuss staff revisions to June 21 recommendations and comment on those revisions
- November 5, 2007 Planning Board meeting to discuss staff revisions to June 21 recommendations and comment on those revisions. The Planning Board approved (3-2) the recommendations with certain stipulations.

The Environmental Review Board's June 21 Recommendation's to the Board of Commissioner's were reviewed by staff, including: Planning Department, Environmental Resources Division, Health Department, Public Works Department and the County Attorney.

There were substantial staff comments and recommendations to the documents and resulted in the final recommendations attached (Attachments 1-5). The changes (comparison document) are generally described in the Crosswalk for New and Old Section 304 (Attachment 6).

The purpose and intent of the documents were left intact, however the language was modified or added to in order to provide; clarity, reasonableness, repeatability and scientifically-based and standard practice methodologies for both the development community and the county administration to follow and understand.

The Environmental Assessment Triggers (Attachment 5) was reviewed by staff and the County Attorney to ensure compliance with state statutes and is included in this agenda package.

Recommendation: The Planning Board recommends the Board of Commissioner's approve the revised Section 304, Section 109 Definitions, Field Procedures for Classification of Streams and Waterbodies, Purpose and Intent and the Environmental Assessment Triggers.