



SassafRAS River Association

P.O. Box 333
Georgetown, MD 21930
www.sassafRASriver.org

October 6, 2009

Honorable Cecil County Board of Commissioners
County Administrative Building
200 Chesapeake Blvd., Ste. 2100
Elkton, MD 21921

Dear Commissioners:

I am testifying on behalf of the SassafRAS River Association (SRA) with regard to the Cecil County Commissioners' Letter of Intent (LOI) to enforce zoning restrictions at Indian Acres campground in Earlville, MD. While this issue has had some longevity, SRA's interest was sparked back in May when it became clear that discussions were underway without the input of the general public. At that time we wrote a letter to the commissioners requesting transparency in the decision making process. We appreciate the opportunity to speak now.

As an organization with a mission to protect water quality in the SassafRAS Watershed, we are strongly opposed to the current Letter of Intent regarding Indian Acres as it does nothing to address water quality issues. Furthermore, SRA is listed as a member of the proposed monitoring committee without ever being asked or solicited for input into the committee function. The current Letter of Intent omits any requirement of a sanitary review for residents entering the proposed transitional program. In addition, the LOI fails to address any of the unsettling environmental and health issues that SRA has discovered that violate current county code such as:

1. Reported incidents of waste and grey water dumping directly onto the grounds by individual residents. While the health department follows up on these reports, there has not been one violator held accountable for this illegal activity. There are at least eight open cases that have yet to be resolved.
2. Twelve parcels with sewage lines directly connected to one of the larger community septic systems, as referenced by the owner of Indian Acres. County law as of 1972 states that "no sewerage, water or drainage system serving two or more properties in the sanitary district may be constructed by any private owner without the prior approval of the Director of Sanitary Facilities." Cecil County Health Department apparently had no prior knowledge of these twelve lines and as such, they continue to go unchecked. SRA has recently informed the Director of Environmental Health of this situation.
3. Permits which allow individual septage haulers to pump sewage from funstead owners' holding tanks and discharge that sewage into one of the combined septic systems at Indian Acres. County ordinance states that "all Cecil County septage must be discharged at a septage receiving facility at the Cecil County Central Landfill," and "all waste must be accompanied by a completed waste manifest form." Septage haulers permitted to operate within Indian Acres are not required to keep a manifest or any record of wastes discharged.

SRA is in support of enforcement of county zoning, however a ten year transition period from full time residency to part time residency only exacerbates the many issues raised above. Allowing a full time population which stands to be greater than any municipality within the watershed to operate for ten more years with no attention to environmental and health impacts is irresponsible and illegal.

SRA hopes the Commissioners will take this opportunity to not only enforce zoning codes but to address the many outstanding environmental issues that threaten the health of the Sassafras and its residents.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kascie Herron". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kascie Herron
Sassafras **RIVERKEEPER®**

Cc: Al Wein
Cecil County Administrator

Chuck Smyser
County Health Department

Honorable E.J. Pipkin
Maryland Senate

Honorable Michael Smigiel
Maryland House of Delegates

Honorable Richard Sossi
Maryland House of Delegates

Honorable Mary Roe Walkup
Maryland House of Delegates

Honorable Frank Kratovil
Member, U.S. House of Representatives