

Eastern Shore Conservancy Planning Conference
Unsinkable Eastern Shore Regional Resilience and Prosperity
Tidewater Inn, Easton, MD October 3, 2013

This was an excellent conference with outstanding speakers.

The Keynote Speaker was Laura Wormuth, Digital Editor, *The Star Democrat*. She was very dynamic. Her message was “Change is Inevitable.” It is how we adapt to it that counts. Like the 1933 Hurricane did a lot of damage to the Eastern Shore, like opening up the OC Inlet. Was that good or bad? Then in 1952 the Bay Bridge opened connecting the shores. Was that good or bad? Abner’s Marina has raised its pier twice and is going to bring in dirt to raise his property 4 feet. He is adapting. We cannot stop the water. Are we going to run or adapt?

The Expert Session: *Climate Change Trends* was led by Dr. Don Boesch, President, UMD Center for Environmental Science <http://www.umces.edu/people/president>. He provided an overview of climate change and thoughts on how to respond. He quickly summarized the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report from Stockholm, Sweden. Link to IPCC web page – <http://www.ipcc.ch/>. You can get the full report here or just a summary. I would suggest the summary (36 pages with lots of charts.) The IPCC report concludes that it is “extremely likely” that human activity is the dominate cause of global warming. We need to reduce emissions to zero!! The Maryland 2012 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act (GGRA) Plan fulfills the mandate to, by the end of 2012, propose a plan that achieves a 25 percent statewide reduction in GHG emissions by 2020, while also spurring job creation and helping improve the economy. Details of MD plans and SLR Projections can be found at <http://climatechange.maryland.gov/>. We need to make choices on emissions. There was a survey done on how people feel/believe relative to climate change. The results are % of the population group that feel/believe as shown below.

Population	Alarmed	Concerned	Curious	Disengaged	Doubtful	Dismissive
USA	16	26	25	5	15	13
MD	23	39	19	5	10	5
Eastern Shore	21	35	24	4	11	6

Education is required. A link for MD & DE Climate Change Education Assessment and Research is <http://www.madeclear.org/>.

Panel Discussion: *Challenges and Opportunities for the Eastern Shore.*

Jim Lewis, UMD Agricultural Extension

- Increased CO₂ and temperature are good for most plants.
- Increased growing season if there is enough water and nutrients
- 10 to 30% increase in crop yields due to CO₂ increase.
- Irrigation from shallow ground water quickly replenished by rain.
- More pests may come due to increased temperature
- Climate change provides job security for Agricultural Scientists

Greg Farley, CLEEn Program, Chesapeake College

- College was built in the 1960s
- New buildings are now more energy efficient
- Using solar and wind for energy
- Lots of Green Initiatives and Opportunities

Kees deMooy, Town of Chestertown

- Chestertown was founded in 1706
- Tourism and Historical Activities are very important
- An old coal power plant left toxic material on site that would be at risk due to SLR

Stuart Clarke, Town Creek Foundation

- Planning is the science of change
- Demographic changes will make the population increasingly diverse
- Need to see who is going to be affected
- Need more people in dialog, need more young people
- There will be a massive redistribution of wealth
- Vulnerable populations will become more vulnerable
- Competition for public resources will change
- Change will take up more resources and people will become more aware
- Opportunities in a carbon constrain environment will change – Need to dream anew.
- Climate change causes sociological stresses – Need to plan for change

First Breakout Session: *Hazard Mitigation for Eastern Shore Towns*

Lisa Craig, City of Annapolis Historic Trust

- They want to keep their historic buildings and their “view sheds”
- They need to work with the Naval Academy and the Academy’s view is they would rather pay later than now.
- The first thing that you need to do is establish what SLR you are going to address

- They are going to address 10 feet (I assume NAVD). Their current FEMA flood plain is at 7.8 feet in 2010. They expect it to be at 8.3 feet in 2050. Their current high tide is at 3.4 feet.
- They are organizing their efforts to develop effective mitigation plans for the hazards that are being identified. They are using a FEMA document for Hazard Mitigation Planning for Historic Districts.
- They need to assess the level of support that they can get to protect historical assets
- They need to engage the public.
- They need a risk analysis
 - Identify hazards
 - Assess Vulnerability
 - Determine Value
 - Determine mitigation costs

Mark James, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

- House Elevation costs average about \$80,000
- Until recently FEMA required a cost benefit analysis to determine whether you got FEMA money. (I have learned from Michael Powell the DE still requires the cost analysis to determine the priority of a request since funds are limited.)
- There is also something called Acquisition/Demolition where a homeowner is paid to leave his “at risk” property. The property ends up being owned by the county.

Second Breakout Session: *Town Planning Solutions to Climate Change*

Cheryl Lewis, Town of Oxford

- Oxford is about 400 homes, 650 residents
- They are raising their homes and sheds
- They are installing flood vents
- They are creating areas to store rainwater until the tide goes back down.
- They are using plants that are saltwater tolerant and trying to slow the water that flows into the Bay.
- They are creating “Living” shorelines
- They do not treat flood from the bay water differently than they treat flood water from the rain. When it is on their property it all looks the same.
- They have installed visibility poles along their streets so that a driver knows how deep the water on the road is.
- Education and early warnings are very important

- Cheryl shared a quote from Daniel Sarewitz, Director of Arizona State University's Consortium for Science, Policy and Outcomes, "The obsession with researching and reducing the human effects on climate has obscured the more important problems of how to build more resilient and sustainable societies, especially in poor regions and countries" <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/02/070207171745.htm>

Summary of Breakout Sessions by Jennifer Hicks, Sustainable Delmarva

- Planning is the most important
- Tools need to be accessible
- Efforts are ongoing
- How to pay for climate change
 - Budgets need to reflect the need for change
 - Economic analysis is required – Cost to do it versus the cost if nothing is done.
- Education is required

Closing Remarks by Secretary Richard Hall, Maryland Department of Planning

- State buildings now require two feet of "Freeboard."

Participants should get an e-mail directing them to a link to the conference's proceedings.