



*Queen  
Anne's  
County*

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION

The Liberty Building  
107 North Liberty Street  
Centreville, Maryland 21617

Telephone 410-758-4406  
Facsimile 410-758-6913

The Ethics Commission  
Kendall Ruffatto, Chairman  
Robert C. Mueller, Esquire  
Reverend Nanese A. Hawthorne  
Harold O. Wilson  
Jody Schulz  
Richard Smith, Alternate Member

Tina Miles, Clerk  
Lynn Knight, Counsel

Advisory Opinion from February 24, 2011

The Commission reviewed an advisory opinion request from a citizen relating to a member of the Queen Anne's County Planning Commission and a potential conflict of interest existing when his attorney appears before him, as a planning commission member.

The Commission determined that given a very specific set of facts, as in the relationship between this Planning Commission member and his attorney as described, there was no actual conflict of interest, but there was an appearance of conflict of interest, under §8-11 A (3), while the parties are in an on-going contractual relationship for representation. Because the two individuals herein have been so publically outspoken about their relationship and pending litigation, a reasonably informed member of the public could infer that the relationship would impair the impartiality and independent judgment of the Planning Commission member when his attorney appears before him on an unrelated matter. The Commission expressly reserves rendering an opinion on whether such an appearance would continue after the representation ceases.

Advisory Opinion 11-03