

The Washington Post

Montgomery Planning Board commissioner dies

By Adam Bernstein
Washington Post Staff Writer
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Jean B. Cryor, 70, a commissioner of the Montgomery County Planning Board who was long active in Maryland journalism and Republican politics, died Nov. 3 at her home in Potomac. She had cancer.

The Montgomery County Council appointed Mrs. Cryor to the Planning Board in 2007 after her 12 years in the House of Delegates, where she served on the House Ways and Means Committee and became its ranking Republican member.

She represented a district that included most of western Montgomery County, and her voting record was described as fiscally conservative and socially moderate.

The election of Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. (R) in 2002 was said to have given Mrs. Cryor more clout on transportation funding issues important to her jurisdiction. She was the county's one GOP state legislator at the time she lost reelection in 2006.

Mrs. Cryor had spent most of her early career in journalism and was an executive at the suburban Gazette Newspapers chain before winning elective office in 1994.

Jean Brown was born in Darby, Pa., on Dec. 13, 1938, and raised in Lansdowne, Pa. She attended the University of Pennsylvania and received a master's degree in business administration in 1979 from what is now Loyola University in Baltimore.

She was a reporter for the Philadelphia Bulletin in the early 1970s and then worked in Philadelphia and Washington as an administrator at the News Election Service, a media consortium responsible for reporting election totals.

She worked for the Gazette from 1987 to 1993, initially as an editor and publisher of papers in the chain and then as a vice president of the company. The Washington Post Co. bought the Gazette toward the end of her tenure.

Last year, Mrs. Cryor taught classes in state and local government at Montgomery College. She was a past president of Women Legislators of Maryland, and her boards memberships including the Maryland Commission for Women, the BlackRock Center for the Arts in Germantown, the Potomac Theatre Co. and Montgomery Women, a leadership and political action committee.

Her husband of 18 years, Dan Cryor, died in 1978.

Survivors include three daughters, Allison Cryor DiNardo of Alexandria, Jennifer Baldwin of North Potomac and Deirdre Cryor of Denver; a brother; a sister; and three grandchildren.

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