

Draft Meeting Summary
COG Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)
January 27, 2010

Members and Alternates

Hon. Robert Catlin, College Park
Hon. Roger Berliner, Vice Chair, Montgomery County Council
Hon. "J" Davis, City of Greenbelt
Hon. Jay Fissette, Chair, Arlington County
Hon. Penelope Gross, Fairfax County Council
Hon. Andrea McGimsey, Loudoun County
Hon. Del Pepper, Alexandria
Hon. Daniel Sze, Falls Church
Hon. Jonathan Way, Manassas City

Austina Casey, District Department of Transportation
Lyn Ericson, Maryland Department of Transportation
Brendan Shane, District Office of Sustainability
Howard Simons, Maryland Department of Transportation
Harriet Tregoning, District Office of Planning
Luke Wisniewski, Maryland Department of the Environment

Adam Ebin, Virginia House of Delegates

Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County
Melissa Adams, Washington Gas
Allison Bishins, World Resource Institute
Nat Bottigheimer, WMATA
Stan Edwards, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection
Katherine Magruder, Maryland Clean Energy Center
Samuel Moki, Prince George's County
John Lord, Loudon County Public Schools
Jeff Platenberg, Loudon County Public Schools
Kara Reeve, District Office of Planning
Lindsay Smith, M-NCPPC, Prince George's County
Dr. Dan Sklarew, George Mason University
Didan Tsongwain, Prince George's County
Lise Van Susteren, Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Hilari Varnadore, Frederick County
Aime Vosper, Northern Virginia Regional Commission

Others Present

John Allender, City of Bowie Environmental Advisory Committee
Eric Bannerman, City of Alexandria
Sharon Cooke, DC Department of Environment
Rick Dooley, Arlington County
Bill Eger, City of Alexandria

Steven Jumper, Washington Gas
Dave Molchany, Fairfax County
Diane O'Grady, citizen
Annette Osso, VSBN
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Ralph Yatsko, City of Falls Church Climate Change Task Force

COG Staff Present

Monica Bansal, Transportation Planner, COG DTP
Leah Boggs, Environmental Planner, COG DEP
Mike Clifford, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Stuart Freudberg, COG, Director, Department of Environmental Programs
Jeff King, Sr. Environmental Planner, COG DEP
Sunil Kumar, Air Quality Planner, COG DEP
Anne Mariani, Environmental Planner, COG DEP
George Nichols, Principal Environmental Planner, COG DEP
Joan Rohlfs, Chief COG Air Quality Planning, COG DEP
Dave Robertson, COG Executive Director

1. Call to Order

Chair Fisetto called the meeting of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) to order at 9:55 a.m.

2. Approval of Meeting Summary for January 27, 2010 and Amendments to the Agenda

Ms. J Davis asked the draft minutes to be modified to better reflect her statement on zoning authority in Montgomery and Prince George's County. Her point was that jurisdictions inside these counties (and not the counties themselves) don't have zoning authority and can't be made accountable for certain actions included in the work plan. This will be corrected. Besides, Ms. Sorenson will be added to the list of presents.

There were no changes to the agenda.

ACTION: Approved meeting summary with edits mentioned above, approved the agenda.

3. Continued discussion of work plan priorities

At the meeting in January, CEEPC approved its 2012 regional energy and climate work plan. The committee also started discussing priorities for 2010 and directed COG staff to propose a list of priority items to support further discussion. COG staff proposal was made available to CEEPC members before the meeting.

Based on this list, Chairman Fisetto asked members to rank the actions according to their significance for helping the region meet its 2012 greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Participants then voted for the actions included in their "top 3".

The result of the vote is the following (*see attachment*):

Tier 1 actions:

1. Government and community wide greenhouse gas inventories – 3rd quarter of 2010
2. System for tracking progress toward GHG reduction goals– 2nd quarter of 2010
3. Regional climate and energy public education campaign – 1st Quarter 2010

Tier 2 actions:

4. Street lights program – 2nd Quarter 2012
5. Jurisdictions purchase or consume 10 percent renewable energy. – *1st Quarter 2012*, 50% of jurisdictions, in collaboration with state energy offices, assist or provide incentives for consumer purchase of renewable energy (e.g., Montgomery County Clean Energy Rewards Program). – *1st Quarter 2012*
6. 10,000 residential units retrofitted annually to achieve a 5-10 percent energy saving, including 500-1,000 units achieving a 10-30 percent energy saving. – *4th Quarter 2010*

Chairman Fisetto called for comments and questions on these preliminary results. He asked participants for input on how to operationalize the work plan and how COG can facilitate this.

Ms. Mc Gimsey said that some jurisdictions will probably be more successful than others on some actions. She wondered to what extent jurisdictions in Virginia would be able to meet the goal for renewable energy.

Ms. Bishins pointed out that the goals for residential retrofits will be difficult to achieve without working first on training and certification of energy auditors and home and building energy retrofit contractors (row 57 of the workplan). She suggested harmonizing the timeframes for these two actions. Chairman Fisetto agreed the two actions are closely tied and should be connected in the 2010 priority list.

Ms. Mc Gimsey mentioned that EPA is working on a pilot program for contractors training and that it would be good to coordinate. Mr. Fisetto referred to EPA Home Performance with Energy Star program that is effective in Maryland and in planning stage for a pilot project in Virginia. Mr. Lord cited a recent DOE webinar on a future national rating system for residential buildings (the presentation can be accessed on DOE EERE website: http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/buildings/publications/pdfs/corporate/ns/doe_webinar_03-09-10.pdf).

Mr. Way said that two types of activities should be distinguished: those in which COG makes a contribution and those that are led by local jurisdictions with COG monitoring and tracking progress. He said the work plan should focus on the former.

Ms. Varnadore said training on GHG emissions inventories offered by COG have been very useful. It helped Frederick County conduct its inventory in-house on a very low budget. Mr. Fisetto asked that a count of jurisdictions with completed greenhouse gas emissions inventory be prepared for next meeting. Mr. King said that a survey was ready to be sent out on government operations and community wide inventories.

The discussion then focused on street lights. Chairman Fisetto mentioned a pilot project in Arlington County. Starting next month and during the coming year, 1000 street and traffic lights will be replaced. Mr. Fisetto asked for more information on what is being done by COG street light group. He wondered if the timeline in CEEPC work plan is not too distant since projects are already being implemented by jurisdictions.

Mr. Bottingheimer said that street lights projects are emblematic projects to pursue because they are very visible.

Ms. Davis pointed out that all jurisdictions don't have control on street lights replacement. For example in Greenbelt, street lights are leased to Pepco and not owned by the city. Ms. McGimsey said the situation is similar in Loudoun County. She asked for more information on what is or is not possible to do in all jurisdictions.

Mr. Fisetto said that street light projects should also be considered from a regional green purchasing perspective.

Mr. Pepper asked for a survey of street lights management and replacement projects to be made by next meeting. Mr. Nichols answered that most data have already been compiled by COG. An additional survey will be made to better

quantity the regional potential for energy savings with street light replacement. The findings will be presented at the next CEEPC meeting.

Ms. Tregoning said that the committee needs to be clear and strategic on how it envisions its mission. Issues on which it's more difficult to get cooperation between jurisdictions or that require collaboration with external partners are potentially areas where the Committee adds the biggest value. In comparison, some other items, such as progress tracking for instance, are equally important but can be addressed with coordination at the staff level.

Mr. Agazi said that priority should be given to buildings. Adopting COG green building policy is more important than, for example, purchasing renewable energy credits. Answering to Mr. Fisette about the percentage of jurisdictions that have adopted COG policy to date, Mr. Nichols said it is about 80%, with the goal of reaching 100% in a year from now.

Mr. Berliner added that the biggest challenge is to improve energy efficiency of the existing building stock, not new construction. He said that the work plan should refer to commercial and multi-family units as well as residential units (L58 of the work plan). For these types of buildings, it is even harder to find technical and financing solutions. This is an area where COG can help. A study of financing options for non-residential building retrofits would be especially useful. Mr. Edwards mentioned a study of the commercial and multi-family sector that Montgomery County is about to kick off.

Ms. Varnadore suggested that COG organize peer exchange on EECBG projects. Mr. Freudberg confirmed that this will be done in the coming months. Mr. Fisette added that it would also be useful to have a summary of how many jurisdictions have projects in each area (street lights, commercial buildings etc.)

Ms. Bishins urged jurisdictions to consider transportation and buildings with an integrated approach. For example, investing money in LEED certification for a building that isn't connected to transit doesn't make much sense. For example it would be interesting to know how LEED certified buildings and Regional Activity Centers overlap.

Mr. Kambiz said it would be useful to get a sense of average return on investment rates to compare all measures and set up priorities. He gave the example of LEED silver certification of government buildings in Fairfax County, a measure that proves to pay for itself over time.

As a conclusion, Mr Fisette reminded that this will be an on-going conversation: CEEPC work plan and agenda will be adapted as new issues are emerging.

4. Climate and Energy Outreach and Communication

Mr. Fisette recalled that CEEPC 2012 work plan includes the design and implementation of a regional outreach and education program. This action has been identified as a priority activity.

Mr. Freudberg presented key-points and potential questions to be addressed in this future program. He said that several studies had showed that up to 25% energy could be saved with behavioral changes only. Competition between neighbors, communities, jurisdictions can be used to help tap this potential. An ad hoc workgroup is going to be appointed today to help design a regional program. It will have to determine how this program can add value, and not compete, with all the existing campaigns. A choice will also need to be made about the message (energy vs. climate) and the targeted audience.

Chairman Fisette announced the list of persons that will serve on this ad hoc committee:

- Christina Twomey, Public Affairs, Maryland Energy Administration
- Andy Farmer, Education Resource Manager, Virginia State Corporation Commission
- Sharon Cooke, Director, Community Outreach, District Department of the Environment
- Melissa Adams, Office of Sustainability, Washington Gas
- Debbi Jarvis, VP Corporate Communications, Pepco
- Irene Cimino, Dominion, Manager, Corporate Public Relations

He opened the floor to comments and discussion.

Ms. Tregoning said peer pressure is undoubtedly a very effective way to engage people. In addition, creating a green brand for the Capital Region would also be useful to highlight all the activities already happening in all jurisdictions. Marketing money from Sustainable Energy Utilities, or equivalent programs, could be pooled for that. In the area of small inexpensive actions that people can take to reduce their energy consumption and GHG emissions, she mentioned a study recently released by the Garrison Institute and NRDC

(<http://content.usatoday.com/communities/greenhouse/post/2010/03/what-simple-changes-save-the-most-energy-study-lists-10-best/1>).

Ms. Gross suggested including a local government PIO person in the workgroup. She said a regional outreach program should have “a simple message that can be expressed by many voices”, similarly to previous regional campaigns on drought or air quality. She recommended the outreach workgroup to consider a diversity of audiences and communities (languages, cultures).

Ms. Magruder said an important aspect of the campaign will be to direct people to the proper resources if they want more information. Key points of contacts should be identified throughout the region.

Mr. Simmons said the outreach program should also target the business sector and publicize their actions.

Ms. Van Susteren asked if TV channels (other than WJLA and its Home Energy Makeover contest) could be partners.

Ms. Bishins said the program should focus not only on what people can do at home but also include transportation. She warned that focusing only on TV may exclude certain people who don't watch TV or watch it on the internet. Advertisement in transit is another channel to be used, as well as social media. She recommended getting in touch with blogging experts from the green DC blogging community.

Mr. Lord said the EPA Energy Star brand can be used as part of this effort. Polls have shown that the brand is well-recognized nationally.

Mr. Sklarew said that communicating on climate change is too controversial and recommended focusing on energy. He said that there is a lot of enthusiasm on campuses that can be tapped. He mentioned an energy challenge program conducted at UMD and GMU in which 4000 students have participated.

Ms. Mc Gimsey said that successful branding critical will be critical to get funding. This region should be able to take advantage of having major decision-makers who live in the area.

Mr. Agazzi said that existing transportation and air quality campaigns should be leveraged (Clean Air Partners, Commuter Connection). He agreed that the campaign should avoid debates on climate change and focus instead on energy efficiency.

Mr. Jumper suggested developing a regional compact for a coordinated region-wide program in which individual initiatives could fit.

Mr. Fisette summarized the take-away points:

- Set up clear messaging and goals
- Respect the audience
- Use professional PR
- Use a diversity of media: TV, social media, internet
- Energy preferable to climate change
- Build on existing successes (previous regional campaigns)
- Find media partners.

5. Other business

a. Regional Climate and Energy Work Plan Progress Report

Mr. King said that the 2012 workplan adopted in January 2010 commits us to produce an annual progress report. The focus for 2010 will be to develop the process, building on existing COG surveys and expanding online survey capabilities. The first full progress report will be released early 2011.

A close collaboration with utilities will be needed. An EAC subcommittee chaired by Loudoun County energy manager Najib Salehi was recently appointed to work on that issue. Part of the project is also to work on progress visualization. The concept of regional energy and climate dashboard will be explored. At first sight the report should present regional aggregates and not individual data.

The next surveys to come will pertain to climate inventories and plans, street lights and renewable energy. Mr. Fisetto suggests that EAC reporting workgroup be completed with a couple of CEEPC members to lead this project.

Ms. Mc Gimsey commented that it will be important to keep individual jurisdictions separated out to foster competition.

b. Legal Opinion re Home Energy Loan Program Financing in Virginia

Mr. Ruck presented his findings on legal authority to implement property-assessed loan programs in DC, Maryland and Virginia. The three jurisdictions have addressed this issue differently. The memo prepared by Mr. Ruck highlights statutory authority, allowed funding sources, repayment procedures, eligibility requirements in each state. The biggest difference is in funding sources for the PACE program: general obligation bonds in Maryland, revenue bonds in DC, no source identified in Virginia.

Mr. Fisetto asked Mr. Ruck to present his findings to the attorneys and CAOs committees to make sure they all share a common knowledge base on PACE programs.

Mr. Sze asked for more information on loan loss reserves. He offered to connect with Merrian Fuller at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory who helped design the first PACE program.

Mr. Berliner raised the issue of liens created by PACE loans. To attract private capital, jurisdictions need to make sure the PACE program place a lien in front of the mortgage. Private capital is not interested in funding a program in which it is subordinate to the mortgage. But this is something the mortgage industry utterly opposes.

In Maryland, jurisdictions have the authority to address this question in the absence of State law. But this is an issue in Virginia, where the PACE legislation states that private lending institutions must be given the opportunity to participate and that those loans operate as liens against the properties.

Mr. Fisetto asked Mr. Ruck to further research this issue of liens.

c. Comment Letter on Montgomery County Home Energy Loan Program

Ms. Rohlf presented the comment letter draft by COG staff on Montgomery County HELP program. A motion was proposed and seconded to approve it.

Ms. Bishins said that the regulation requires applicants to be three years clear on property tax. This provision prevents people who recently bought their home from participating in the PACE program. She proposed an amendment that "if possible, the regulation should provide reasonable exemptions for the 3-year rule".

The comment letter was unanimously approved with this amendment.

d. HUD Sustainable Communities Grant Program

Mr. Robertson presented the HUD Sustainable Communities program, a \$100 million grant program.

Applications are expected to be due early June and grants notified in August. COG plans to organize and lead a regional consortium to draft the application for the Washington region. It will likely take the form of a two-level coalition, with a high level steering committee and a technical work group. Anyone interested can contact Dave Robertson.

The intention is to leverage the adoption of Greater Washington 2050 and step into the implementation stage at the regional and local levels.

Ms. Magruder said the application should consider planning activities for electric vehicles deployment.

e. National Capital Region Land Conservation Act

Mr. Freudberg said that a bill has been introduced in the Senate and the House that will make \$50 million available each year by 2014 to State and local governments for acquisition of land that preserves open land and green infrastructure in the Washington region.

This "National Capital Region Land Conservation Act" has been endorsed by several committees at COG and will ultimately go to COG Board of Directors.

People interested are invited to contact Mr. Freudberg for more information

f. Subcommittee and other programs highlights

Mr. Fisetto referred CEEPC members to the summary of recent activities at COG and in member jurisdictions.

6. Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for May 26, 2010 from 9:45am to noon. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00.