

# Air Quality Public Advisory Committee

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<http://www.mwcoq.org/environment/committee/>

The Air Quality Public Advisory Committee (AQPAC) is an advisory body to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC).

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

Monday, April 20, 2009

Room 1

5:30 P.M.-7:30 P.M.

**Present:** Bill Butler, Tim Duggan, Sally Kane, Deron Lovaas, Linda Murphy, Larry Zaragoza, Peter Owen, Beverly Fourier, Lauren Milone

**Staff:** Jeff King, Joan Rohlf

**Others:** Larry Martin, TPB CAC

## **1. Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda, Approval of Minutes**

Larry Zaragoza, Vice Chair opened the meeting at 5:35 pm. Introductions were made. There were no changes to the agenda. The minutes of the February 2009 meeting were approved with one minor change -- Lauren Milone was not present at the last meeting.

## **2. Discussion with Larry Martin, TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**

Larry Martin discussed the TPB Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and possible coordination between AQPAC and the CAC. The CAC is legislatively mandated and has obligations to advise the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) (i.e., the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)). The ability of the CAC to directly influence priorities and actions in the transportation sector is somewhat limited. The project selection process often occurs at the state level, with a significant amount of work being handled by the respective Departments of Transportation (DOTs). One effective role of the CAC has been to try to influence the visions for long term planning in the region. The Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study (RMAS) is a good example. This effort has transformed into a series of Scenario Studies. The goal is to look at the nexus of land use and transportation planning in an attempt to design the region so that travel times and congestion are reduced. One major thrust has been to encourage increased density in activity centers so that individuals work and live near transit.

Some topics of potential mutual interest are improving walkable communities, building out activity centers, increasing density to support transit, identifying traffic analysis zones (TAZs) that are most acceptable to transit. Other priorities in the region include variably priced high occupancy toll lanes and bus rapid transit. Sally Kane suggested that three issues urgently need to be addressed -- funding for mass transit, cutbacks on bus routes, and free bus rides on code orange days.

Larry Martin agreed to continue to liaise with AQPAC to identify areas for future collaboration.

### **3. Stimulus Package (ARRA): Local Projects**

Joan Rohlf said that COG is developing proposals in response to new federal stimulus funding available through the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA), Clean Cities, and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) program. As an eligible entity, COG is bundling projects to submit to EPA Region III to retrofit, repower, and replace heavy duty diesel equipment. COG is also developing Clean Cities proposal focusing on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles and vehicle electrification infrastructure. Possible energy efficiency projects include coordinating public education and outreach, energy auditor and contractor training and certification, revolving loan fund financing, and street light replacement programs.

### **4. Staff report on MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Jeff King provided a report on the recent TAC meeting. EPA Region III recently returned the PM<sub>2.5</sub> SIPs to the Maryland, the District, and Virginia. Their rationale was the recent Clean Data Determination for the Washington region. The states contacted EPA to express concerns stating the SIPs should not have been returned. EPA agreed and the states are in the process of sending the SIPs back to EPA. With the exception of a possible action on the proposed motor vehicle emission budgets, it is possible that the EPA may not take any action on the SIPs unless pushed. It is not clear why EPA has not taken any action on the PM or ozone SIPs. It is possible it is due to issues related to the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) or the change in administration. Joan Rohlf said that a state air agency representative suggested that AQPAC consider sending a comment letter about EPA's inaction on the DC region SIPs. Members said that such a letter would be more timely once all the new administration positions were filled within the EPA administration.

Jeff King discussed a possible EPA Clean Air Act endangerment finding for greenhouse gases. The New York Times recently reported that EPA may intend to propose that emissions of greenhouse gases pose a risk to public health and welfare (Clean Air Act endangerment finding) and that emissions from mobile sources cause and contribute to climate change (cause or contribute finding). The endangerment finding would be the first step if EPA decides to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. Once the endangerment finding is finalized, EPA may also take action on the California waiver request (CAL LEV II).

### **5. Montgomery County “Home Energy Loan Program”: A model for the region?**

Joan Rohlf said that Montgomery County recently enacted a “Home Energy Loan Program” (HELP) that could serve as a model for the region. The program will involve establishing a revolving loan program to finance building efficiency improvements. The project financing is then amortized through the property tax bill. Chris Van Hollen has introduced such a concept in federal legislation. Virginia has also recently enacted enabling legislation that would allow such an approach by local jurisdictions in the Commonwealth. It will be important to determine ways to capitalize the programs, either through block grants, issuance of bonds, and private financing.

### **6. Climate and Energy Outreach Coordination Meeting, 4/28**

On April 28, COG is hosting a meeting to coordinate energy efficiency outreach in the region. As background, she said the recent climate action plans developed in the region call for outreach and education campaigns. COG invited many of the key players for a meeting to discuss regional collaboration on messaging, timing, funding, etc. Invitees

include state energy offices, public service commissions, utilities, and local government energy managers.

**7. Other Business**

Appointments are currently being made for a new COG Climate Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC).

Members asked that draft meeting minutes be circulated by email prior to posting on the committee website.

**8. Next meeting, Agenda, and Adjourn.** There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm. The next meeting will be on May 18, 2009.