

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG)

## **Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)**

Meeting Summary: October 28, 2015

### **Members in Attendance:**

Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County  
Erica Bannerman, Prince George's County  
Roger Berliner, Montgomery County (Chair)  
Lisa Feldt, Montgomery County (by phone)  
Jay Fisette, Arlington County  
Penelope Gross, Fairfax County  
Rachel Healy, WMATA  
Maureen Holman, DC Water  
Julia Koster, National Capital Planning Commission  
John Lord, Loudoun County Public Schools  
Del Pepper, City of Alexandria (by phone)  
Jeff Platenberg, Fairfax County Public Schools (by phone)  
Dann Sklarew, George Mason University  
Chris Somers, Arlington County  
Ken Stadlin, Kenergy  
Tim Stevens, Sierra Club  
Glenna Tinney, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) Chair  
Michelle Vigen, Montgomery County (by phone)  
Katherine Zyla, Georgetown Climate Center

### **Other Attendees:**

Bill Anderson, Eaton  
Michael Barancewicz, Loudoun County Public Schools  
Molly Berger, Maryland Department of the Environment (by phone)  
Grant Collier  
Sarah Dallas, Washington Gas  
Kimberly Goddu, Bethesda Green  
Devin Hartman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
Christian Kamrath (by phone)  
Rozina Kanchwala, Grid Alternatives  
Peter Kokopeli, Climate Decision  
Jarred McKee, National Geographic  
Jamie Nolan, US Department of Energy  
Stephanie Tsao (by phone)  
Colleen Turner, Maryland Department of Transportation (by phone)  
Luke Wisniewski, Maryland Department of Energy (by phone)

**COG Staff in Attendance:**

- Leah Boggs, Department of Environmental Programs
- Amanda Campbell, Department of Environmental Programs
- Maia Davis, Department of Environmental Programs
- Sophie Earll, Department of Environmental Programs
- Stuart Freudberg, Deputy Executive Director
- Bob Griffiths, Department of Transportation Planning
- Erin Morrow, Department of Transportation Planning
- Isabel Ricker, Department of Environmental Programs (by phone)
- Daivamani Sivasailam, Department of Transportation Planning
- Kanti Srikanth, Director of Department of Transportation Planning
- Madison Wagner, Department of Environmental Programs
- Steve Walz, Director of Department of Environmental Programs

**1. Call to Order/Introductions/Chair Remarks**

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Chair Berliner called the meeting to order.

**2. Announcements and Updates**

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ACPAC Report (Glenna Tinney, ACPAC Chair)

- The climate and energy awards program applications were scored by ACPAC and the presentations of awards occurred at the October COG Board Meeting.
- ACPAC members identified environmental justice as the top priority of the committee. The October ACPAC meeting included a discussion on how to incorporate environmental justice activities in a way that is in line with ACPAC’s mission. ACPAC will hold another meeting where these ideas and suggestions will be discussed and then present its recommendations to CEEPC for approval and integration.

Built Environment and Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC) Report (Michelle Vigen, BEEAC Chair)

- Over the past several months, BEEAC has been working closely with the PACE working group on education for energy and green building managers on commercial real estate and energy project financing. First education series meeting brought in experts on the overlap between energy financing, commercial leasing, and the real estate market.
- BEEAC has had recent presentations on greening of the MLS and one CEEPC member requested similar presentations at a future CEEPC meeting.
- BEEAC is currently evaluating its fiscal year 2016 priority survey. Based on the survey responses, renewable energy, alternative fuel vehicles, and environmental financing are top priorities. Benchmarking is a 2<sup>nd</sup>-tier priority to members.

Member Updates

- National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) - The Commission recently held a hearing for public comment on its Comprehensive Plan. Advisory recommendations will be taken from this

session and used to implement compliance efforts. A public comment period is currently open and NCPC welcomes your comments.

- Loudoun County Public Schools - Virginia school districts have over 250 ENERGY STAR certified public schools to help school systems save money and the environment. Loudoun County proposed a friendly competition with DC and Maryland, as their school districts have no ENERGY STAR public school buildings.
- Montgomery County - The County received 50 early bird submissions for the energy benchmarking law. The County has a dedicated lender they are working with to implement commercial PACE. A County Green Bank meeting held this morning had more than three dozen participants. The County has banned the use of pesticides on private lawns and requires radon testing in homes being sold. The County government is now carbon neutral and offered its own challenge to CEEPC members to also go carbon neutral.
- DC Department of General Services - The District has plans to announce it's the award for its bulk solar project next week.
- WMATA - The Authority has created a Sustainability Agenda to guide initiatives that help reduce operating costs, improve customer service, and protect the environment. In support of the Sustainability Agenda the Authority is working on a bulk solar procurement of 8-13 MW across nine facilities, mostly carport solar in parking lots.
- Arlington County - Discovery School is the first net zero energy school that opened in the County September 2015 and includes features such as solar and daylighting. After measuring a year of energy they will submit for ENERGY STAR certification. Tours will begin next year.
- Fairfax County - The County recently had local presentations on the Clean Power Plan and requested having the Plan as an upcoming CEEPC agenda item and include a discussion on the local jurisdiction's perspectives and roles.
- MDVSEA - Maryland, DC, and Virginia's regional solar industry association (MDVSEA) is hosting its annual conference, SOLAR FOCUS, Nov 17-18, 2015.

#### COG Updates

- Climate and Urban Systems Partnership (CUSP) - COG is working with National Geographic on the CUSP focusing on climate outreach initiatives. This year, CUSP is bringing educational games about climate change and the environment to local communities. Let COG staff know if you are interested in bringing the games to your community.
- Climate Action Champions - COG has been recognized as a Climate Action Champion by the Obama administration and is currently talking to the White House about regional resilience to climate change. Under this program, COG is receiving technical assistance for modeling potential microgrid sites in the region.
- Solarize - COG partnered with several other regions to apply for a Solar Ready II grant to make solar power easier and more cost-competitive. The funding from this grant has gone towards supporting solar co-ops in 7 regional communities to install over 90 solar contracts and counting.
- Cooperative Procurement - COG has a Cooperative Purchasing Program that allows public agencies to cooperatively purchase goods and services. With the support of CEEPC, COG has

been promoting green cooperative procurement opportunities. New cooperative contracts of interest to the group are environmentally-friendly ice-melt and lighting. The lighting contract offers regional consumers up to 90 percent off the list price. There is a Chief Purchasing Officers Committee (CPOC) meeting on November 4<sup>th</sup> that CEEPC members are invited to join to discuss the lighting contract and advancement of cooperative procurements for biodiesel, natural gas and electricity. It was requested that follow-up information be sent to the entire committee about these opportunities and the upcoming CPOC meeting.

- Clean Tech Leadership Forum - COG hosted a forum on clean technology opportunities in the region. COG is working with an international State Department Fellow, Wilson Ang from Singapore, to craft recommendations and next steps that could be incorporated into the next edition of COG's Regional Climate and Energy Action Plan.

### **3. Annual Progress Report (Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs)**

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Maia Davis gave an overview of the Annual Climate and Energy Progress Report. The report is titled Portraits of Progress to highlight successes of both the people and projects that help the region meet its greenhouse gas emission (GHG) reduction goals. The region as a whole was able to meet the 2012 target to reduce GHG emissions 10 percent below business as usual projections (i.e. back down to 2005 levels), as well as surpass the 5,000 renewable energy system installation goal set in 2009. She gave a brief overview of the zero energy, zero waste and zero emission vehicle policies and initiatives in the region and noted that the region was ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation for clean tech activities in the 2015 Clean Tech Leadership Index. Despite these accomplishments, she also discussed opportunities for the region to improve and advance its climate and energy initiatives. For instance, one of CEEPC's goals is to have 10 percent of the region's energy generation to come from renewables and the region is currently at 0.65 percent.

#### **Discussion**

It was requested that staff translate what 10 percent renewable energy generation means into megawatt hours to get a better sense of how much further the region has to go to achieve this goal. It was also requested that both staff and committee members begin to think through how we can address that gap to make further progress toward meeting this goal. Another member suggested we begin tracking the percent of new generation coming online that is renewable and FERC offered to provide data that could assist with this assessment.

One member mentioned that the progress report was not reflective enough of local government implementation of specific actions in the action plan and suggested that it should not be considered a CEEPC action plan progress report, but more of a general report on climate action in the region. Staff acknowledged the report this year focuses on identifying cutting edge, innovative initiatives that perhaps could be considered as part of the next edition of the action plan that CEEPC will work on beginning in the New Year. Next year's progress survey will reflect progress made on every action in the action plan, which will be reflected in the 2016 progress report.

Roger Berliner called for a motion to approve the Progress Report to be sent to COG board for review and publication. The motion was approved by CEEPC members.

#### **4. Climate and Energy Awards** (*Glenna Tinney, ACPAC Chair*)

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For the second year, COG has formally recognized communities and businesses for taking actions toward meeting the regional greenhouse gas reduction goals. This year, outreach efforts increased and more than doubled the number of applications were received. ACPAC reviewed and judged all the applications and chose a winner for each of the four categories: small/medium community, large community, non-profit, and private business.

A video was shown, briefly detailing the programs that were awarded in each category. The small/medium community award went to the City of Takoma Park for its Sustainable Energy Action Plan and actions including a solar co-op and the Neighborhood Clean Energy Challenge. The large community award was presented to Frederick County for their Green Homes Challenge, which resulted in over 700 certified green homes in the county. The non-profit award was given to the Community Power Network for its efforts in launching 37 solar co-ops, resulting in 600 new residential solar systems in the region. Nextility was awarded the private sector award for their commercial solar electric and hot water program, which installed 50 commercial-scale systems in the region.

In the future, ACPAC plans to include environmental justice as a judging criterion, which will hopefully attract a broader base of applications and diversify the projects. This year, many of the applications received were for solar projects. Going forward, ACPAC will adjust the focus of the outreach to engage a broader range of programs such as education, electric vehicles, and alternative transportation. Glenna requested feedback from CEEPC members on ideas to improve the program and additional outreach opportunities that could be incorporated into the National Geographic grant application to support the 2016 program.

#### **Discussion**

It was commented that the award ceremony was very well-received by the Board and recipients were touched and honored to receive the awards. A question arose about the cost of the program and suggested considering an application fee. National Geographic provided funding to support some of the outreach that went into the program this year. It was suggested that the program could be diversified through several means such as:

- Outreach to small minority businesses
- Outreach to diverse set of socio-economic demographic groups
- Engaging new members of the community/recently located to the region
- Provide a means for CEEPC members and others to nominate organizations for the awards

#### **5. MSWG Interim Report** (*Steve Walz, COG Environmental Programs Director*)

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ICF has completed the draft interim report supporting the Multi-Sector Working Group, assessing the potential emission reductions that can be made with the strategies defined by this group. Steve Walz

presented a summary of this report, the strategies involved in the emissions reductions, and the work done by the MSWG to support this document.

The Interim Report discusses the potential of transportation and land use (TLU) and energy and built environment (EBE) strategies to meet the region's GHG emission reduction goals. Existing strategies are expected to get the region one-third of the way to our 2050 regional GHG reduction goal of 80 percent below 2005 levels. Additional potential strategies analyzed would get the region another one-third the way toward the goal. This leaves the region short of reaching the 2050 goal by one-third. A more granular focus is needed to achieve the overall goal. National action, including the Clean Power Plan, will also play an important role in helping the region to reduce the final third of the emissions needed to achieve the target.

The overview of the Interim Report explained the intricacies of the TLU and EBE strategies and the impact these will have on the region and stakeholders, the role of jurisdictional differences, as well as concerns of MSWG members.

### **Discussion**

The transportation planning role in implementation of the MSWG strategies were discussed, with concerns regarding travel demand management, the differences between transit and highway funding in the region, and potential jurisdictional opposition to policies. Attendees discussed the need for these issues and concerns to be built into the MSWG's action plan.

Members and attendees discussed the need to treat transportation differently than other strategies because of the unique factors impacting this region in terms of commute and transit needs. The concern of the limited influence CEEPC, MSWG, and regional policy makers have over transportation policy was raised, along with the fact that some of the reduction policies need to be left to federal policy makers. It was brought to the attention of the committee that greenhouse gases are often not treated like criteria pollutants, making it more difficult to implement effective transportation policies.

CEEPC members commented on the importance of state/federal action and public education in achieving the targets laid out in the MSWG Interim Report. A member suggested that in addition to an ad-hoc group developing a consensus for local actions, consensus actions should also be identified to recommend for state and federal action. It is important that citizens are informed because they will be more engaged if they are aware of and understand the policies and targets being implemented and need to make more sustainable choices, such as taking transit instead of driving. Education on the federal, regional, and local level was determined to be a priority that needs to be a larger part of the strategies and better explained within the report.

The COG Board adopted a resolution to create a policy-level work group to recommend strategies for a regional action plan. Jay Fiset, Arlington County, volunteered to participate in the work group.

## **6. DC Climate Projections and Scenarios**

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A motion to remove this item from the agenda until a future meeting in the interest of time was approved by the members of CEEPC.

## **7. Adjourn**

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The next CEEPC meeting will be a joint meeting with the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) on December 16, 2015.