

## Draft Meeting Summary

### COG Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

May 26, 2010

#### Members and Alternates

Hon. "J" Davis, City of Greenbelt  
Hon. Jay Fiset, Chair, Arlington County  
Hon. Penelope Gross, Fairfax County Council  
Hon. Andrea McGimsey, Loudoun County  
Hon. Del Pepper, Alexandria  
Hon. Jonathan Way, Manassas City

Austina Casey, District Department of Transportation  
Lyn Ericson, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Howard Simons, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Harriet Tregoning, District Office of Planning  
Luke Wisniewski, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Kanti Srikanth, Virginia Department of Transportation

Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County  
Melissa Adams, Washington Gas  
Allison Bishins, World Resource Institute  
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation  
John Lord, Loudon County Public Schools  
Jeff Platenberg, Loudon County Public Schools  
Kara Reeve, District Office of Planning  
Dr. Dan Sklarew, George Mason University

#### Others Present

Dan Barry, DC Department of the Environment  
Larisa Dobriansky, Global Energy Network  
Rick Dooley, Arlington County  
Bill Eger, City of Alexandria  
Joan Kelsch, Arlington County  
David Jackson, Cambridge Systematics  
Cliff Majersik, Institute for Market Transformation  
Dave Molchany, Fairfax County  
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County Department of Transportation  
Tim Stevens, City of Falls Church  
Karen Young, City of Frederick

#### COG Staff Present

Monica Bansal, Transportation Planner, Department of Transportation Planning  
Leah Boggs, Environmental Planner, Department of Environmental Programs  
Mike Clifford, Department of Transportation Planning  
Paul Desjardins, Director, Department of Planning  
Stuart Freudberg, Director, Department of Environmental Programs

Ryan Hand, Intern, Department of Transportation Planning  
Jeff King, Sr. Environmental Planner, Department of Environmental Programs  
Sunil Kunar, Air Quality Planner, Department of Environmental Programs  
Anne Mariani, Environmental Planner, Department of Environmental Programs  
Erin Morrow, Department of Transportation Planning  
George Nichols, Principal Environmental Planner, Department of Environmental Programs  
Joan Rohlfs, Environmental Resources Program Director, Department of Environmental Programs  
Jeanne Saddler, Office of Public Relations  
Heidi Schmidt, intern, Department of Environmental Programs  
Daivamani Sivasalam, Department of Transportation Planning

### **1. Call to Order**

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

Chair Fisette started the meeting with several announcements. He announced that George Nichols of the COG staff would retire on June 25th. On behalf of the committee, he recognized George for his long and distinguished service to COG and the region. He thanked George for his key role in shaping COG's energy, green building, alternative fuels, aviation policy, emergency contingency planning, and more recently, climate change. Chair Fisette welcomed CEEPC new members: Christophe Tulou, new Director of the District Department of the Environment, and Dr. Teresa Lawrence, new DC Energy Office Director. Two other members will be leaving the committee in the coming weeks: Falls Church Council Member Daniel Sze, whose term of office ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and Matt Gray, who is leaving the US Department of Energy for a new position in Mauritius.

### **2. Approval of Meeting Summary for March 24, 2010 and Amendments to the Agenda**

The meeting summary and agenda were approved without any changes.

### **3. Briefing and Discussion of Transportation Planning "What Would it Take?" Scenario Analysis**

Ron Kirby, COG's Director of Transportation Planning, presented the results of the "What Would it Take?" scenario analysis. This assessment examines a range of potential actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, with the intention of addressing what it would take for the transportation sector to achieve the regional greenhouse gas reduction goals set by the COG Board of Directors in 2008.

The goal for the transportation sector is to reduce emissions by 40% in 2030 compared to 2005, which means a cumulative reduction of 33.5% over the 2005-2030 period. The analysis was conducted for a large range of local and federal policy options and includes an analysis of the cost-efficiency of each measure. Mr. Kirby made several key points:

- Heavy duty vehicles represent a significant and growing share of regional emissions
- Short trips (less than 3 miles) if shifted to non-emitting transportation modes, would yield significant emission reductions
- A lot of transportation measures have benefits in addition to emission reduction, such as congestion reduction, safety, air quality, economic impacts.
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations will soon be required to adopt climate goals (such a provision is included in the three major transportation bills)

Chair Fisette asked for a discussion about collaborating with the Transportation Planning Board on potential policy initiatives. Chair Fisette asked if there were any legal obstacles to implementing Pay as you Drive (PAYD) Insurance in the Washington region. Mr. Kirby said that he was not aware of any obstacle. PAYD insurance is was already available in Maryland.

Ms. Bishins added that California is working on legislation that would require PAYD insurance to be made available to customers. She asked if registration fees and VMT fees had been considered. Mr. Kirby said that it hadn't been included per se, but that the study considers the impact of an increase in gas prices, which is somehow similar.

Ms. McGimsey asked if the discussion could be brought to the local level. She mentioned the County Transportation Plan update that is underway in Loudoun County. A presentation of the WWIT scenario study results would be beneficial to help design strategies that are adapted to the suburban context. Mr. Fisetto agreed that linking land use and transportation is critical. He mentioned the adoption of Complete Streets Policies as a useful tool to better accommodate all transportation modes in street design.

Ms. Gross asked how Public Safety agencies are involved, especially on congestion reduction. Mr. Kirby cited the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) program as a promising way to reduce congestion and emissions. He added that more timely public information is needed to reduce congestion due to accidents.

Mr. Way commented that there is still a long way to go to meet the goals based on current Federal policies. He said he hoped the \$7 per gallon scenario wasn't considered a viable strategy to reduce emissions. Mr. Kirby explained that this scenario comes from the US DOE and recalled that the gas price had already reached \$4 per gallon in the past.

Ms. Adams asked about alternative fuels for heavy duty trucks. She mentioned the compressed natural gas for trash trucks as a good option. Mr. Kirby agreed with this, because local governments have control over it and federal incentives are available.

Mr. Simmons asked about the difference between long and short term strategies. Long term strategies are those that can't be implemented immediately, or that don't result in immediate benefits, for example new transit lines and land use changes.

Mr. Starik said that an information strategy was needed, for example on the market availability of plug-in electric vehicles, to make sure that the infrastructure required for these types of vehicles is in place in the region.

Mr. Agazi called for a better definition of eco-driving.

Ms. Tregoning asked for a roadmap to meeting the transportation sector's greenhouse house goals. This would make the region more competitive for Federal grants and increase the region's preparedness to adapt to a new regulatory context that should be coming soon. She suggested aiming for strategies that induce behavioral changes and have health benefits, for example to fight against obesity.

Mr. Fisetto directed COG staff to come back to next meeting with a proposal on how TPB and CEEPC shall pursue their proactive collaboration to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector.

#### **4. Concept Proposal for Outreach and Education Campaign**

Mr. Fisetto recalled that at the March meeting, an ad hoc work group had been appointed to develop recommendations for a regional energy outreach program. The work group met three times and has put together a concept proposal focused on energy savings that complements, supports, and integrates with the campaigns led by states, local jurisdictions and utilities.

Ms. Rohlf's presented the concept proposal. It focuses on energy savings and conservation, and uses on an on-line tracking and feedback system, with rewards and competition to motivate participants. The program would be rolled out as a pilot late 2010 and expanded to other communities in 2011.

Ms. Adams, who's a member of the ad hoc work group, insisted that one of the big assets of this program is that it will be easily accessible to a broad audience. She said that the platform allows tracking greenhouse gas emission tracking in addition to energy savings, which is a good thing.

Chair Fisetta supported the benefits of the presented approach. It would rely on an existing energy monitoring platform that would be customized to COG's needs; the proposed project also has the ability to grow and to turn into an on-going program. Mr. Grow asked about the estimated benefits of the campaign. Ms Rohlfs answered that it would depend on the participation rate.

Mr. Starik suggested additional partners, such as students, university staff and alumni. He recommended that the program promote renewable energy along with energy efficiency, as a way to make the program more attractive to participants. Mr. Parker agreed on the essential role young people may play in the program.

Mr. Agazi said that the concept is similar to what Clean Air Partners has been doing for several years and that has proven to be successful. He added that County resources could be leveraged if the program enabled the County to get some visibility as a program partner.

Ms. McGimsey regretted that the business community not be part of the target audience. She said that Loudoun County Green Business Challenge is a huge success. She added that the pilot communities would have to be picked up very carefully. She mentioned the EPA climate showcase communities grant program as a possible funding opportunity for the program expansion.

Ms. Bishins recommended working with the social services agencies to make sure low income households are not excluded. The message should be that at the end of the day, saving energy means saving money.

Mr. Platenberg recounted his experience with a similar campaign in Loudoun County Public Schools, using the GreenQuest software. He said that it's extremely hard to motivate people to participate without a significant marketing and public relation effort.

Mr. Fisetta added that he thought this concept had the potential for becoming viral if it was well branded and marketed. He asked for a general endorsement from CEEPC to enable staff to proceed with implementing a pilot program as well as preparation of funding proposals for future grant opportunities. The proposal was endorsed unanimously.

## **5. Adoption of Policy Endorsing Energy Efficient Building Codes**

Joan Kelsch, chair of COG Intergovernmental Green Building Group (IGBG) gave a presentation of efforts underway to improve the energy efficiency element of the commercial and residential building codes. She presented IGBG's recommendations that COG members participate in the International Energy Code Council (IECC) meeting in Charlotte, NC this fall. The meeting is the final step of a three-year process to update the IECC model code and adopt the 2012 version. The new code is expected to have energy savings of at least 30% over the 2006 version. City / County code officials' attendance and support is critical to get the "30% solution" passed. Only representatives who make the trip to Charlotte will be able to participate in the final vote. COG has applied for grant funding to cover for travel and lodging expenses. Ms. Kelsch urged CEEPC members to recommend their staff to attend. Chair Fisetta added that the energy efficiency package had fallen short by only two votes at the last IECC conference, which makes it even more important to go this time.

A question was asked about the cost impacts of the energy efficiency package. Ms. Kelsch responded that the additional upfront costs are offset by energy savings over time. This is important especially for affordable housing. Ms. Gross mentioned that in Virginia, local jurisdictions are not allowed to modify the code adopted at the state level. Mr. Agazi said that Fairfax County Board members had given direction to staff to attend the conference.

Ms. McGimsey asked if there would be an interest in having elected officials attending too, in addition to staff. The answer is no, since the debates will be very technical and only code officials participate in the vote.

Responding to Mr. Simmons, Ms. Kelsch confirmed that state agencies can vote as well. To a question on how IECC interferes with the LEED certification, she explained that LEED goes beyond the code and considers much broader issues such as site design and building location.

Ms. Tregoning insisted on the need to focus on actions that create synergies between storm water management, energy efficiency and green space preservation, green roofs for example.

A motion to adopt IGBG recommendation to support energy efficient building codes was approved unanimously.

## **6. Assessment of Energy Efficiency Block Grants Received by COG members**

Mr. Nichols reviewed the results of a recent survey and analysis of energy efficiency block grants received by COG members under the Department of Energy formula allocation grant program. He summarized plans for utilizing the grants, and identified potential areas of regional collaboration: street lights, GHG inventories and action plans, energy outreach campaigns, energy efficiency programs for businesses and residents, and building retrofits.

The COG Energy Advisory Committee (EAC) identified two priority areas on which collaboration should be developed: outreach campaigns and energy efficiency programs or more specifically, financing mechanisms for energy efficiency. In addition, EAC recommended examining opportunities for cooperative purchasing of energy related products and services.

Ms. McGimsey recalled that EECBG is not funded under the energy and climate bills examined in the Senate. She said that this report should be sent to Senators as a demonstration of the importance of sustaining EECBG funding.

## **7. Other Business**

### **a. Regional Climate and Energy Work Plan Progress Report**

Mr. King recalled that the 2012 work plan adopted in January 2010 commits us to produce an annual progress report. He said that an online energy and climate reporting portal has been recently created that allows COG members to report their data with a secured access. He gave an update of the jurisdictions that have created an account on the portal so far. He urged CEEPC members to encourage their staff to contact him and set up their account, since the online surveys will be the main data sources for CEEPC progress report. For this report to be complete, it will be critical to get data from all jurisdictions.

Mr. King also reported on the work engaged with utilities to streamline the energy data collection process in the region. The objective is to get to a Memorandum of Understanding signed by all utilities in the coming months. The next step will be to engage discussion with CEEPC on the content and format of the progress report.

### **b. Subcommittee and other Program Highlights**

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

## **8. Adjourn**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

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*The next meeting will be held on **July 21, 2010 from 9:30am to 11:30am.***