

# Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee

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

The Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) is an advisory body to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) and the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

Draft Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 21, 2015  
Training Center  
5:30 P.M.-7:30 P.M.

**ACPAC Members:** Leah Fisher, Gretchen Goldman, John Howes, Andrew Kambour, Chuck Kooshian, Robin Lewis, Daniel Moring, Natalie Pien, Gabriel Thoumi, Glenna Tinney, Tamara Toles O'Laughlin

**Staff:** Steve Walz, Maia Davis, Amanda Campbell, Sophie Earll

**Additional Guests:** Rhonda Chapman, DOEE; Tanya Crk, EPA; Akosua Dosu, Prince Georges County; Analisa Freitas, Natural Resources Defense Council/Voces Verdes; Karim Marshall, DOEE; Sunaree Marshall, HUD; Naisa Thaker, DOEE; Jalonne White-Newsome, WE ACT

## 1. Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda and Approval of Minutes (*Glenna Tinney, Chair*)

The draft agenda was approved without changes. Glenna Tinney shared a couple of announcements including the 2015 Climate and Energy Leadership Awardees that would be publically announced at the October 14 COG Board meeting. Awardees include Takoma Park, Frederick County, Community Power Network, and Nextility. Also, the DRAFT 2015 Climate and Energy Progress Report is open for ACPAC comments until Wednesday, Sept 30, 2015. Please email your comments to Maia Davis.

## 2. Environmental Justice Roundtable (facilitated by *Glenna Tinney, Chair*)

Glenna welcomed speakers and guests for the Environmental Justice (EJ) Roundtable and provided some background information on ACPAC and why the group is holding an EJ Roundtable. ACPAC's role is to advise policy makers as well as conduct outreach to the public on air quality and climate change issues in the metropolitan Washington D.C. region. The June ACPAC meeting featured an advocacy and outreach roundtable discussion with ACPAC members only so that members could identify top priorities of the group. The top priority identified was environmental justice (EJ) as it relates to climate change, air quality and environmental health and a subcommittee was established to identify next steps. Since only a few ACPAC members have experience in EJ and the subcommittee requested that this meeting have a variety of speakers to introduce existing and new EJ initiatives.

The EJ Roundtable provides an initial opportunity for ACPAC members to learn about EJ and ask questions and get the advice of the speakers and other expert participants. ACPAC will have a follow-up discussion at their October meeting to take what was learned during the roundtable discussion to help scope out next steps for ACPAC's potential involvement in EJ.

The first speaker, Sunaree Marshall, Senior Policy Advisor for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Economic Resilience, serves as Co-Chair to the Federal Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Environmental Justice. The IWG was first established in 1994 through President Bill Clinton *Executive Order "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"*. Order directed federal agencies to develop EJ strategies

directed at disproportionately high and adverse human health as well as environmental effects of their programs, relaying nondiscrimination and access to public information and public participation. The executive order established the IWG chaired by the EPA administration and comprised of the heads of 11 departments. The IWG has recently launched EJ Screen, a mapping tool that uses 12 indicators to help advance data driven solution to achieve health, sustainability, economic opportunity, revitalization and resilience. The IWG is also working with youth leaders through Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs ). Future focuses of the IWG include Climate Action Plan and needs for communities.

HUD is charged with equitable housing and urban growth relating to redevelopment, relocation, climate and other hazards. There are a wide range of issues pertaining to these “front line” communities - disparities in impacts through industry proximity, hurricane zones, flooding, toxic in homes (asthma, lead, asbestos), climate adaptations (shocks/stressors), financial issues (as unmalleable income burdens recovery/resources). We need to understand how the community is disproportionately affected, what factors create these concentrations, and offer offered decisions/solutions that are controlled by community. Sunaree emphasized that cities can provide EJ leadership as they plan for their communities.

Jalonne White-Newsome, Director for Federal Policy with WE ACT for Environmental Justice, was the second speaker and began her talk describing the mission and background of WE ACT, which is ‘to build healthy communities by assuring that people of color and/or low-income participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices.’ Jalonne described three questions that help frame EJ:

- Is a certain community bearing more of the burden than another?
- Are the laws of the land protecting us?
- If we do adopt these laws, why are we still seeing communities with a higher proportion of negative health outcomes?

WE ACT’s focus has been on federal policy and addressing whether it addresses the above questions. WE ACT has been a voice for EJ during development of the Clean Power Plan and the new Ozone Standard. In New York City some successes include implementation of a Green Depot, the Clean Heat Initiative, and the Healthy Homes Campaign. In DC they are participating in the new DMV EJ Coalition.

Jalonne suggested that some of the university EJ initiatives in Washington D.C. may be of interest to ACPAC, including George Washington University and University and Maryland with their Ivy City Air Pollution Monitoring Study, University of Michigan’s Resiliency Study, and Georgetown University’s EJ focus groups. Her specific recommendations to ACPAC included going and listening to affected communities, teaming up with leaders to educate and engaging youth. The existing infrastructure could be used to conduct focus groups, understand where the concerns are, how they define environmental health, climate change, etc. Understand where the current initiatives are and work to fill the gaps.

Analisa Freitas, Project Coordinator for the Natural Resources Defense Council/Voces Verdes, was the third speaker of the evening. Analisa is a California native with a lot of grassroots experience. She serves as a conduit for communicating and mediating between Latino leaders and state and federal policymakers. Through Voces Verde she advocates for inclusive environmental policies, renewable energy and climate change solutions from the Latino perspective along with nearly 100 grassroots leaders.

Analisa described Latinos as a front line community and Voces Verde as an advocate for sound environmental policy. Analisa noted that engaging the Latino community is important and should not be overlooked. In general, Latinos vote for environmental action, especially for action that support local jobs and protect air quality and health.

There is a broad range of Latino communities across metropolitan Washington. There is a broad range of income levels, education levels, careers. It also varies on whether English is a first or second language. These factors make it important to define outreach and engagement for Latino communities. Analisa had a lot of advice on how to engage Latino communities such as the need to leave your agenda at home, meet them where they are at and have the flexibility to create a new agenda. It's important to have dual dialogue to find ways to link climate change to the community's interests and needs and develop a culturally appropriate approach.

Following the speaker's presentations, discussion opened up to the entire group of participants. Some of the questions and follow up discussion on whether demographic shifts in communities alter demand for EJ, what does public engagement look like and how to measure it, what are the financial impacts related to EJ, and how to maintain a continuous conversation. Not every question had a one size fits all solution; however, some of the recommendation that came out of the discussion includes:

- Community voices still need to be amplified no matter the demographic shifts in the community
- Building trust and relationships is key to success
- Don't rush or push, these things take time and you need to be patient with the process
- The community needs to be involved in the process from the beginning to help create and execute the agenda
- You need to meet in a location and time that is convenient and accessible to the community you are trying to reach (i.e. meet people where they are)
- Don't just post 1 flyer. If you want to engage the community you need to put flyers all over the community, in mail boxes, via email, etc.
- Don't look at EJ as a trend
- Don't go into a community, engage them and then leave. That doesn't affect change and it leaves a hole – people will notice you've left and miss your presence. This does not help build trust.
- Don't use buzz words like sustainability but instead talk about the issue in a way that's more meaningful to that community
- Using health frame is promising; people care about their health
- Cannot work in silos, initiatives need to think holistically and consider all communities
- It's important to use youth as a pipeline to develop future stewards and create avenues to educational institutions
- Numbers of meetings, attendance, demographics, and number of comments are some basic
- Need to have the ability to accept non-traditional feedback

## **2. *Multi-Sector Work Group Draft Interim Report Update (Amanda Campbell, COG)***

Amanda Campbell provided an update on the Multi-Sector Greenhouse Gas Work Group, which was last discussed by ACPAC at a work session in May 2015. Today's update on the project's status will help

prepare ACPAC members for a more thorough discussion to provide input during the project's upcoming public comment period for the Draft Summary Report of Findings. COG will be requesting feedback on priorities and goals.

ACPAC had questions and discussion on the limited magnitude of viable and stretch goals for the transportation sector and the implications of policy on EJ. The benefits of publically reporting greenhouse gas emission targets, goals and progress and its relationship to municipal bond financing was introduced.

**Next meeting: October 19, 2015 – 5:30pm – 7:30pm**