

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 Fiset, Chair, Arlington County
Hon. Penelope Gross, Fairfax County Council
Hon. Andrea McGimsey, Loudoun County
Hon. Leta Mach, Greenbelt
Hon. Del Pepper, Alexandria
Hon. Dan Robinson, Takoma Park
Hon. David Snyder, Falls Church
Hon. Geraldine Valentino-Smith, Bowie
Hon. Jonathan Way, Manassas City

Keith Anderson, District Department of the Environment
Austina Casey, District Department of Transportation
Samuel Moki, Prince George' County
Brendan Shane, District Office of Sustainability
Howard Simons, Maryland Department of Transportation
Dr. Dan Sklarew, George Mason University
Kanti Srikanth, Virginia Department of Transportation
Jo Anne Sorenson, Virginia Department of Transportation
Harriet Tregoning, District Office of Planning
Luke Wisniewski, Maryland Department of the Environment

Melissa Adams, Washington Gas
Allison Bishins, World Resource Institute
Nat Bottigheimer, WMATA
Matt Gray, U.S. Department of Energy
Bucky Green, U.S. EPA, Sustainability Facilities Branch
Bob Grow, Greater Washington Board of Trade
Deron Lovaas, ACPAC
Jeff Platenberg, Loudon County Public Schools
Dr. Mark Starik, George Washington University
Aime Vosper, Northern Virginia Regional Commission

Others Present

Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County
John Allender, City of Bowie Environmental Advisory Committee
Eric Bannerman, City of Alexandria
Dan Barry, District Department of the Environment
Robert Clarke, M-NCPPC

Travis Cutler, Dominion Resources
Bill Eger, City of Alexandria
David Evans, The Clark Group LLC,
Joan Kelsch, Arlington County/ IGBG
Dave Molchany, Fairfax County
Steve Offut, citizen, Arlington County
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Caroline Petti, AQPAC
Kara Reeve, District Office of Planning

Staff Present

Monica Bansal, Transportation Planner, COG DTP
Leah Boggs, Environmental Planner, COG DEP
Mike Clifford, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Jen Desimone, COG DEP
Stuart Freudberg, COG, Director, Department of Environmental Programs
Jeff King, Sr. Environmental Planner, COG DEP
Ron Kirby, Director, Department of Transportation Planning
Anne Mariani, Environmental Planner, COG DEP
Erin Morrow, Transportation Planner, COG DTP
George Nichols, Principal Environmental Planner, COG DEP
Joan Rohlfs, Chief COG Air Quality Planning, COG DEP
Daivamani Sivasailam, COG Department of Transportation Planning

1. Call to Order/Introductions/Chair Remarks

Chair Fisette called the meeting of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) to order at 9:45 a.m.

Mr. Fisette welcomed newly appointed CEEPC members:

- Tom Dernoga from the Prince George's County Council
- Samuel Moki representing County Executive Jack Johnson
- Phyllis Marcuccio from the Rockville City Council
- Doug Domenech, Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources
- Sean Connaughton, Virginia Transportation Secretary

Mr. Fisette reported recent announcements related to energy initiatives in Maryland and Virginia.

Governor O'Malley has released his clean energy agenda to promote jobs and sustainability. It focuses on accelerating achievement of the state's renewable portfolio standard, extending renewable energy tax credits for businesses interested in going green, as well as tax credits for families to purchase plug-in electric vehicles as they become commercially available later this year.

In Virginia, Governor McDonnell's state of the Commonwealth address includes a proposal that any business creating a green energy job over the next five years would receive an income tax credit of \$500 per position.

On January 21 in Richmond and on January 28 in Annapolis, COG is hosting informal legislative events with members of the regional delegations. Any elected official is welcome to participate.

Mr. Fisette also reported the recent adoption, by COG Board of Directors, of the Greater Washington 2050 plan. In the next months, local jurisdictions will be presented a voluntary regional Compact for consideration, to support this

regional effort and advance the goals set up in the plan. Where appropriate, the Greater Washington goals have been integrated into the 2012 Climate work plan.

2. Approval of Meeting Summary for November 18, 2009 and Amendments to the Agenda

The meeting summary for the November 18, 2009 meeting of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) was approved with no changes. There were no changes to the agenda.

ACTION: Approved meeting summary.

3. 2012 Regional Climate/ Energy Action Work Plan

Mr. Fisette and Mr. Freudberg provided an overview of the process used to develop the plan.

Mr. Fisette said that the intent is to have the work plan adopted as a living document. At anytime in the future, elements of the work plan can be revised, deleted, or added.

In November, CEEPC examined sections 1 and 2 (GHG goals and plans, energy). Since November, the Ad Hoc Committee convened several times to review the other sections (transportation and land use, adaptation, outreach). COG staff incorporated comments, reorganized and streamlined the document.

Mr. King highlighted the main changes, summarized in a separate handout. This handout also includes a list of “outstanding recommendations” that are not incorporated in the plan but will be referred to supporting committees for consideration.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2012 climate and energy work plan. Chairman Fisette called for comments and questions.

Transportation (L101-133)

L101: Ms. Tregoning said she agrees to refer to TPB work plan in the transportation section, but that beyond the regional work program, some localities are developing local transportation projects that can also impact emissions. She said COG needs to develop a clearinghouse of best practices with regard to emission reduction strategies in the transportation sector. Ms. Tregoning also asked what protocol is used by TPB for cost effectiveness analysis. She said that some strategies that may not be cost effective at first sight have ancillary benefits that should be factored into the analysis. She proposed to add CEEPC as a responsible party, along with TPB, for cost-benefit analysis of transportation and land use GHG reduction strategies (L 107).

Ms. Bishins mentioned that CCAP released a report in June 2009 on multi-benefit analysis of GHG reduction strategies. This report will be made available to CEEPC members.

Mr. Way insisted that any analysis should assess the competitiveness impacts regionally, nationally and internationally, and not rely on subjective benefits.

L 117: Ms. Petti and Mr. Loavas reported that AQPAQ commented on the need to coordinate the development of alternative fuel regionally, to avoid a patchwork of different technologies and infrastructure across jurisdictions. AQPAQ members also expressed concerns about the work plan only mentioning public fleets. Mr. Fisette asked AQPAQ to propose specific language and added that coordination is needed with TPB on those issues.

Ms. Bishins proposed to hold a joint CEEPC/TPB meeting. Mr. Freudberg said this option is being discussed with Mr. Kirby, COG Director of Transportation Programs. He also mentioned COG Alternative Fuels Partnership, which is a public/private partnership working on green fleets.

Land Use (L141-145)

L 143: Ms. Bishins asked for precisions on the percentage of growth targeted to regional activity centers. It was made clear that this percentage applies to new growth and not to total square feet. It is an annual goal starting in 2011.

Mr. Way said that the goal of 100% jurisdictions meeting the Greater Washington goals in 2011 is impossible to reach because some jurisdictions don't have an activity center.

Ms. Davis said that Regional Activity Centers would be revised in 2010. She added that some jurisdictions within Montgomery and Prince George' County don't have planning and zoning authority, and therefore can't be made accountable for meeting the 100% goal. It was proposed to acknowledge this in progress reports.

Idling (L148)

Ms. Sorenson said that, as for any regulation, the goal for anti-idling enforcement should be 100%. The performance measure for this action was debated. Ms. Tregoning suggested tracking tickets. Ms. Mc Gimsey explained that Loudoun County has an elected Sheriff and thus no control on tickets. Mr. Agazi proposed to track the number of education campaigns instead, and Ms. Bishins, the money spent on education campaigns.

It was eventually agreed to change the action to "100% jurisdictions have anti-idling regulations and enforce it as reflected by the number of tickets and/or education efforts", as suggested by Mr. Fisette.

Local food (L151)

Ms. Gross reported being pressured to allow residents to have livestock at home. Zoning regulation forbids it for public health reasons. But this becomes an issue in the current economic context.

Mr. Fisette agreed there are growing expectations with regard to local food, community garden, farmers market etc. Stuart Freudberg mentioned COG National Capital Farm Initiative, an initiative that encompasses all these issues. L151 should thus refer to a regional plan.

Adaptation (L152-156)

Mr. Starik reported on the National Council for Science and Environment's resolution to develop Master's degrees in Climate Science and Solutions. He announced that a consortium of universities in DC region had already agreed to develop such a curriculum. Mr. Bottigheimer said that an Urban Energy planning curriculum should also be developed.

L153 will be modified to "research climate change adaptation strategies" (delete "develop partnerships").

On L 155, Mr. Grow said that research on adaptation strategies should consider financial impacts of potential decisions. Howard Simons added that this financial analysis should include both public and private infrastructure. Ms. Bishins asked that other sectors be mentioned, such as agriculture and transportation, potable water and storm water. Mr. Fisette proposed to consolidate language to "assess the environmental, financial and other impacts of climate change on one or more sectors".

Mr. Snyder said that the financially constrained context should be mentioned somewhere in the plan as a limitation to what can be done.

Additional comments were also made on sections that had been examined at the November meeting:

Energy

L84 and 92 It was decided to change “renewable energy system installations” to “renewable and cleaner” (district heating is not always based on renewable sources, yet it is more efficient)

L 93 Mr. Berliner said that several different mechanisms can be used to promote renewable energy – not only a regional fund. For example Montgomery County has a tax credit for renewable energy installations. It was agreed to change the language to “develop a matrix of options to finance renewable energy projects”.

L98 Mr. Grow asked that specific actions be included to reduce methane emissions from landfills.

Mr. Way said Manassas supports the work plan on the condition that it doesn't put residents or businesses at a competitive disadvantage, does not involve public subsidies, and is realistic to administer within current staffing levels.

There being no other comment, Chair Fisetto called for a vote on adoption of the work plan, including amendments mentioned above. The motion was unanimously approved with no objections.

ACTION: Adopted the 2012 Regional Climate/ Energy Work Plan.

4. Work plan priorities

Among the extensive list of actions included in the work plan, Mr. Fisetto proposed to discuss the priority actions for 2010.

COG staff has identified greenhouse gas inventories and plans outreach, and home energy retrofits as key-themes. Work also needs to be done internally on reporting/ progress tracking procedures.

Mr. Bottigheimer said it would be useful if COG could put together position descriptions and develop business case arguments to support hiring of sustainability coordinators.

Ms. McGimsey said that given budgetary pressures, it would be good if COG could conduct an inventory of best local programs (“local jewels”) and publicize them. She said it would also be interesting to develop projects with a business / economic development focus.

Mr. Fisetto directed COG staff to finalize and propose a list of priority items for 2010, in order to continue the discussion at the next CEEPC meeting.

5. Energy / Climate outreach and education

A workgroup has convened several times in 2009 to share information on outreach programs and coordinate messages. The purpose of the discussion was to determine how to pursue this effort.

Ms. Rohlfs presented the activities of the workgroup since its inception and gave an overview of all outreach programs in the region. Especially, a number of energy and climate challenges / friendly competitions are being launched throughout the region to encourage residents and businesses to take action.

Mr. Fisetto agreed that competition works well to motivate people. He mentioned two examples: the Green jurisdictions challenge launched by the Municipal League in Virginia (Go Green VA), and the Green Living Challenge for Arlington residents.

Ms. McGimsey reported that Loudon County's green business challenge, set up in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, is an overwhelming success.

Mr. Shane mentioned the green office challenge developed by ICLEI. Specific programs were also developed for universities and other targeted audiences.

Ms. Davis asked COG staff to develop a list of programs with web resources and contact information.

Mr. Parker expressed interest in the idea of an “outreach package”. Mr. Lovaas suggested that AQPAC could help putting this together.

Mr. Grow asked how reporting was organized in these community outreach programs and if they could be used to capture benefits of actions that are undertaken beyond local governments.

As a conclusion, Mr. Fissette directed COG staff to develop recommendations for a regional outreach program, to be discussed at next CEEPC meeting.

6. Other Business - Members

Ms. McGimsey reported on Loudon County Energy Strategy, modeled after similar initiatives in Germany. She said this plan receives enthusiastic feedback from the community.

Ms. Bishins urged CEEPC members to advocate for secured funding for transit in the Job for Main Street Act. She said the Senate version of the Bill includes less ambitious provisions than the House version that was passed in December.

Mr. Berliner reported on the Cash for Caulkers program that is currently being discussed in Senate. He confirmed that an economy-wide cap and trade system wasn't likely to happen this year. A climate-friendly energy bill will probably be discussed instead, as well as a job bill with energy-related provisions.

An update was given on Smart Grid projects in the region. Maryland and DC were awarded US DOE grants, essentially for deployment of smart meters. Both MD and DC public services commission have approved utilities financing plans, including rate payers' contribution for the – somehow limited- fraction that is not covered by Federal monies. These projects are now in the implementation stage.

Ms. Gross reported that a bill had been passed in Virginia in 2009 that allows local governments to set up energy loan programs. She said these programs look interesting at first sight, but raise many issues once you go deeper into details. First, according to Fairfax County's legal counsel, Virginia constitution prohibits local governments to service loans. It is also hard to convince banking institutions to participate in such programs because of financial risk issues (in case of payment default, these loans don't take first position but lie behind mortgages).

Mr. Berliner responded that in Montgomery County program, Home Energy Loans will indeed have priority on other loans/mortgages. Moreover, because they are secured on property tax, they are low-risk for banks. To fund this program, the County will be able to use Federal Clean Energy Bonds with low interest rates that can be passed through to homeowners – this gives homeowner an additional incentive to participate.

Mr. Berliner added he believed this kind of programs was being developed nation-wide with good results. He invited CEEPC members to consult the “PACenow” website for more information (<http://www.pacenow.org/>).

7. Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2010 from 9:45am to noon. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00.