

Draft Meeting Summary
COG Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)
September 28, 2011

Members and Alternates

Hon. Roger Berliner, Vice Chair, Montgomery County
Hon. Al Carr, Jr., Maryland House of Delegates
Hon. J. Davis, City of Greenbelt
Hon. Jay Fissette, Chair, Arlington County
Hon. Del Pepper, City of Alexandria

Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County
Austina Casey, District Department of Transportation
Laine Cidlowski, District Office of Planning
Matt Dernoga, Prince George's County, Council staff
Stan Edwards, Montgomery County, DEP
John Lord, Loudoun County Public Schools
Sam Moki, Prince George's County
Najib Salehi, Loudoun County
Brendan Shane, District Department of the Environment (DDOE)
Dr. Dann Sklarew, George Mason University
Kanti Srikanth, Virginia Department of Transportation
Christophe Tulou, District Dept. of Environment
Didian Tsongwain, Prince George's County

Bob Grow, Greater Washington Board of Trade
Caroline Keicher, Institute for Market Transformation (IMT)
Julie Locascio, DC Sierra Club
Stephen Pattison, Maryland Clean Energy Center

Others Present

Dan Barry, District Department of the Environment
Erica Bannerman, City of Alexandria
Rich Dooley, Arlington County
Mike Lake, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Bill Skrabak, City of Alexandria
Tim Stevens, City of Falls Church
Jennifer Todd, District Department of the Environment
Doug Weisberger, Montgomery County
Kelly Zonderwyk, Arlington County

Staff Present

Leah Boggs, COG DEP
Amanda Campbell, COG DEP
Maia Davis, COG DEP
Stuart Freudberg, Director, COG DEP
Jeff King, COG DEP

1. Call to Order/Introductions/Chair Remarks

Chair Fisetto called the meeting of the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) to order at 9:45 a.m. He announced that MWCOG is hosting two fellows from China, Ms. Rong Gao and Ms. Tao Ran, for a couple weeks. And he mentioned that the board room has been renovated with new LED lighting.

2. Approval of Meeting Summary for March 23, 2011 and Amendments to the Agenda

The meeting summary for the July 27, 2011 meeting was approved with no changes.

3. Green Business Certification Programs: Panel Discussion (Doug Weisburger, Montgomery Co.; Kelly Zonderwyk, Arlington Co.; Bob Grow, Greater Washington Board of Trade)

Chair Fisetto commented that our goal is for 35% of jurisdictions to develop a green business challenge by the end of 2011. The Chair advised the panel to focus on answers to the following questions:

1. How does the program work?
2. What is the target population?
3. How does the program measure success?
4. What is the program's outreach strategy?

1st Panelist: Doug Weisburger, Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program

Their program was developed and carried out in partnership with University of Maryland University College (UMUC). Participating companies range in size and type from Lockheed Martin and Marriott, to a three-person IT company. The program has actions in seven categories such as organizational commitment, stormwater management, energy efficiency, etc. Actions begin with low hanging fruit. There are four different versions for tenants and owner occupiers, and for small and large businesses.

A large business owner/occupier must complete 120 actions, choosing among 250--for example, printing double sided, or adopting environmentally preferred purchasing policies. There is some overlap with LEED. They also require verification through an onsite visit by a 3rd party contractor, which takes about 1.5-2 hours. The verification process allows some flexibility.

How do they measure success? Currently, it is anecdotally: for example, Marriott saved \$100,000 by conducting daytime cleaning while Goodwill mitigated all CO₂ emissions with carbon offsets. Businesses are not required to measure, but measurement is among the options (i.e. they can earn points by using EPA calculators). They do not have aggregated data. They are working on a performance measurement calculator that could help tenants who do not have access to bills with a goal of not being overly burdensome. These may include pounds of waste generated, percent recycled waste, or percent alternative transportation modes. Businesses would prefer to be able to access all of the various calculators on one site. Soon, they may use university students' assistance to create a template with their own calculators.

For outreach, businesses are listed on their website, and obtain access to a logo. The Montgomery County Public Information Office features businesses on TV and in their newsletter. The local gazette has printed editorials and donated free space to list businesses and their success stories. The 'Get on the Bus' campaign helped launch the program.

2nd Panelist: Kelly Zonderwyk, Arlington Green Games

Arlington Green Games program was similar to Montgomery County's, except that it was not a certification program, but a competition. It lasted for one year. It was modeled on Chicago's green participant challenge w/ ICLEI. Partners included: chamber of commerce, developers, and others. The green games focused on the commercial office sector, with two tracks: 1) Office tenant track—Includes an online scorecard. Energy is the most significant category. Evaluation includes 30 action items, including some LEED credits, for 0-100 points, with different award levels; and 2) Property managers—Measures energy, water, waste data, and tenant engagement. They include base and stretch goals.

How they measure success: The original goal was to attract 50 participants, but they had 170. A total of 1 million square feet of office space was covered by the program's participants—one-third of the county's total). Friendly competition between participants helped boost the program's popularity.

Staff met 1-on-1 voluntarily twice with businesses before and after score submittal. Marketing materials included some set and customizable versions. The posters were well designed and corresponded to categories. They also ran a monthly training program, on different days of week. They brought in speakers and made webinars available. Awards will be given in spring 2012.

Now Arlington has a retail door pledge which encourages businesses to close doors to reduce A/C loss. Businesses receive a window marker when they pledge.

3rd Panelist: Bob Grow, Greater Washington Board of Trade (GWBOT)

The GWBOT has over 900 members throughout Virginia, the District of Columbia and Maryland. They wanted to implement a program to recognize green companies. Many have found it is a competitive advantage to do the right thing for the environment.

Currently, they are working on a draft checklist, borrowing questions from Montgomery County's program. Topics include transportation, water, energy, organizational commitment. It will be a self-certification web-based program, with three levels of certification. Recertification will occur every two years. Certified businesses will receive recognition through a type of 'good housekeeping seal of approval' and recognition on website and in press releases.

The target population is the board of trade member businesses. They are aiming for 300 or 500 signups. The challenge is to have a robust checklist, without it being too hard to complete. For outreach, certified businesses will be listed on their website, and in communications with GWBOT.

Staff noted in response to inquiries that three or four jurisdictions now have a green business challenge.

Brendan Shane from DDOE explained that the District is starting a voluntary challenge first aimed at entry level; the next level would be on par with the GWBOT award, and would include inspection/verification.

Jay Fiset commented that it is important not to make it too difficult, so that businesses only have to fill out one form despite overlapping jurisdictions. Stan Edwards from Montgomery County commented that the State of Maryland was hoping to have counties join their state program, but a regional certification would be valuable to businesses. COG could try to organize one. Jay Fiset responded that the Outreach and Education group is discussing an umbrella residential certification program, with the goal of region-wide applicability.

Doug Weisberger responded to questions about the coverage of his program: only a very small percentage of the 3,000 or so businesses in Montgomery County are registered. Out of all who register, a few will not certify. Some are still in the process of submitting documentation.

One member inquired about how the programs are funded.

- Arlington's program draws on county funds
- Montgomery County launched their program with some county funds, and then used EECBG funds. The hope is that it will continue. A small registration fee assists in funding: \$100 for small businesses, \$250 for large.
- GWBOT's program is part of regular work funds, and has a small fee to participate.

Jay Fisette inquired if all three programs were web-based. Arlington and Loudoun's are, but Montgomery's is in portable document format but they are moving to web-based.

Several members commented on partnerships. Julie Locascio suggested that the challenge programs tap into various sustainable business associations. Dann Sklarew commented that in the DC area, Arlington, Loudoun, and Fairfax, several chambers of commerce have green committees, and may be interested in being involved. Another suggestion is to match graduate students to work on these projects.

In regards to other programs that could be used as models, Dr. Agazi asked if COG staff could review the Cool Capital Challenge website, which is privately run. It is an ongoing program that applies to government and non-governmental organizations. Doug Weisberger added that the Bay Area has a regional green business program in nine jurisdictions. It requires on-site verification.

Jay Fisette responded to a question about whether programs could be linked to greenhouse gas reduction goal tracking. Jay's impression is that it is challenging, but could perhaps be used to compare annual results over time. This falls to designers to figure out. The Cool Capital Challenge is a regional effort that the COG Board endorsed that quantifies, aggregates and tracks progress towards goals.

4. Building Performance Labeling, DDOE Results for DC Government Buildings (Brendan Shane and Jennifer Todd, District Department of the Environment)

Jay Fisette, Chair, commented that the regional goal is for 80% of jurisdictions to benchmark energy performance in all government buildings by 2012. The District of Columbia's Green Building Act of 2008 is one example of implementation of this goal. The Act makes the government's building performance information transparent.

Christophe Tulou said that Mayor Gray has kicked off a sustainability strategy for DC. The purpose is to create an overarching goal that integrates all of the sustainability-related activities that are occurring. The District Office of Planning is creating framework to define DC's goals for energy, climate, nature, etc. But sustainability for the District by itself is ridiculous—we need to include the region and even the globe to succeed. Energy is only one part of the picture. Benchmarking and having data to measure is important to monitor success. DC was the first city in the nation to mandate reporting building energy performance on their website (New York City (NYC) was second). This type of transparency helps tenants choose their buildings. DC has 826 LEED certified or in the process of applying for LEED certification, second place to NYC. The private building LEED requirement does not begin until 2012.

Brendan Shane reported that overall, the District's public buildings assessment reveals opportunities for gains in energy efficiency.

The District passed the Green Building Act in 2006 and Clean and Affordable Energy Act in 2008. The laws required that government use the ENERGY STAR portal to benchmark public buildings, and later private buildings. The District was first in the nation to require private buildings to use the ENERGY STAR portal. Data will be posted on a website. The rulemaking process for this legislation is beginning in the next two weeks.

Portfolio Manager is EPA's national tool to manage building energy and water use. The tool rates buildings against others of their type across the nation. 200 buildings have undergone the assessment. If a building scores 75 out of 100, it can get an ENERGY STAR plaque. Handouts include results of buildings reported in Fiscal Year 2009, and a summary of different programs in other cities.

Jennifer Todd reported on public buildings' ratings results. There are two types of buildings in the Portfolio Manager system: 'ratable' and 'un-ratable.' Ratable buildings include offices, schools, and warehouses. These are buildings that have a national database to measure against. Un-ratable buildings include libraries, parks and recreation facilities, fire stations, and other various buildings. Ratable buildings are benchmarked with percentiles; non-ratable buildings are given an energy use intensity score.

1. Offices averaged 49th percentile in 2010, up from 43 in 2009.
2. Schools ranked in the 29th percentile in 2009, and 41st percentile in 2010. New schools are more efficient and have better data. Christophe Tulou added that the data in ENERGY STAR is based on US Department of Energy building consumption survey used to create a database of commercial buildings of certain types. The survey is based on the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS).
3. Warehouses exhibited the lowest score in the ratable buildings category at 13th percentile.
4. Libraries performed better than the national average.
5. Fire stations performed much worse than the national average, partly due to older building stock.
6. Parks and recreation buildings also performed less efficiently than the national average.

Some of the lessons learned include the recognition of the benefits of investments in building improvements. The Portfolio Manager helps with tracking progress towards goals, although there are many challenges discovered in gathering data from multiple agencies with multiple-meter buildings.

Members discussed the difficulties of gathering electricity and water use data due to mislabeled or un-accounted for meters, and tenant/owner issues. Brendan Shane shared that when the laws were implemented, some owners did not know how many meters were in a given building. Building managers discovered they were paying for buildings they no longer had tenants in. The District had twelve different agencies managing buildings. Now they will consolidate facilities management into one department. John Lord said that LCPS inventoried meters, they discovered that they were paying for some that were not theirs. When they went to shut one off they discovered it was in fact the courthouse's meter.

Chair Fisette concluded that utility data should not be so difficult to get and that sorting out meters is a good first problem to solve. Brendan Shane added that maybe smart meters would help the problem.

Members discussed the disconnect between utility payers and facility managers. A member commented that often the payer of utilities is not the same as manager of building. Brendan Shane said ideally energy performance savings should be awarded back to that building.

Stuart Freudberg added that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is undergoing energy performance benchmarking, and that facilities managers are aware of the initiative. COG uses one third of this building. Roger Berliner pointed out that in Montgomery County, on the resident side at time of sale, a new home purchaser must be able to see utility bills. Realtors supported the measure.

John Lord noted that Portfolio Manager allows account sharing in a group. He suggested asking EPA to present on Portfolio Manager's Master Account Sharing function.

Chair Fisette inquired about how many jurisdictions are doing building benchmarking: Loudoun, Arlington, Prince George's, Montgomery County, and Fairfax. He stated we should move towards the 80% goal. There's no national standard yet and Virginia jurisdictions cannot require benchmarking, but they can still encourage,

educate, and incentivize. Dr. Agazi commented that benchmarking is easier for government buildings, although the standards such as energy intensity are not that clear.

Finally, a question about the fairness of comparing building performance in different climates was resolved—DOE and EPA do normalize the building performance survey results for weather.

5. Styrofoam Packaging: Legislation and Bans (John Snarr, MWCOG DEP Staff)

Mr. Snarr gave a presentation about polystyrene's environmental and health concerns, and described legislative responses in various locations. Several jurisdictions have banned polystyrene due to concerns about litter, marine life, human health, including California, Washington, Oregon municipalities.

There are two types of polystyrene: foam (Styrofoam) and non-foam (crystal clear clamshells, utensils), both of which carry some environmental or health-related concerns. One concern is that styrene, an ingredient in polystyrene, can migrate into food, as several studies have reported. Polystyrene can blow into waterways, break into smaller pieces, float, and be eaten by marine animals.

Various jurisdictions around the country have implemented different laws to reduce these impacts. Some regulations prohibit government spending or purchasing of polystyrene. Some locations extend this prohibition to spending occurring at any event taking place that involves government property. Other jurisdictions prohibit polystyrene purchase and require biodegradable and compostable tableware. Bio-based, corn-based utensils and paper alternatives to plastic are available for purchase.

Polystyrene is difficult to recycle since containers usually have food contamination. Composting biodegradable tableware is facilitated by implementing a composting system like California's.

Members discussed the pros and cons related to pricing. Roger Berliner shared that it was elementary school students that helped urge Montgomery County to ban Styrofoam. The higher cost was hard to overcome—two cents per tray for foam, 11 cents per tray for other options. The cost difference was as much as \$1 million a year. Re-useable trays are more expensive. Some places can compress tableware into a brick to be recycled. Loudoun County schools have reusable trays that they wash which requires extra staff and dishwashing equipment, which is expensive, but they have not found a reasonable replacement.

There was some discussion around promoting a stronger composting network in the region.

Chair Fisetta commented (and others echoed his sentiments) that if it was really bad for health and the environment why is it not prohibited by the FDA? Christophe Tulou responded that marine science community hates plastic that contaminates ocean life.

7. Projects and Subcommittee Updates

a) Legislative and Regulatory Update (Joan Rohlf)

1. Letter of Support for Amended Senate Bill 652. SB 652 establishes the American Infrastructure Financing Authority to help fund infrastructure, including energy. The proposed letter recommends amending the bill to include a lower \$25,000,000 threshold to ensure that district energy and thermal energy solutions are eligible. The letter was approved unanimously.
2. Letter recommending addition of LED and induction outdoor lighting incentives to the EMPOWER Maryland program. The letter was approved unanimously.

b) Alexandria and Gen-On Agreement to Close Potomac River Power Plant (Bill Skrabak, Deputy Director, Dept Transportation & Environmental Services)

In 2003, public health issues were raised regarding the Alexandria coal plant. In 2004, the City Council moved to clean up and/or close the plant. In 2005, the state of VA Department of Environmental Quality found that the plant exceeded air pollutant standards, and sent a letter to Mirant, the owner at that time. This resulted in a voluntary temporary shut-down of the facility. Then Pepco upgraded the electricity grid and added two more trunk lines under the river, but DOE issued an order to keep the plant open until the lines were installed. GenOn, the new owner, studied measures to control SO₂, but found that those actions might increase fiber pollutants, which have even worse health consequences. They proposed to consolidate the stacks, but the City of Alexandria opposed this. The City's goal was reduction of pollutants, not simply dispersion. In 2008, the VA Air Board negotiated with GenOn to form a \$34 million escrow account to fund actions to reduce emissions, which would be implemented through 2011. GenOn was about to sign a contract with a vendor to install emission-reducing baghouses, when they instead offered to close the plant. GenOn agreed to close plant in 2012 in exchange for the \$32 million remaining balance. This was an example of democracy in action. Staff received direction from officials in responding to demands from the public and the plant. They expect to see a short-term reduction in SO₂ levels in the vicinity of the plant. It seems that in a time of regulatory uncertainty and low natural gas prices, GenOn made the decision from a business perspective. There is no reason that the plant would not close, unless another emergency order is issued, which seems unlikely. The earlier reliability issues were removed by the new lines.

Chair Fisetto recommended that the city look into other forms of energy generation in the location to capitalize on transmission efficiency. Perhaps combined heat and power in that area could be integrated with a new mixed-use development.

c) Adaptation Project, Sector meetings (Maia Davis)

Ms. Davis reported on the EPA grant-funded climate adaptation project. The consultant, SRA, led four sector meetings at COG—transportation, water, buildings, and land use. SRA received feedback from participants on current practices, challenges, and opportunities. The biggest concern raised was lack of regional climate data. Region Forward staff has written blogs about the sector meetings. The next step is for SRA to submit an outline of adaptation guidebook and a preliminary list of strategies. A draft guidebook will be available in November, with the final due to COG in January.

d) Outreach Campaign update, checklist (Joan Rohlf)

The Outreach and Education ad-hoc subcommittee is continuing to develop a region-wide residential green living challenge that complements existing programs and gives jurisdictions something to fall back on when EECBG grant funding ends. The group met in August and September. Staff confirmed that the group is familiar with Sustainable Maryland's program.

e) Electric Vehicle Work Groups (Joan Rohlf)

Although MWCOG was not awarded the grant, Electric Vehicle (EV) regional planning efforts are continuing. The first meeting was held yesterday. Dr. Agazi agreed to chair the Electric Vehicle Process and Planning Workgroup. Olayinka Kolawole, DDOE, is chairing the EV Infrastructure Workgroup. One Fortunately, the COG region will benefit from a large grant awarded to a consortium of clean cities coalitions. COG is partnering with the Greater Washington Regional Clean Cities Coalition. They will share in the grant. The EV Planning Work Group's timeline is one year.

f) Solar Initiatives Update: (Jeff King)

Solar PV Workshop-- On October 6th, COG will hold a solar workshop in partnership with APA, ICMA, ICLEI and NARC through their Solar America Communities Outreach grant. The workshop will focus on solar at the regional level for first time. Sessions will address ways to reach our goals, barriers, and financing. There will also be a technology vendor forum.

Solar Collaborative Update— Engineers are conducting feasibility studies on as many as 100 sites. Joint procurement efforts will follow.

g) Integrated Community Energy project (Jeff King)
FVB Energy is working on holding another workshop.

h) Tree Canopy Workgroup (Jeff King)
COG staff and partners are looking at tree canopy strategies for air quality, stormwater MS4, and climate goals. COG and partners are attempting to convene a regional work group. So far the roster contains mainly foresters, with some stormwater representatives. If members are aware of a potential climate representative, let Mr. King know.

i) MobilizeGreen Sustainability Intern Program for Local Governments (Leah Boggs)
COG applied on September 9th for a sustainable workforce development initiative, sponsored by Wal-Mart and ICLEI. If awarded, the region will have ten summer interns. The announcement should occur within the next six months.

8. Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2011 from 9:30am - 11:30am. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05pm.