

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

Meeting Summary: November 19, 2014

CEEPC Members and Attendees:

Roger Berliner, Montgomery County (Chair, CEEPC)

Jonathan Way, City of Manassas (Vice Chair, CEEPC)

Andrew Kambour, National Governors Association (Chair, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee)

Glenna Tinney, (Vice Chair, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee)

Penny Gross, City of Alexandria (by phone)

Chris Somers, Arlington County

Veronique Marier, Bethesda Green

Grant Klein, Community Power Network

Maureen Holman, DC Water

Kate Johnson, District Department of the Environment

Dan Barry, EcoAmerica

Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County

Tim Stevens, City of Falls Church

Kathryn Zyla, Georgetown Climate Center

Karen Akerlof, George Mason University

Bob Grow, Greater Washington Board of Trade

Scott Sklar, George Washington University

Brett Wiley, Groundswell

Michele Peterson, Honeywell

John Andreoni, Institute for Market Transformation

John Lord, Loudoun County Public Schools

Michael Barancewicz, Loudoun County Public Schools

Kira Austin, Montgomery County

Nick Bonard, National Capital Planning Commission

Matt Dernoga, Prince George's County

Akosua Dosu, Prince George's County

Fred Shultz, Starpower

Bjorn Frogner, University of Maryland Baltimore County

COG Staff in Attendance:

Stuart Freudberg, Deputy Director

Steve Walz, Department of Environmental Programs Director

Paul DesJardin, Department of Community Planning and Services Director

Leah Boggs, Department of Environmental Programs

Amanda Campbell, Department of Environmental Programs

Jennifer Desimone, Department of Environmental Programs

Maia Davis, Department of Environmental Programs
Jeff King, Department of Environmental Programs
Isabel Ricker, Department of Environmental Programs

Call to Order/Introductions/Chair Remarks: *Roger Berliner, Chair*

Chair Berliner called the meeting to order, members and attendees introduced themselves, and the October 2 meeting summary was approved with no changes.

Joint MWAQC/CEEP Meeting Follow Up: *Stuart Freudberg, Steve Walz, COG*

The joint MWAQC/CEEP meeting on October 2 resulted in a resolution asking COG to establish a multi-sector, multi-disciplinary professional working group to explore establishing greenhouse gas targets for specific sectors and identify practical cost effective measures the region can take to achieve the climate goals established in the 2010 Region Forward resolution by the COG Board.

The working group's purpose and function will be to:

- Identify set of multi-sector viable strategies implementable at local, regional, state & national levels
- Evaluate strategies to quantify greenhouse gas reductions and costs
- Estimate implementation timeframe
- Explore establishing attainable greenhouse gas reduction targets for all sectors

Working Group Composition

- Workgroup Oversight: Policy/Advisory Boards (COG, TPB, MWAQC, CEEPC), facilitated by COG's Deputy Executive Director
- Workgroup Membership: Professional staffs of:
 - Transportation agencies – highway and transit
 - Energy and environmental agencies
 - Land use planning
- Workgroup Staff:
 - COG Transportation, Environment, Community Planning Directors
 - Support by subject matter experts and technical consultants

Outcomes:

- *What Can We Do* report (tentative title)
- Assessment of viable, multi-sector GHG reduction strategies in four sectors
 - On-road transportation; off-road; area; point source
 - Cost-effectiveness analysis
 - Co-benefits analysis

- Energy; environmental; other
 - Quantitative & qualitative
- Potential implementation timetable
- Report on exploration of GHG reduction targets for specific sectors

Process

- Identify and set scope of work, schedule and budget
- Convene technical working group: agency representatives, consultant procurement
- Technical group identifies draft set of multi-sector strategies
- Public input and Board/Committee review of strategies
- Analyses of strategies/sketch planning
- Drafting *What We Can Do* report
- Public comments and Board/Committee reviews

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

- Q4 2014-Q1 2015 – Establish and convene working group, detailed work plan and schedule, procure consultant services
- Q2 2015 – Consider of goals and co-benefits, identify strategies for analysis, public input
- Q3 2015 – Technical analyses of identified strategies, working group review
- Q4 2015 – Report preliminary findings to committees, public input, report to COG Board/Policy Committees, TPB, MWAQC

Discussion:

In response to a question about COG member input on workgroup participants, Mr. Freudberg clarified that COG would like jurisdictions to identify who would be best to represent them in the working group and will be asking members to recommend staff to participate, within certain criteria.

A question was asked about whether the joint meeting resolution requested development of strategies to include GHG considerations in the CLRP planning process, as this workgroup is an opportunity for the MPO to look into that issue. Mr. Freudberg clarified that the resolution asked to “*explore establishing a target for screening the regional transportation plan*” so the workgroup will look into what a potential screen could look like, or other methods for implementing a GHG target. It should be noted that TPB does include GHG considerations in the annual call for projects.

A comment was made that this effort has much overlap with state-level 111d planning processes. More information about the scope of this project, and opportunities for collaboration with those efforts could be mutually beneficial.

In response to a question about academic institution involvement, Mr. Walz clarified that COG will be reaching out to appropriate people to act as subject matter experts to take advantage of the fact that many in the area often provide free research for local governments.

In response to a question about the relationship of this process to the conformity analysis, Mr. Walz clarified that while some of the measures examined will overlap, conformity is a separate and very strictly defined process.

It was commented that the resolution's ask to examine possible targets seems a bit weak, when the intention was and need is for transportation departments to commit to meeting a GHG reduction target.

Climate and Energy Leadership Awards: *Andrew Kambour, ACPAC Chair*

The COG Climate and Energy Awards are a joint effort between CEEPC and ACPAC to recognize jurisdictions for their work on climate and energy issues, specifically related to the CEEPC action plan. The 2014 program was a pilot, which gave awards in four categories based on jurisdiction size. The awards were presented at the October COG Board meeting, attended by many CEEPC members and by EPA Administrator McCarthy's Chief of Staff to show EPA's support for this effort. ACPAC felt that the program was a great success and recommends that the program continue in 2015 and beyond. A motion was approved to support the program going forward.

Regional Permitting Standard: *Isabel Ricker, COG*

One of the 2008 COG Climate Report's five recommendations related to clean energy was to "Examine options for removing barriers to implementing renewable energy (e.g. solar panels)." Toward that end, COG is participating in the U.S. DOE SunShot Initiative Rooftop Solar Challenge II (RSC II), to support our local government members in reducing the "soft costs" (non-hardware costs) of solar in their communities. Permitting is one of the largest soft costs for solar energy systems in terms of both money and time.

A national study by SunRun in 2011 found that on average, permitting & inspections add over \$2,500 to a residential solar system - about \$.50/watt - which is quite significant given DOE's goal to make solar cost, on average, \$1/watt by 2020. SunRun found that variation in local permitting requirements across jurisdictions was the largest portion of this cost, adding about \$730 per installation. Clearly, streamlining and making the permitting process more consistent across jurisdictions is crucial for solar to be cost-competitive.

Based on the solar market baseline assessments that jurisdictions participating in RSC II have completed, there is significant variation in permitting practices across the COG region. To encourage increased consistency, we worked with the local solar energy industry association, MDV-SEIA, to develop a list of recommendations for residential solar PV systems, which tend to be very similar in design, and should be simpler to permit and inspect than is current practice.

We have two primary motivations for pursuing regional consistency: (1) to make the NCR more attractive to solar installers and financiers, and (2) to reduce costs for residents and businesses in the region who want to go solar.

The recommendations are based on national best practices identified by DOE, NREL and others. COG solicited feedback from all the localities participating in RSC II during their development. All of the offices that responded were supportive or indicated they were already working toward many of these measures.

The recommendations packet includes (1) a list of recommendations based on national best practices, modified to be compatible with current local needs; (2) two model checklists, which are for jurisdictions to adopt and modify as necessary; and (3) the Solar America Board for Codes and Standards model for a simplified permit review for qualifying systems (e.g. a fast track for cookie-cutter systems). In addition to COG and MDV-SEIA, the Maryland Energy Administration, Northern Virginia Regional Commission and District Department of the Environment have written letters of support for the recommendations.

Several of the jurisdictions participating in RSC II are already making great headway improving their permitting process, including DC, which on October 1 implemented its new solar permitting standards for both PV and thermal, and Montgomery County, which is working to implement an expedited permit process for solar on single-family detached homes. Both DC and Montgomery are also reducing their permit fees by 50%.

MEA is also working to streamline solar permitting through its Comprehensive Online Application Portal (COAP) project, which will be a one-stop-shop for solar applications, connecting to the County permit system, the state grant application, utility interconnection and SREC registration on one website.

COG is encouraging jurisdictions region-wide to examine current processes and adopt these recommendations, or adjust permitting and inspections requirements, where they can. We also hope that a regional best practices document will help sustain progress after the Rooftop Solar Challenge ends, and in new jurisdictions.

Discussion

CEEPC members commented that this is a very important effort, and can have a real positive impact for residents and local businesses. Chair Berliner asked whether the committee wished to endorse this effort. A motion to support the regional solar permitting recommendations passed unanimously.

Next steps including sharing the recommendations with all of COG's members, and working one-on-one with policy and permitting offices to identify their goals, measures for improvement, and opportunities for COG to provide technical assistance. Please contact Isabel Ricker at iricker@mwkog.org for more information, or if you have questions or concerns.

Building a Resilient Region: Climate Communications and Community Engagement Panel

Maia Davis of COG introduced the panel. COG recently received a grant to participate in trainings through the Institute for Sustainable Communities. As part of this program, staff from the region had the opportunity this fall to participate in communications trainings on climate change and resilience in Houston, TX and Alexandria, VA. This panel will share lessons learned through these trainings.

Karen Akerlof, George Mason University

GMU works with the Yale Center for Climate Change Communication to do surveys around the country on various climate change issues. Most of the mitigation and adaptation work in the country is happening at local and state levels, and it can be important to assess where people are and what they believe on these issues.

GMU also works with many Maryland agencies to provide survey research and message testing to inform recommendations on messaging about policies and programs. The climate communication consortium of Maryland has been active for 3 years.

Nationally, a majority of survey respondents consistently believe that climate change is happening, and are concerned about climate change.

- In Maryland 77% of people say they think climate change is happening
- In Virginia, 85% of people say they think climate change is happening

Nationally, about half of people think that climate change is human-caused. In Maryland and Virginia most people believe it is created by both human and natural causes.

- 74% of people strongly support local and state government actions to address climate change
- Generally, people want to see more wind and solar
- 36% are not willing to pay more to address climate change, but a majority are willing to pay more to increase renewable energy

Understanding where there is social consensus is very important for policy makers. The top concerns people express about short-term climate impacts are coastlines, health and agriculture, so it can be effective to use these examples when talking about climate change. Contact Karen at kakerlof@gmu.edu if you want to get involved or get more information.

Dan Barry, EcoAmerica

EcoAmerica combines values research and polling with community organizing. They train leaders across sectors in order to develop and support a grassroots network of locally-trusted leaders and institutions that lead by example and encourage their stakeholders to do the same. The goal is to broaden the climate discussion by meeting people where they are. They focus on five sectors: health, faith, business, higher education and community/local government.

Americans usually rank addressing climate change pretty low in a list of policy concerns compared to other issues. However, they greatly value a stronger economy, better health, and clean water and air. People also tend to feel responsible to do something about climate change as individuals, although they rank fossil fuel companies as the most responsible, followed by industry.

EcoAmerica uses psychographic research to create a typology of people. Fortune 500 companies use the typology to market products differently to certain groups of people. The formula uses primary motivations (ideals, achievement, self-expression) and resources (self-confidence, innovation & curiosity, health & energy, age, income & education) to divide the population into eight groups of people.

Main findings from this work:

- Americans follow their tribes – people believe things that others they identify with believe
 - Acknowledge ambivalence up front – it is important to meet people where they are
- Benefits are essential for action – positive messaging is more motivating
- Not ready to abandon the American dream – use hope, opportunity, innovation messages
- My family first – it should affect them personally
- Preparedness can motivate action – “adaptation” makes no sense, “resiliency is vague,” but people get “preparedness”

EcoAmerica Report: *Communicating on Climate* lays out 13 steps to use in talking about climate change

1. Start with people, stay with people
2. Connect on common values
3. Acknowledge ambivalence
4. Scale from personal to planet
5. Sequence matters
6. Use “facts,” not science
7. Inspire and empower
8. Be solutions-focused
9. Describe, don’t label
10. Have at least 1 powerful fact from a trusted messenger
11. Prepare don’t adapt
12. Speak from the mountaintops, don’t fight in the trenches
13. Message discipline is critical

Brett Wiley, Director of Energy, Groundswell Energy

Groundswell was founded in 2009 in DC and now works in Maryland and Pennsylvania also. The motivating question for founding the organization was: how can we use the skills and strategies used to elect the President in 2008 to create a clean energy economy? Their mission is to empower the collective purchasing power of communities to create access to clean energy.

Generally, this happens as follows:

1. Individuals join a group that wants to switch to green power
2. Groundswell screens suppliers and negotiates on behalf of the group
3. The group switches to the alternate supply

Relating clean energy to people's lives and values can be very powerful:

- In 2010 Kansas was having trouble meeting energy its goals. The state reframed climate change around simple actions to save money. As a result, six municipalities reduced their collective energy use by 5%, a very high reduction for efficiency programs.

Groundswell has helped 240 community groups and 3,000 individuals to switch to clean energy. They are working to organize and motivate people to go up the engagement ladder, e.g. after the simple action of switching electric supply, people are often excited about doing more.

They partner with many community groups to help support grassroots groups that don't have a lot of available resources and target people on the front lines of climate change, such as communities of color and low income communities.

Their most recent project was the City of Hyattsville, which is now using 100% wind power (and a Green Power Community), and saving \$16,000 annually on their electric bill.

Veronique Marier, Bethesda Green

Bethesda Green is a public-private non-profit launched in 2008 to make Bethesda a model sustainable community. Their three strategic goals are (1) educate the community about sustainability (2) facilitate implementation of green solutions and (3) incubate green businesses. After 5-6 years there is more capacity and a real desire for action, especially related to the small business incubator.

Discussion:

There was a recommendation to bring back a discussion on the Institute for Sustainable Communities trainings and elevate or build on discussions that took place among the local jurisdiction representatives that attended, especially related to resilience.

Announcements and Updates

Chair Berliner shared with the committee that Bob Grow is retiring from the Board of Trade on December 15, and thanked him for his years of service and accomplishments in the region.

Next CEEPC Meeting: Wednesday, January 28, 2015 from 10am - noon

CEEPC Recruitment – CEEPC stakeholder members are appointed annually by the CEEPC Chair. All current stakeholder members should email [Maia Davis](#) to confirm whether you would like to continue on CEEPC in 2015. All CEEPC members are encouraged to share the [CEEPC Application](#) with those that would be a good fit for the committee. The deadline for applications is Friday, January 9.

ACPAC Recruitment – The [Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee](#) (ACPAC) is also recruiting members for 2015. Please share the [ACPAC Interest Form](#) with those you think may be interested. The ACPAC deadline is also Friday, January, 9.

Annual CEEPC Survey – The Annual Climate and Energy Survey will be sent out to local government members on Friday, January 30, 2015 and will be due back Friday, February 20, 2015.

Awards Task Force – COG is seeking 3 CEEPC members to volunteer for the awards task force. Participation will require 3-4 calls over the next year to guide the launch of the 2015 awards program. Please email [Maia Davis](mailto:mdavis@mwkog.org) (mdavis@mwkog.org) if you are interested or have questions.

Green Purchasing Fair - SAVE THE DATE: COG will host a Green Purchasing Vendor Fair on January 29.

Climate & Energy Legislative Committee – COG is reconvening the Climate & Energy Legislative Committee for the 2015 General Assembly sessions in Maryland and Virginia and the beginning of Council Period 21 in DC. This committee recommends priorities for the COG-wide Legislative Priorities, which will be set at the January 14 Board meeting. Last year's priority was Energy Productivity, and included the following three areas: 1). Access to Energy Efficiency Finance; 2). Modernizing Our Energy System; and 3). Investing in Innovation. Please email Isabel Ricker at iricker@mwkog.org if you are interested in getting involved or would like more information.

Solar Workshop – On November 17, COG hosted “Driving the National Capital Region Solar Market: *Opportunities for Local Government*,” a day of workshops co-sponsored by partners in the Rooftop Solar Challenge II program. About 50 attendees, from local, state and federal agencies, the solar industry, finance, and advocacy, joined us to talk about actions localities can take to spur their local solar market through community-based solar purchasing (“Solarize”) programs, and municipal solar procurements.

Solar RFP – COG recently released an RFP ([15-008 Consultant Support for Solar Photovoltaic Market Development Activities](#)) to support our member governments and communities in the NCR in efforts to foster solar market development through education, awareness and community-based solar purchasing. This project is part of COG's work under the Rooftop Solar Challenge II. Closing: 11/26/2014.