

Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee
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DRAFT MINUTES OF September 25, 2013 MEETING

Attendance:

Members and Alternates

George "Tad" Aburn, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) (via phone)
Hon. Johanna Barry, Council, City of Falls Church
Cecily Beall, District of Columbia, Dept. of Environment
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Hon. Jay Fisette, Arlington County Board of Supervisors
Maurice Keys, District of Columbia Department of Transportation
Hon. Phil Mendelson, Council Member, District of Columbia
Hon. Leta Mach, Council Member, City of Greenbelt
Hon. Redella "Del" Pepper, Council Member, City of Alexandria
Caroline Petti, Chair, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee
Howard Simons, Maryland Department of Transportation
Hon. Linda Smyth, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

Other Attendees

Lon Anderson, Chair, Clean Air Partners
Laura Kate Bender, American Lung Association
Janice Nolen, American Lung Association
Jessica Daniels, District of Columbia Department of the Environment
Mike Lake, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources
Malcolm Watson, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Crispus Gordon, III, District of Columbia
Molly Berger, Maryland Department of the Environment

Staff

Chuck Bean, COG Executive Director
Amanda Campbell, COG/DEP
Jennifer Desimone, COG/DEP
Stuart Freudberg, Senior Director, COG/DEP
Steve Kania, COG/OPA
Jeff King, COG/DEP
Ron Kirby, COG/DTP
Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP
Joan Rohlf, COG/DEP

1. Public Comment Period, Approval of Minutes, Chair's Remarks

Chair Mach called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm. The minutes from the April 24, 2013

meeting and the May 22, 2013 meeting were approved with no changes. The agenda was approved with no changes.

Chair Mach noted that the committee last met in May at the beginning of the ozone season, and will now hear a report on this summer's good air quality. An expert panel will discuss the region's progress and future challenges. Also since the last meeting, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed to limit greenhouse gas emissions from power plants.

2. Committee Reports

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Cecily Beall, DDOE.

TAC met on September 10th. Committee members reviewed the ozone season summary. TAC discussed the base year and appropriate projection year inventory for the 2008 Ozone State Implementation Plan (SIP). The region needs to submit an inventory by next summer to meet requirements for marginal classification. In addition, if the region does not meet the current standard, then the region may be reclassified as moderate, which would require submittal of a Reasonable Further Progress plan. A Reasonable Further Progress plan would also necessitate the development of an emission inventory between the base year and six years after to show progress. TAC heard a presentation from Maryland Department of the Environment on the state's greenhouse gas reduction plan which aims to achieve 25% reduction by 2020.

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC), Caroline Petti, Chair

ACPAC last met on September 16th, 2013. ACPAC heard presentations on the draft Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, and the 2013 Ozone Season. ACPAC was pleased to hear the good news, but wants to make clear that there is more work to do and more challenges ahead. A letter was sent to Chair Mach expressing these points. In addition, ACPAC has been working with COG staff to develop a climate & energy awards program proposal, which was presented to the Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) today.

Clean Air Partners (CAP), Jennifer Desimone, Acting Director

Clean Air Partners board conducted outreach at twelve festivals and events this summer in Fairfax, Arlington, Loudoun County, and others. CAP was asked to participate in Walk to School Day, which they plan to do. CAP's media campaign is continuing to ramp up, with radio ads placed on four stations in the District of Columbia and Baltimore areas. Online ads were published in July on the Washington Post and Baltimore Sun websites. Ads also appeared in transit stations. CAP conducted a successful Twitter Chat for Car Free Days (search online for @CarFreeMetroDC to see posts). The Education team completed summer camp outreach to more than 2,000 students—25% more than 2012. The slogan contest deadline is November 22; winners will be announced in December.

Ms. Desimone thanked Hon. Mach for her leadership as CAP Board chair and welcomed new chair Lon Anderson and new vice chair Brian O'Malley.

Chair Mach noted that many schools participate in Walk to School Day, and that it is a great opportunity to incorporate air quality concepts.

3. Regional Transportation Priorities Plan, Ron Kirby, Senior Director, Transportation Planning

Mr. Kirby reported that the Transportation Planning Board's (TPB) Regional Transportation Priorities Plan identifies near-term, ongoing, and long-term regional strategies that the public can support and that offer the greatest potential for addressing regional transportation challenges. The Plan identifies challenges and proposes strategies that go beyond the impact analysis (accessibility, greenhouse gases, congestion, air quality, etc.) required for the Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). In contrast to the CLRP, the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan identifies overall goals and strategies rather than specific projects. Strategies are classified by near-term, ongoing, and long-term timeframes.

Congestion, which is one of the priorities identified, leads to more air emissions. Some of the solutions include COG's Commuter Connections program and promoting electric vehicles. In the inner jurisdictions, only 45% of commuters drive to work, while 70 to 80% of commuters drive to work in the suburbs. There is an opportunity to better coordinate land use and transportation to reduce emissions in some areas.

The proposed goals of the draft Regional Transportation Priorities Plan are:

1. *Options*: Provide a comprehensive range of transportation options for everyone
2. *Activity Centers*: Promote a strong regional economy including a healthy regional core and dynamic activity centers
3. *Maintenance*: Ensure adequate system maintenance, preservation, and safety
4. *Effectiveness*: Maximize operational effectiveness and safety of the transportation system
5. *Environment*: Enhance environmental quality, and protect natural and cultural resources
6. *Inter-regional*: Support inter-regional and international travel and commerce

Near-Term Strategies

1. Improve access around bus stops and rail stations
2. Alleviate bottlenecks
3. Alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure
4. Commute alternatives (i.e. Commuter Connections)
5. Pedestrian infrastructure
6. Bicycle infrastructure

Ongoing Strategies

1. Metro maintenance
2. Highway maintenance
3. Bus priority (i.e. give signal priority to buses)
4. Roadway efficiency (i.e. improve incident response and traffic information; coordinate signals)
5. Accessible transportation (i.e. MetroAccess and Complete Streets)
6. Update traffic laws (i.e. increase safety, enforcement and outreach)

Long-Term Strategies

- A. Express toll lanes with rapid bus transit
- B. Concentrated growth with more transit (and alternative mode) capacity
- C. Both A & B

A Public Opinion Survey was conducted that reached a representative sample of COG region residents. Although all of the measures in the Plan were rated as important to fund, the following are priorities that arose from the Public Opinion Survey:

1. Address metro and highway repair challenges
2. Address transit crowding and roadway congestion challenges
3. Address special focus areas such as mobility needs of people with disabilities, bus priority, enforcing traffic laws to increase safety, alternative fuel vehicles, expanding bicycle infrastructure

Next, staff will review public comments and modify as necessary. Another comment period will likely occur in after November when a revised plan is released. The Regional Transportation Priorities Plan is designed to inform projects included the next Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan. The Regional Transportation Priorities Plan is available online [here](#), and the survey format (which describes the plan in a quick and visually appealing format) is [here](#).

Mr. Aburn said that in some ways the region is on the cutting edge. Maryland is working on electric vehicle planning, addressing climate change and criteria pollutant challenges through efforts like the Transportation Climate Initiative. Electric vehicles would benefit from a dedicated pool of public funds, and from an expanded range that would at least allow travel to Philadelphia.

Mr. Kirby said that CAFE standards will help with electric vehicle production. There may be untapped opportunities to locate charging stations in Metro parking lots or other public spaces. Hopefully more funding will be dedicated in the next planning cycle to these issues.

Mr. Freudberg said that Roger Berliner, Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee Chair, has been working with COG and Montgomery County on the idea of utilizing cooperative purchasing for electric vehicles and associated infrastructure.

Chair Mach said that MWAQC could potentially draft a comment letter on the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan by the next meeting.

4. State and Local Air Reports

District of Columbia

No report.

Maryland

Mr. Aburn reported that the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), of which Maryland is a participant, was updated with a new emissions cap and new regulations.

Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is developing regulations to reduce NO_x and SO₂ emissions from power plants. MDE is holding a meeting on October 21st regarding ozone and the 1-hour SO₂ standard; Sierra Club is involved. MDE is working with several states to petition additional states to join the Ozone Transport Commission. This is one of several actions to address air pollution problems in the Baltimore/Washington area that originate from upwind states. Most politely declined but agreed to cooperate on ozone transport. The Environmental Protection Agency declined to create the proposed 15-state ozone transport region.

MDE is challenging Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia's claim that they are not required to include Good Neighbor demonstrations in their State Implementation Plans.

MDE is developing a state initiative to reduce emissions from uncontrolled diesel generators that operate on the worst ozone days, since generators are one of the only source categories that shows increasing NOx emissions.

Mr. Fisette said that he thinks that generators are a problem—they are dangerous and counterproductive. Many homeowners are installing generators for backup power. They are needed for critical facilities such as hospitals, but the most important priority is to focus on improving the power grid.

Ms. Rohlfs reported that COG already did a study of the small stationary generator regulations in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia and presented to the Technical Advisory Committee in 2012. The study did not make any policy recommendations; it established a baseline policy inventory.

Mr. Fisette said that it would be good to reexamine that information and hold a discussion on regulatory options and implications. Chair Mach asked the Technical Advisory Committee to examine the small generators issue again and noted that MWAQC will want to learn about the regulations that apply in various jurisdictions.

Ms. Smyth pointed out that natural gas generators are a lower emissions alternative to diesel. She added that Fairfax is looking into setting up public facilities with generators in the event of an emergency. Local governments should know about the potential environmental issues.

Mr. Freudberg said that COG's emergency response program is looking to install backup power in many locations. It might be helpful to work together to address environmental issues and the need for backup power.

Ms. Beall said that it is difficult to know how many commercial diesel generators exist in the district, and the District of Columbia does not track residential generators. Most of the known commercial generators are diesel, not natural gas. The District of Columbia does not allow distributed generation participation, but it is likely that it is occurring under the radar. Third party companies solicit organizations to participate and turn on their generators on high electricity demand days.

Mr. Aburn said that MDE's regulations do not impact the use of diesel backup power for true emergencies. The problem is distributed generation in which power companies pay organizations to run dirty diesel engines. Companies can reduce their electricity bills in this program, while reducing demand on the electricity grid. Many university and government agencies are participating. Uncontrolled diesel engines are running on the worst ozone days; some companies are signing three year contracts now. MDE wrote a regulation for the intermediaries to provide data. About nine tons per day in Maryland are being emitted on poor electricity reliability days. Backup generators were not intended to serve as a power source.

Mr. Mendelson suggested addressing the issue through public service commissions.

Mr. Ballou stated that residential generators are not the problem. All three states regulate generators to some extent, especially the larger ones. The real issue is fundamental: there is a lack of data since companies do not want to release the information, and it is hard to know how big of a problem generator emissions are. The underlying source of the problem is the inability of power companies to build additional clean power sources in the DC area due to unintended consequences of other air quality actions.

Chair Mach noted that there are a lot of issues to examine in the coming months.

Virginia

No report.

5. Staff Report, Joan Rohlfs, COG/DEP

Ms. Rohlfs said that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing standards for greenhouse gas emissions for new and existing power plants as part of the President's Climate Action Plan announced in June. Any new plant that runs on coal will only be able to emit half of the greenhouse gases that plants emit today. The rules will provide significant reductions in carbon pollution. The rules will be phased in over time. EPA will hold a 60 day comment period after the rules are published in the Federal Register. States will enforce the regulations and will have choices on how to meet them including use of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures. Staff will follow up with MWAQC when the rules are published.

6. Special Air Quality Panel: Past Progress and Future Challenges

Hon. Phil Mendelson, Moderator

Mr. Mendelson stated that there were no code red days last summer. Progress has been made due to the combined efforts of state and local governments. This is good news, but it is important not to lose sight of the challenges ahead. The Environmental Protection Agency is tightening standards to protect public health. Air quality is still a problem for children, the elderly and others with health concerns. Everyone contributes to air emissions through driving and electricity use, but transport is also a problem. A lot of progress is a result of tighter requirements on automobiles. Not all of the solutions rest with the region alone.

a. 2013 Ozone Season Summary; 10 Year Trend. Sunil Kumar, COG/DEP

There were four ozone exceedances in 2013, each one only slightly exceeding the standard on one monitor. The region is experiencing an overall decreasing trend in the number of code orange, red, and purple exceedance days under the 75 parts per billion 2008 Ozone Standard. The region has not experienced a code purple day since 2006. After 2005, several significant air pollution control measures led to a decline in emissions and ozone exceedances. From 1997 to 2005, days over 90°F almost always resulted in high ozone conditions, but from 2006 to 2013, this relationship was more tenuous: hot days did not always result in ozone exceedances. Several federal, state and local emissions control programs have helped clean the air, including Tier 2 Rule in 2004, Virginia's CAIR Rule, and Virginia Regional Express's Idling Reduction campaign.

The region has met the 1997 ozone standard, but is above the 2008 standard. For particulate matter, the region experienced 55 code yellow days this summer, but has not experienced any exceedances, despite the more stringent standard. The region has made

very good progress in controlling particulate emissions. The region submitted the fine particle maintenance plan earlier this year to demonstrate compliance with fine particle standards. More information can be found at:

<http://www.cleanairpartners.net>, <http://www.mwcog.org/environment/air/forecast> and <http://sonomatechdata.com/>.

b. Clean Air Partners' Contribution to Improving Air Quality. *Lon Anderson, Chair, Clean Air Partners*

Mr. Anderson said that the region's clean air this summer is important news, and a result of joint efforts of a number of groups and citizens. Tailpipes from mobile sources are 96% cleaner than 50 years ago. Improving air quality is one of the nation's biggest accomplishments. Mr. Anderson is honored to serve on Clean Air Partners.

Clean Air Partners is a public-private partnership formed in 1995 and comprised of 30 organizations: local governments from Virginia, District of Columbia, and Maryland; state transportation and environmental agencies; businesses and major employers; and health, environmental, education, and transportation advocacy groups. Clean Air Partners was developed to improve the region's air quality through voluntary actions. Surveys show that in the last decade, fewer residents are concerned about air quality, and fewer are choosing to take actions to improve air quality. This may be due to better air quality, but also points to a need to increase fundraising and enhance messaging to the public.

Clean Air Partners spent \$85,000 on marketing campaigns last year, employing a variety of strategies. One of the greatest successes was the Great Maryland Lawnmower Exchange – exchanging old gas-powered mowers with electric ones which reduced emissions by many thousands of pounds. The website, Air Alerts, and free tools are among other Clean Air Partner's successful offerings. School and summer camp programs reached thousands of youths. For more information, see <http://www.cleanairpartners.net>.

c. Air Quality Challenges, Next 20 Years. *Janice Nolen, American Lung Association*

Ms. Nolen reported that the American Lung Association has been working on making air healthy for forty years. The nation has seen a remarkable 68% improvement in criteria air pollutants while the economy, population, and travel rates have continued to grow.

The American Lung Association's annual State of the Air report found that 41% of the US population lives in counties that have a monitor that shows poor air quality. Progress has been made, but we are not done. A 2013 EPA Integrated Science Assessment expanded the list of ozone-caused health risks. Someone in every family is at risk from air pollution. Children and teens have growing lungs, older adults are vulnerable, and those with chronic diseases are also vulnerable. Healthy adults who exercise outdoors or live near highways are also at risk. Poor people often live closer to sources of air pollution, may have higher incidence of disease, and less access to care. Meeting the 2008 Ozone Standard will save up to 2,100 premature deaths annually by 2020.

The Clean Air Act states that the air quality standards should be set to protect human health. In reviewing the 2008 Ozone Standard, scientists recommended a 60 to 70 parts per billion standard. The review was due in March, 2013. A stronger standard would drive

federal measure across the nation. Tier 3's cleaner gasoline and vehicle standards will avoid an estimated 2,500 premature deaths annually by 2030. Power plant emissions rules such as the mercury and air toxics standards and transport rule are making slow progress through the courts.

Ozone is a climate change agent, and ozone precursors also impact climate (and climate impacts them). Climate change will make it more difficult to protect public health since increased temperatures set the stage for ozone formation. EPA models have found that climate change may lengthen the ozone season and may increase ozone by two to eight parts per billion. This effect is termed the 'climate penalty'. EPA is investigating model revisions to incorporate climate change so that models are more realistic.

Ms. Nolen thanked the committee for their work to protect public health in the region.

Ms. Petti thanked everyone for their efforts. She suggested that the Air Alerts be paired with a 'what you can do' tip on code orange or red days.

Chair Mach thanked the panel for their interesting presentations.

7. Set Date for Next Meeting, Adjourn

The next meeting date is October 23. The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 pm.