



AIR AND CLIMATE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

April 16, 2018
5:30 - 7:30 P.M.

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

ACPAC MEMBERS (*VIA PHONE)

Kelsey Crane*
Tony Giancola
Gretchen Goldman, Chair
Andrew Kambour*
Natalie Pien
Ron Rodriguez*
Rodney Sobin
Gabriel Thoumi
Sarah Mazur*

STAFF

Amanda Campbell
Tim Masters
Stephen Walz

GUESTS

Dan Barry, ecoAmerica

1. CALL TO ORDER, AGENDA, MEETING SUMMARY APPROVAL, CHAIR REMARKS

Gretchen Goldman, ACPAC Chair

The agenda and meeting summary were approved with no changes. Chair Goldman reminded the committee of the By-Laws that guide ACPAC's work and rules of conduct. Chair Goldman thanked everyone for their dedication to collaborating in a collegial manner to help our region improve air quality and meet the goals in the climate action plan.

2. THE CLIMATE READY DC PLAN

Amanda Campbell in lieu of Kate Johnson, District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment

The District of Columbia is already seeing the effects of climate change, including longer and more intense heat waves, more intense precipitation events, extreme weather. Sea level in tidal areas has already risen about 11 inches in the last century and over time will add to the inundation of storm surge from coastal storms. Under a high greenhouse gas emissions scenario, average high and low temperatures are expected to increase by 10F by the 2080s. The urban heat island effect, in which built areas retain more heat than surrounding, more vegetated, suburban and rural areas, exacerbates the impact on public health. Heat waves may double in length by mid-century. Cool roofs and cool pavements can help reduce urban heat. The one-day 100-year rain event, now 8 inches,

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may bring nearly 14 inches of rain by the 2080s. Green infrastructure, including wetlands, can help manage water from heavier rains. More severe storms may increase power outages – solar with battery storage and microgrids can help keep buildings running during outages.

The District of Columbia examined how changing precipitation and temperature patterns and sea level rise are expected to affect the District's communities and infrastructure. Metrorail, roadways, and some electric substations are at risk, for example. Several priority planning areas were identified including Bloomingdale and LeDroit Park, Watts Branch, the Federal Triangle, Southwest and Buzzard Point, and Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant. All of Ward 7 and 8 are also priority areas due to vulnerable populations residing in those locations.

This analysis informed a plan to prepare the city as the climate changes. The plan contains 77 actions to create a more climate-ready DC.

As part of the plan development process, District staff used climate communication best practices to engage with the community on their priorities, such as pairing problems with solutions. Now, as a member of 100 Resilient Cities, climate change is one of several resilience challenges that the District is aiming to address.

Steve Walz added that DC has a base flood elevation ordinance that is 1 1/2 feet higher than the 100-year flood elevation. Other COG jurisdictions including Prince George's County, Gaithersburg, and Alexandria have incorporated climate adaptation goals and strategies into their plans. Arlington County has an energy resilience plan.

3. CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Dan Barry, Director, ecoAmerica's Path to Positive Communities

Eco-America has developed effective guidance for climate conversations and engagement based on extensive research. EcoAmerica's mission is to build a critical mass of institutional leadership, public support and political will for definitive climate solutions in the US. EcoAmerica has built coalitions of religious congregations, health professionals, and government-focused agencies. The materials and strategies described in ecoAmerica's guidebooks, including 'Let's Talk Climate,' provide focus-group tested tactics for engaging people on climate change issues.

A majority of adults believe that climate change is happening, but fewer are familiar with the solutions, and even fewer regularly talk about it. Avoidance of the issue is motivated by fear, confirmation bias, optimism about technological solutions, conflict avoidance, social norms, and resignation. Emphasizing green jobs is no longer a central part of the messaging strategy. Messaging now revolves around connecting with people on their values and personal experience and engaging them in concrete solutions. Every problem should be paired with a solution that people can support. Everyone wants to feel they are part of something bigger. Messaging tips include using trusted messengers, avoiding doom and gloom, and using stories for deeper engagement. Additional resources, including the 'Let's Talk' guides, are available here:

<https://ecoamerica.org/research/#talking-points>.

Members discussed the value of green jobs and energy jobs as one positive aspect of climate action. Members asked about how to counter face news and industry-led campaigns. Mr. Barry said to try to

avoid arguing about climate change, and instead pivot to personal impacts and personal benefits of the solutions.

4. MEMBER TIME

Natalie Pien, ACPAC Member

Ms. Pien has always been passionate about protecting the environment. As a middle school teacher, she led an ecology club and coordinated reforestation projects. Later she became involved in environmental activism and helped lead events and initiatives. She has worked to promote protection of the Chesapeake Bay, the James River, innovative energy strategies such as PACE (property assessed clean energy financing) and environmental justice. She's helped plan and lead bus tours, develop video materials, and is now working on integrating COG's Climate Action Plan measures into Loudoun County's comprehensive plan. Now she's on the board of the Sierra Club in Loudoun County, and works with the Chesapeake Climate Action Network, Oceana, and others. She's interested in learning about communicating climate change. One thing she's found is that TV and radio meteorologists are some of the most trusted messengers on climate change.

5. UPDATES

- COG Resilience Updates – COG and NVRC worked together to produce the Resilient Critical Infrastructure: A Roadmap to Resilience that summarizes findings from the series of workshops on the subject last year. COG is working on the next steps for resilience with NVRC and other partners as part of a draft Resilience Framework.
- Sustainability Report – The report is undergoing internal review and will be presented to CEEPC in May.
- Climate & Energy Leadership Awards – Please promote the awards!
- Air Quality What We Can Do Project will be on Agenda for May meeting – more coming soon.

ADJOURN.