

Draft Meeting Highlights

COG Climate Change Steering Committee

October 22, 2008

In Attendance

The Honorable Nancy Floreen, Montgomery County Council, Chair
The Honorable Dave Snyder, City of Fall Church
The Honorable Gerald Connolly, Fairfax County
The Honorable Redella S. (Del) Pepper, Vice Mayor, City of Alexandria
The Honorable Roger Berliner, Montgomery County
The Honorable Paul Ferguson, Arlington County
The Honorable Andrea McGimsey, Loudoun County
The Honorable Jack Foust, Fairfax County
Zack Dobelbower, District of Columbia Office of Planning
Nat Bottigheimer, WMATA
Mercury Payton, City of Manassas Park
Mark Rawlings, District of Columbia Department of the Transportation
Jack Werner, District of Columbia Department of the Environment
Daniel Moring, District of Columbia Councilmember Cheh's Office

Staff/Others present include:

Randy Carroll, Maryland Department of Environment
Bob Grow, BOT
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County DOT
Jim Ponticello, VDOT
Kanti Srikanth, VDOT
Stuart Freudberg, COG, Director, Department of Environmental Programs
George Nichols, COG, Principal Environmental Planner
Leah Boggs, COG, Environmental Planner
Joan Rohlfs, Chief COG Air Quality Planning
Jeff King, Senior Environmental Planner, COG Air Quality Planning
Ted Graham, COG, Director, Water Quality Planning
Monica Bansal, COG DTP

1. Call to Order

Chair Nancy Floreen called the Climate Change Steering Committee to order at approximately 11:30 a.m.

2. Approval of Meeting Summary

The meeting summary was approved as submitted.

3. Summary of California Greenhouse Gas Reduction Emissions Reduction Legislation (SB375)

Joan Rohlf's updated the committee on California legislation to reduce GHG emissions. On September 30, 2008, California measure SB375 was signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger. This landmark legislation requires that regional transportation plans in California include a "sustainable community strategy" to achieve greenhouse gas emission reduction targets established by the California Air Resources Board for 2020 and 2035. One of the key provisions of AB32 is that it provides for emissions-reduction goals around which regions can plan-integrating disjointed planning activities and providing incentives for local governments and developers to follow new conscientiously-planned growth patterns. It also enhances the Air Resources Board's (ARB) ability to reach our AB 32 goals by directing ARB to develop regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets to be achieved from the automobile and light truck sectors for 2020 and 2035. ARB will also work with California's 18 metropolitan planning organizations to align their regional transportation, housing and land-use plans and prepare a "sustainable communities strategy" to reduce the amount of vehicle miles traveled in their respective regions and demonstrate the region's ability to attain its greenhouse gas reduction targets.

4. Review Comments on and Recommended Revisions to Climate Change Steering Committee Draft Report To COG Board of Directors

The Climate Change Steering Committee is charged with preparing a report to the COG Board of Directors in response to Resolution R31-07. On July 9, 2008, Chair Floreen presented the draft COG Climate Change Report to the COG Board of Directors. The Board approved the review draft for release and a comment period through September 30, 2008. Mr. Freudberg noted that almost every COG member jurisdiction received a briefing on the draft report and many have provided comment and feedback. Staff received over 200 comments which were reviewed and organized and has proposed responses for each comment (see attachment). In addition, staff is proposing consolidation and reorganization of the report recommendations and has developed a list of no-cost, low cost and higher cost initiatives that individuals can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. (See attachment).

Mr. Freudberg then highlighted the most significant comments received and recommended actions in revising the report. He noted that all of the comments received are posted on the COG website. The vast majority of the comments were quite supportive of this effort. Highlights include COG member jurisdictions were recognized as leaders; the public urged early action and suggested that the reduction targets should be strengthened; some suggested consistency in reduction targets across the states./regions involved; and many requested government assistance in removing barriers to implementation of solutions to the climate crisis such as increased application of solar energy technology and utility

incentives for conservation. While most of the comments were supportive, a few comments with skepticism were received about the existence of climate change and the need for action to address climate change. Many suggestions were added as new recommendations.

Chair Floreen thanked the committee for their efforts to produce a Climate Change strategy for the region. She noted that the Committee has met the goals and mission as articulated by the COG Board when it was first created. She also thanked the DEP staff.

Action: A recommendation was made and seconded that the final report be presented to the COG Board of Directors for consideration at its November 12, 2008 meeting.

5. Next Meeting and Adjourn

It was determined that the next meeting would be held until early 2009. A specific date will be determined later. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 pm.