

Draft Meeting Highlights

COG Climate Change Steering Committee

February 25, 2009

In Attendance

The Honorable Nancy Floreen, Montgomery County Council, Chair
The Honorable Dave Snyder, City of Fall Church
The Honorable Redella S. (Del) Pepper, Vice Mayor, City of Alexandria
The Honorable Jay Fisette, Arlington County
The Honorable Paul Ferguson, Arlington County
The Honorable Andrea McGimsey, Loudoun County
The Honorable "J" Davis, City of Greenbelt
Mark Charles, City of Rockville
Zack Dobelbower, District of Columbia Office of Planning
Mark Rawlings, District of Columbia Department of the Transportation
Brendan Shane, District of Columbia Office of Sustainability

Staff/Others present include:

Ken Brown, Climate Communities
Keith Dennis, First Environment
Jim Dinegar, BOT
Bob Grow, BOT
Dale Medearis, Northern Virginia Regional Commission
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County DOT
Caroline Petti, AQPAC
Howard Simons, MDOT
JoAnne Sorenson, VDOT
Kim Watson, Pepco
Barry Weise, District of Columbia

Leah Boggs, COG DEP, Environmental Planner
Mike Clifford, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Stuart Freudberg, COG, Director, Department of Environmental Programs
Jeff King, Senior Environmental Planner, COG Air Quality Planning
Sunil Kumar, Sr. Environmental Engineer, COG DEP
George Nichols, COG DEP, Principal Environmental Planner
Dave Robertson, COG Executive Director
Joan Rohlf, Chief COG Air Quality Planning
Daivamani Sivasailam, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Tanisha Williams, Intern, Department of Environmental Programs

1. Call to Order, Review of 10/22/08 Meeting Summary and Amendments to the Agenda

Chair Nancy Floreen called the Climate Change Steering Committee to order at approximately 9:40 a.m.

There were no changes to the agenda and the meeting summary was approved with no changes.

2. Chair, Member and Staff Announcements/Updates/Advocacy

Montgomery County has recently prepared a Sustainability Plan. Among the 58 recommendations in the report is a proposal to establish a revolving loan fund to pay for energy efficiency investments, with costs being repaid through property tax bills.

The Virginia Climate Commission released its final report on December 15, 2008. The plan calls for a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2025. One controversial recommendation is to establish an energy efficiency target of 19% reduction by 2022.

The Greater Washington Board of Trade Green Committee is developing a new carbon offset program called CarbonCut. Under the program, members trying to reduce their carbon footprint could pay money into a fund that would finance greenhouse gas reduction projects in the National Capital Region.

The Greater Washington Board of Trade is also working to develop a National Center for Sustainability on the National Mall. Project proponents are discussing the proposal with the Smithsonian and are seeking funding sources.

3. Legislative Updates

Ken Brown, Executive Director of Climate Communities, summarized the outcomes of the federal stimulus bill concerning energy conservation and promotion of renewable energy, and preview expected federal climate and energy legislation during the current session of Congress.

State energy offices are receiving substantial increases in funding. Local governments may need assistance to apply for energy efficiency block grant funding from the states. There is a new funding source from EPA for local climate change demonstration projects. On May 18-20, Climate Communities in collaboration with ICLEI is hosting a Local Government Sustainability Summit. The Clean Cities program has also received a significant increase in funding. It will be important to track and measure results for all projects funded through the stimulus program. Other issues being tracked by Climate Communities is a cap and invest program which could generate \$150 billion for reducing greenhouse gases. In addition, there are ongoing discussions in Congress about how to fund transportation projects nationally given declines in revenues from the gas tax. There have also been discussions of developing a National Energy Policy and

holding an energy summit. Mr. Brown referred members to Climate Communities Fact Sheets for additional information.

Ms. Floreen said that COG could have a role in helping members understand opportunities and procedures to tap into these new sources of project funding. The Committee then held a lengthy discussion on a range of potential areas where COG might assist including energy audits and retrofits, green job training, outreach and education, coordination on grant proposals, and other support. Staff noted that several meetings were scheduled by staff on energy stimulus funding including a meeting on diesel retrofit funds, clean cities, energy block grants and possibly other issues. It was also noted that the stimulus was a major item on the COG Board agenda for March 11th.

4. State Legislative Initiatives

Due to time constraints, the presentation on state legislative initiatives was deferred to the next meeting.

5. COG Climate Change Work Program for FY 2009/FY2010

Due to time constraints, the presentation on the work program was deferred to the next meeting. Members asked staff to revise the outline of the work program to reflect the new opportunities from the stimulus package. Staff asked that members send in comments and suggestions on the annotated outline before the next meeting.

6. Recommendation to COG Board on Climate and Energy Policy Committee

Due to time constraints, the presentation on the proposed committee structure was deferred to the next meeting. Staff asked for volunteers to help sort out the committee structure, focusing on questions such as involvement of stakeholders, federal government role, and appropriate representation from the various state and local agencies in the region.

7. Next Meeting and Adjourn

The next meeting will be held on March 27, 2009. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately noon.