

Final Meeting Highlights

COG Climate Change Steering Committee

November 28, 2007

(Approved January 23, 2008)

Attendance

The Honorable Nancy Floreen, Montgomery County Council, Chair
The Honorable Mary Cheh, Council of the District of Columbia
The Honorable David Snyder, City of Falls Church Council
The Honorable Redella S. (Del) Pepper, Vice Mayor, City of Alexandria
The Honorable Judith "J" Davis, Mayor, City of Greenbelt
Mark Rawlings, District of Columbia Department of the Transportation
Corey Buffo, District of Columbia Department of the Environment
Zack Doberbower, District of Columbia Office of Planning
Tad Aburn, Maryland Department of Environment
Nat Bottigheimer, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Association

Staff/Others present include:

John Morrill, Arlington County
Bhesh Dhamala, Fairfax County
Stuart Freudberg, COG, Director, Department of Environmental Programs
Naomi Friedman, COG, Assistant Executive Director
George Nichols, COG, Principal Environmental Planner
Leah Boggs, COG, Environmental Planner
Heidi Bonnafon, COG, Environmental Planner
Joan Rohlfs, Chief COG Air Quality Planning
Jeff King, Environmental Planner, COG Air Quality Planning
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County DOT
Anna Chamberlin, DDOT
Zach Fields, Fairfax County
Dale Medeadris, Northern Virginia Regional Commission
Josh Foster, NOAA Climate Program Office
Kathleen Schramm, City of Alexandria, IRE Cohort #6
Needham Kelly, Fairfax County, IRE Cohort #6
Laurie Wilson, Prince William County, IRE Cohort #6,
Justin Clarke, Arlington County, IRE Cohort #6

1. Call to Order

Chair Nancy Floreen called the Climate Change Steering Committee to order at approximately 11:00 a.m.

2. Chair's Remarks and Announcements

Chari Floreen made several announcements regarding climate change and related activities that occurred during the past weeks. Included in these announcements were the Board of Trade

Potomac Conference which was held on Oct 29/30; MWAQC Air Quality Town Meeting held November 1st; and the District of Columbia Energy Expo held on November 10th. The Chair emphasized that there are a lot of climate change activities throughout the region.

3. COG Institute for Regional Excellence (IRE) Climate Change Team Presentation on Regional Catalogue/Best Practices Project

The IRE Climate Change Team presented the preliminary findings of their Climate Change project. The Team recommended that all COG members join a national or International Climate Change group; implement climate change educational programs; establish regular climate change summits for residents and businesses; and create a national Capital Region Climate Change Action Alliance. The Team will present its final report in January 2008. Results from a survey will be incorporated into the Best Practices document being prepared by COG DEP.

4. Review of Federal Climate Change Legislation

Naomi Friedman provided members an update on Federal energy/climate change policy. Ms. Friedman provided a briefing on the Warner Lieberman Bill which is gaining momentum in the Senate. Staff explained the cap and trade mechanism and the basic operations of the bill. The bill aims to achieve up to a 70% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050. Staff emphasized that there is currently no defined local government role in the bill, but that 9% of emissions allowances will go to states. *There was interest among the Committee to learn more about the bill and to work to expand local role.* *The policy subcommittee met a few weeks later to further discuss. The presentation is posted for more information.

5. Presentation on Climate Change Impacts on the Washington Metropolitan Region

Members heard a presentation from Dr. Don Boesch, Chair of the Scientific and Technical Working Group of the Maryland Climate Change Commission. The working group is charged with preparing a comprehensive climate change impact assessment for Maryland, focusing on evaluating the likely consequences of climate change to Maryland's agricultural industry, forest and freshwater resources, fisheries, and human health. Some of the major tasks involve analyzing available information on climate trends and models, sea level rise and coastal storms, hydrology and water resources, and forested and agricultural resources. One of the key challenges is to assess regional impacts using information from available national and international assessments. The workgroup is using existing climate modeling results, in particular from the Northeast Climate Impact Assessment to project possible temperature trends (days above 90 degrees) and rise in sea levels. The results of the Maryland initiative may be used to inform impact studies for the Chesapeake Bay, Potomac Basin, and Greater Washington.

6. First Discussion of Regional Baseline and GHG Emissions Reduction Targets and Goals

Staff reported that regional CO₂ emissions are projected to increase by 35% by 2030 due to growth in transportation and electricity consumption. Short-term and Long-term greenhouse gas reduction goals were defined and examples were given. Questions for discussion were suggested, such as what is the objective for setting a regional climate change goal, how can a

climate change goal accommodate regional growth, who would the goal apply to and how would progress towards a goal be measured. The Committee asked staff to develop climate change reduction options. Every member of the Committee expressed interest in participating in the discussion of regional climate change goals. *Chair Floreen asked that the January meeting be devoted to a conversation about regional climate change goals and that businesses be invited to join in the discussion.*

7. Participation in Cool Capital Campaign

Chair Floreen requested the policy committee to consider for further consideration. A recommendation is expected at the January 23rd meeting.

8. Options for Increasing Participation and Outreach in Climate Change Steering Committee

An Executive Committee will address broader committee participation as well as structural alignment with other policy committee within the COG structure.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for January 23rd at 11:30 a.m.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:10 pm.