

Draft Meeting Highlights

COG Climate Change Steering Committee

February 27, 2008

Attendance

The Honorable Nancy Floreen, Montgomery County Council, Chair
The Honorable Paul Ferguson, Arlington County
The Honorable Gerry Connolly, Fairfax County
The Honorable Mary Cheh, 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
Harriet Tregoning, District of Columbia Office of Planning
Mark Rawlings, District of Columbia Department of the Transportation
Jack Werner, District of Columbia Department of the Environment
John Morrill, Arlington County
Zack Doberbower, District of Columbia Office of Planning
Liz Entwistle, Maryland Department of Environment

Participating via Call In

Nikki Rovner, Commonwealth of Virginia

Staff/Others present include:

Patrick Leibach, Councilmember Cheh's Office, District of Columbia
Bob Grow, Board of Trade
Vandana Sinka, Washington Business Journal
Monica Backmon, Prince William County
Dale Medearis, NVPC
Ted Graham, COG
Howard Simons, MDOT
Daivamani Sivasailam, COG DTP
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 Rohlf, Chief COG Air Quality Planning
Jeff King, Environmental Planner, COG Air Quality Planning
Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County DOT
Zach Fields, Fairfax County
Rich Rybeck, District of Columbia
Erin Morrow, COG DTP
Eulalie Gower-Lucus, CIG DTP
Colleen Tuner, Baker Corp
JoAnne Sorenson, VDOT

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

Chair Floreen noted that we have a full agenda began the meeting by announcing that the COG Board on February 13, 2008, the COG Board gave unanimous support for advancing the endorsement of the Cool Capital Challenge. COG's Executive Director Dave Robertson also took action on behalf of the COG corporation. Staff was asked to transmit the endorsement including a model resolution for use by members. Staff will brief the Committee on the progress of the campaign at a later date. Meanwhile, members are urged to make a pledge by April 1, 2008.

3. Staff and Member Announcements/Updates/Advocacy

- Maryland Climate Commission and Maryland Legislative Update

Cap and Trade is one of the tools in the Maryland's Global Warming Solutions Act. It is complimented by RGGI. The funding will come from investment fund – RGGI. There is a green building requirement for all new government buildings and public schools. – LEED Silver. There is a renewable energy portfolio standard.

- Virginia Climate Commission and Virginia Legislative Update

Nikki Rovner gave an update on Virginia Climate Commission. The Virginia Energy Plan identified four overall goals, one of which is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2025, bringing emissions back to 2000 levels. The reduction in emissions will be partially achieved through energy conservation and renewable energy actions identified in the Energy Plan. The Commission on Climate Change will further study and formulate an action plan to fully achieve this goal. It was noted that several area members have been appointed to the Commission, including Arlington County Boardmember Jay Fissette and COG's Environmental Director, Stuart Freudberg.

The Commission's next meeting is at the University of VA on March 27, 2008. The IPCC will be presenting and Pew will talk about RGGI and other regional initiatives.

- District of Columbia Energy/Climate Legislation

Councilwoman Chen noted that the District of Columbia was in process of considering several energy related bills. The main bill, which she is sponsoring, amends the Retail Electric Competition and Consumer Protection Act of 1999 to eliminate the Reliable Energy Trust Fund and to clarify the net metering requirements. It would also amend the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Act of 2004 to increase the required percentage of renewable energy, to allow solar-thermal water heaters and energy collectors to qualify as tier-one renewable energy sources, to require that all solar electricity counted towards the solar carve-out be generated within the District, and to require energy suppliers to enter into long-term contracts for the purchase of renewable energy credits from on-site generators. There are also provisions to establish a contract

administrator for the Sustainable Energy Utility; and to establish the Sustainable Energy Utility Oversight Board as the responsible entity.

One hearing has been held and mark up is expected by summer.

Montgomery County Energy/Climate Legislation

Roger Berlinger reported on legislation he is sponsoring in Montgomery County. There are 7 different global warming bills with 25 measures. To highlight a few, there is the cap and trade program and the energy tax program. Regarding green buildings, there was legislation introduced for all new buildings to be Energy Star and another bill for an energy audit at the time of sale for retrofits. All progress in green building is only for commercial buildings, not residential. The following is a listing of pending legislation.

Separate Initiatives in Global Warming Bills – Montgomery County Council

Motor Vehicles: 29-07

1. *Require county's diesel vehicles to use biofuels*
2. *Annual inventory and restriction of SUVs in county fleet*
3. *Increase fuel efficiency standards for county vehicles*
4. *Provide low carbon gasoline when available*
5. *Evaluate car share program for county*
6. *Develop telecommute program for county employees*

Buildings: 30-07

7. *Energy star requirement for new residential buildings*
8. *Study and report on adoption of ASHRAE Code 189.1, energy chapter for new commercial buildings*
9. *Study and report on incentives for retrofits of existing buildings*
10. *Performance contracting for county buildings*
11. *Energy Cost Savings Plan for each county building*

Energy Performance Audits: 31-07

12. *Require presentation of utility bills and information on energy audits and energy efficiency improvements at time of sale*

Climate Action Plan: 32-07

13. *Adopt GHG reduction goals of Cool Counties*
14. *Evaluate membership in cap and trade program*
16. *Conduct GHG inventory*
17. *Develop Climate Action Plans with annual reports*
18. *Develop Tree Canopy Program*
19. *Develop Education and Outreach Plan*

Renewable Energy: 33-07

20. *Develop Renewable Energy Action Plan*
21. *Evaluate Sustainable Energy Utility*
22. *Prohibit restrictions on renewable energy devices*
23. *Property tax credit for use of renewable energy and efficiency improvements*

Planning Procedures: 34-07

24. *Planning Board to consider impact on global warming*

Consumer Protection: 35-07

25. Establish Energy and Environmental Advocate

Fairfax County Position on Proposed Wise, Virginia Power Plant

Supervisor Connolly brought to the Committee's attention a proposal to construct a coal-fired power plant in southwest Virginia. He raised concerns that: there was no analysis of alternatives to a coal-fired power plant conducted, such as renewable energy or conservation; the emission of carbon dioxide (CO₂) is very significant; and transported air pollution is a major challenge for the region. The Committee felt that it was important, in view of its mission and work, that these concerns be communicated to the Virginia Department of the Environment prior to the issuance of a permit.

Committee Action: *Provide comment to the Virginia Department of Environment Quality by March 12. Seek input from MWAQC at its 2/29 meeting.*

Other Fairfax County updates include – all new and retrofit buildings are to be LEED Silver and expansion of the counties tree canopy program.

Advocacy: Recommended COG Position on Federal Climate Legislation

Councilmember Snyder reported that the Climate Change Steering Committee Policy Subgroup had discussed the importance of COG taking a position on Climate Change legislation. It looks likely the Lieberman-Warner legislation will move forward in the US Senate this spring, and the US House is developing a companion bill. The consensus of the full Steering Committee was to express support for strong federal climate change legislation, including cap-and-trade mechanisms; recognize the leadership of local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, and regional entities in implementing programs to reduce greenhouse gases; ensure regional entities and localities receive adequate funding to fulfill their role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and that local governments and regional entities are included in the development and implementation of all cap-and-trade and auction programs.

Committee Action: *Approved resolution for action by the COG Board.*

Other Updates

Stuart Freudberg highlighted other updates, noting the completion of the Regional Catalogue/Best Practices Report and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Report; and activation of the COG Climate Change Web Site.

4. Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through “Green” Development

Harriet Tregoning, Director, DC Office of Planning noted the importance of good land use planning on helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Local governments and regions are demonstrating leadership in employing energy efficient building designs and compact development practices, which, among other benefits, can reduce greenhouse gases. In the interest of time, Ms. Tregoning presentation was distributed. Her presentation provided an overview of some cutting edge development strategies that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions from both the building and transportation sectors.

4. Agreement on Regional Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Goals

Joan Rohlf's noted that at the last meeting of the Climate Change Steering Committee, there was general consensus that short or interim, medium, and long-term regional greenhouse gas emission reduction goals for the Washington metropolitan region should be recommended to the COG Board of Directors. Ms. Rohlf's went on by discussing long term goals needed to stabilize climate and short term goal to insure immediate progress. The recommended regional goals are:

- 2012 Reduce GHG emissions by 7%
- 2020 Reduce GHG emissions by 20% below 2005
- 2050 Reduce GHG emission by 70% below 2005

The committee discussed the proposed goals and suggested that 70% below 2005 by 2050 was not aggressive enough. The committee proposed an 80 % goal. Staff said the 2012 goal was to stop growth in GHG emissions, and since the growth rate is actually 10%, it was agreed to adopt a 10% reduction goal for 2012. Some members asked that the goals be stated in terms that relate to the 1990 baseline chosen by the Mayors Agreement participants (the District).

Staff was directed to continue to conduct and develop analysis of potential actions that would help achieve the proposed goals.

Committee Action: The committee reached consensus on regional greenhouse gas emission reduction goals for incorporation into Climate Change Steering Committee report to COG Board of Directors. The goals agreed upon were for 2012, 10% reductions; for 2020, 20% below 2005; and for 2050, 80% below 2005.

6. First Discussion of Climate Change Steering Committee Recommendations to COG Board of Directors

Stuart Freudberg began the discussion, noting that a first draft outline of the report had previously been provided and ask for guidance regarding how much detail and level of recommendations the Committee wanted in the report. The Climate Change Steering Committee draft report to the COG Board of Directors is scheduled for discussion at the March 25, 2008 meeting.

Committee Guidance: *Specific recommendations with actions/strategies for implementation preferable. Policy Subgroup may work with staff to formulate draft final report recommendations.*

7. Regional Climate Impacts Report

The regional climate impact discussion was postponed.

8. Next Meeting and Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for March 25th, at 11:30 a.m. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:15 pm.

