

Meeting Highlights

COG Climate Change Steering Committee June 27, 2007

1. Call to Order

Chair Nancy Floreen called the Climate Change Steering Committee to order at approximately 12:05 p.m.

Members (and alternates) present:

- 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 Del Pepper, Vice Mayor, City of Alexandria
- The Honorable Lori Waters, Loudoun County
- Emeka Moneme, District of Columbia Department of the Transportation
- Corey Buffo, District of Columbia Department of the Environment
- Harriet Tregoning, DC Office of Planning
- Tad Aburn, Maryland Department of Environment
- Mercury Payton, City of Manassas Park
- Nat Bottigheimer, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Association

Staff/Others present include:

- Bhesh Dhamala, Fairfax County
- David Robertson, Executive Director, COG
- Stuart Freudberg, Director, Department of Environmental Programs
- Naomi Friedman, Assistant Executive Director
- George Nichols, Principal Environmental Planner
- Leah Boggs, Environmental Planner
- Joan Rohlf, Chief COG Air Quality Planning
- Jeff King, Environmental Planner COG Air Quality Planning
- Ron Kirby, Director, Department of Transportation
- Jocelyn Rawat, Montgomery County
- Hawi Sanuy, Prince George's County
- Jenny Sumner, US EPA
- Jac Mmit, Chesapeake and Potomac Regional Alliance
- Zack Doberbower, District of Columbia Office of Planning
- Chris Steuer, ICF International
- Calvin Smith, HSPPS, COG
- Bob Owolabi, Fairfax County DOT

2. Approval of May 23rd Meeting Summary and Amendments to the Agenda

The May 23rd meeting summary was approved, as submitted. There were no amendments to the agenda.

3. Chair's Remarks and Announcements

Chair Floreen made the following announcements:

COG June 14th State-Local Partnership Dinner

On June 14, COG hosted a very pleasant networking reception and dinner, featuring COG leadership and representatives from the Maryland and Virginia State legislatures. The dinner program featured a series of short presentations on the topic of Climate Change as an Emerging State and Local Partnership Opportunity. The lead speaker, Dr. Karl Hausker, from the Center for Climate Solutions – and consultant to ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiative) described the important role of states in moving forward policy on climate change, and how local governments and regions also play a critically important role on this issue. Representatives from Maryland (Tad Aburn), Virginia and the District of Columbia provided updates on key policy in their states being promoted to address this issue.

Formation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Work Group

A new Greenhouse Gas Emissions work group has been formed by MWAQC's Technical Advisory Committee. The purpose of the committee is to make recommendations to TAC and Climate Steering Change Committee regarding base year, future years, inventory methodology and regional targets for greenhouse gas reductions. Participating jurisdictions included: Arlington County, Montgomery County, Fairfax County, Prince George's County, the District of Columbia, Maryland Dept. of the Environment and Virginia Dept of Environmental Quality. The workgroup is currently reviewing methodologies in use around the region and by EPA and others, and will be reporting to us in upcoming meetings with their findings, analyses and recommendations. Harriet Tregoning questioned how vigorous or robust we anticipated the emission inventory to be. *Chair Floreen noted the need to identify the various methodologies currently being used for GHG inventories.*

Issuance of draft COG Green Building Policy Report

The Intergovernmental Green Building Group (IGBG) established by the COG Board last fall has completed a draft of its interim green building policy report in response to the Board's direction. The report's recommendations support the vision of making the region a national leader in green building. The Green Building policy report provides recommendations on regional green building standards and guidelines, and is supportive of the Climate Change initiative. On June 6th, the draft interim report was presented to the COG Chief Administrative Officers Committee who recommended it for Board presentation, which will take place at the July 11th COG Board meeting. The COG Board will be asked to transmit the draft interim green building report to member local governments and other stakeholders for a 60-day comment period.

Status of Review of Use of Ethanol Fuels and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Mr. Freudberg reported that at our last meeting, Supervisor Lori Waters raised concerns regarding the use of ethanol and whether it required more energy to produce than was obtained from this fuel. DEP staff has begun to review various research on the economics and energy production requirements for ethanol vs. gasoline. He also noted that the US Dept. of Energy (DOE) is also reviewing this issue as the ethanol strategy is developed. *Staff expects to prepare a background document on this issue, including bio-diesel, other alternative fuels, for the September meeting. The background information should also include a discussion of credits*

for various fuel use incentives. Councilwoman Mary Cheh also mentioned EPACT alternative fuel requirements for state fleets, does not allow substitution of hybrid vehicles for alternative fuel vehicles. Washington is trying to get a waiver to use hybrids. (There are also other states trying to promote the use of hybrids to meet EPACT requirement for state fleets.)

Report on Cooling the Commonwealth, June 13, 2007

Naomi Friedman updated the group on a well-attended climate change meeting held at George Mason University which featured Dr. Shukla, director of GMU's new climate center and member of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and Chairman Gerry Connolly who spoke about Fairfax's climate reduction measures, including fleet-greening programs, as well as big picture changes the county is starting to think about regarding changing land-use patterns to favor more compact, mixed use development around transit stations.

Cool Capital Campaign

Chari Floreen invited Zack Dolbelbower, DC Office of Planning, to provide brief comments on the Cool Capital Campaign. Cool Capital Campaign is Cool Capital is a non-profit consortium of leading Washington-area businesses, institutions, government agencies, congregations, and community and environmental organizations, united to bring about an immediate and dramatic reduction in regional greenhouse gas emissions to lead the US in reversing global warming. Mr. Dolbelbower then introduced Mr. Cliff Majersik of the Institute for Market Transformation who is one of the organizer of the Campaign. Mr. Meajerisk noted this was a regional approach to addressing climate change. Chair Florren noted that there were lots of activities occurring in the region and that COG coordinated on behalf of all local governments. There may be opportunities to coordinate with the Cool Capital Campaign. Mr. Freudberg noted that staff would meet with Mr. Majersik and others and further explore options for the committee's consideration. Ms. Tregoin noted that the District of Columbia's relationship with DC Cool Campaign has not been finalized.

4. Federal Update

Naomi Friedman provided members an update on Federal energy/climate change policy. There has been a lot of action on Capitol Hill to move forward a federal energy bill. The U.S. Senate passed a bi-partisan energy bill on June 21 that included several provisions that could reduce greenhouse gases in the COG region. These include: new Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards (CAFÉ) for cars and light trucks; new Energy and Environmental Block Grants – that would provide an additional funding source for local governments for energy efficiency/greenhouse gas reduction improvements; provisions to improve the electricity grid; an Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings Initiative; and a renewable fuels standard (see handout). The U.S. House is currently considering a different version of an energy bill, which does not include some of the more controversial items, such as CAFÉ standards. This bill will likely come to the House Floor after the July recess (but before the August recess), and the House and Senate bills will go to conference committee, presumably in the fall. Climate Change legislation (a table was distributed that provides descriptions of major climate change bills) will likely be dealt with in the fall.

Councilmember Berliner said there are a variety of ways to promote the COG agenda in federal legislation. Harriet Tregoning said it will be important to make sure there is a role for local governments in cap and trade schemes. She also suggested the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill will provide opportunities to promote climate change reduction, through support of transit, etc. Mr. Berliner suggested that further down the road, COG may want to consider joining the Chicago Climate exchange, a voluntary trading program. Ms. Tregoning said that cities could be aggregators of offsets. Mr. Aburn said that Stappa/Alapco has promoted principles regarding energy legislation. Mr. Corey Buffo expressed concern about federal pre-emption of state (e.g. CA) standards.

A group of Climate Change Steering Committee Members volunteered to be part of a policy subgroup to further investigate opportunities for the Steering Committee to make recommendations regarding advocacy positions to take on federal energy and climate change legislation. Members of the policy subgroup include:

- Roger Berliner
- Tad Aburn
- David Snyder
- Harriet Tregoning

Lee Ruck gave a short update on the status of CA-LEV II legal proceedings. Both Maryland and the District of Columbia have indicated that they will adopt the CA-LEV standards. Since these standards are more stringent, a waiver must be granted to California. Once a waiver is granted to California other states can use such a waiver. The EPA Administrator recently stated that a decision on California requested waiver is not expected until 2009. California has also announced it will pursue court action.

COG Climate Change Steering Committee Work Program and Schedule

Mr. Freudberg presented the revised work program and schedule. He also referred the Committee to a chart (item #5) that identifies potential action items per meeting. Staff revised the work program to indicate the milestones and actions anticipated by the Steering Committee at each of its upcoming meetings. Work program tasks include: the regional greenhouse gas inventory; a catalogue of existing activities; regional reduction goals/targets; a climate change reduction guide/best practices to achieve reduction; outreach and education; regional climate change effects and adaptations; feasibility study of carbon offset fund; and state and national advocacy.

There was general consensus that staff would proceed with implementation of the work program as presented.

5. Transportation Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Ron Kirby, Director, COG Dept. of Transportation Planning, presented an analysis of transportation CO2 emissions that includes a projection through 2030, as well as assessment of the potential benefits of the California Cars standard and the federal fuel economy standards known as CAFÉ. Without any actions, almost 50% growth in CO2 emissions is forecast by 2030. This presentation may help reinforce the need for advocacy positions regarding the EPA

waiver for California's greenhouse gas emission standards, and federal legislation regarding CAFÉ standards.

6. Regional Climate Change Best Practices: Cataloging Actions Already Implemented and Consideration of Additional Initiatives

Nat Bottigheimer said it would be useful to talk about how to support local leaders in their efforts to move climate change actions forward. Councilman Berliner indicated it would be helpful to have examples of implementable best practices the region could do. Harriet Tregoning mentioned that Councilwoman Cheh (who has to leave the meeting early) will be suggesting the idea of a car-free day. Some suggested this may not be practical in all parts of the region, but, perhaps, individual could take other appropriate actions. Mr. Emeke Moneme said this problem requires us to consider gross changes otherwise we will just be playing around the margins.

Further discussion of this item was postponed due to time constraints.

7. 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.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2007 at 12:00 Noon.

9. Adjourn

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