



Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY: JULY 29, 2026

CEEPC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

- Hon. Cindy Dyballa, City of Takoma Park (Chair)
- Hon. Alan Hew, City of College Park
- Hon. Tom Osina, City of Manassas
- Hon. Tom Peterson, City of Fairfax
- Hon. George Stewart, Prince William County
- Hon. Laura TeKrony, Loudoun County
- Noelani Brockett, Charles County
- Eric Coffman, Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)
- Jennifer Fioretti, Arlington County
- Randy Freed, Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Matt Goetz, Georgetown Climate Center
- Beth Groth, Charles County
- Rachel Healy, WMATA
- John Lord, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)
- Dale Medearis, Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)
- Shannon Moore, Frederick County
- John Morrill, Fairfax County
- Matt Ries, DC Water
- Dann Sklarew, George Mason University
- Antoine Thompson, Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)
- Danielle Miller Wagner, Prince George's County
- Brittany Whited, DOE
- Susan Elliot, ICF
- Dory Estrada, City of Takoma Park
- Valerie Fitton-Kane, Casey Trees
- Susan Gerson, Loudoun County
- Amy Gillespie, Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC)
- Deb Harris, ICF
- Allison Homer, Fairfax County
- Callie Houghland, Virginia Energy
- Andrea Lizarzaburu, City of Takoma Park
- Matt Meyers, Fairfax County
- Opeoluwa Olawale, Washington Gas
- Sheena Oliver, Montgomery County
- Amy Posner, City of Alexandria, REVD Chair
- Lauren Paulet, City of Frederick
- Maha Saidahmed, Office of Supervisor Laura TeKrony
- Mike Sandler, Loudoun County
- John Silcox, Fairfax County
- Morgan Standley, Fairfax County
- Cora Stryker, Bright Saver
- Yi Sun, Prince William County
- Jennifer Tastad, Arlington County
- William Washburn, Former ACPAC Chair
- Sunny Wescott, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES:

- Josephus Allmond, Virginia Chief Energy Officer
- Valerie Amor, City of Alexandria
- Michael Barancewicz, Loudoun County
- Amanda Campbell, City of Rockville
- Kate Daley, Fairfax County
- Richard Dooley, Arlington County
- Robin Dutta, Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association (CHESSA)

COG STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

- Alissa Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Environmental Programs
- Maia Davis, COG Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Director Climate, Energy and Air Programs
- Caroline Sherman, COG Environmental Programs
- John Snarr, COG Environmental Programs

1. WELCOME AND MEETING SUMMARY

Cindy Dyballa, CEEPC Chair

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) Chair Cindy Dyballa called the July CEEPC meeting to order. The May CEEPC Meeting Summary was approved.

2. COMMITTEE AND MEMBER UPDATES

A. Chair Update

- The Midcourse Review was originally scheduled to go before the COG Board at their July meeting, however that meeting was cancelled. The Midcourse Review is now on the agenda for the September 9th, 2026, COG Board meeting.

B. Member Updates

- Frederick County and the City of Frederick completed a joint County/City Climate and Energy Action Plan in coordination with COG. The resulting actions and data from the plan will be displayed on a public facing dashboard in the late summer/early fall. Frederick County is working on updating their Alternative Fuel Vehicle Plan and GHG inventory.
- The City of Takoma Park launched their ClearPath 2.0 Climate Dashboard and held a public webinar that can be found on their website.

C. Built Environment Energy Advisory Committee (BEEAC)

- BEEAC met in June and discussed energy insecurity, energy affordability, and utility disconnections across the region. The next BEEAC meeting is September 17th, 2026.

D. Air And Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC)

- ACPAC met in July and received an update on the ozone season, and in response ACPAC members make the following recommendations: expand the analysis to examine the impact of PJM's emergency request that permitted high electric loads like data centers to operate backup generators during the May and July heat waves, provide more detailed assessment of fine particles like black carbon and ozone, and use particulate sensors to detect small subsets of PM2.5. ACPAC successfully concluded the annual Climate Awards campaign with 24 applicants. The winners of the Climate Awards have been determined and will be announced at the COG Board meeting in the fall.

E. Regional Electric Vehicle Deployment (REVD) Working Group

- The REVD Working Group met in July and learned about the City of Rockville's new right of way charging equipment that installs a shallow channel through the sidewalk, and DC's medium- and heavy-duty vehicle electrification and their approach to charging and resilience with their solar and battery storage facilities.

F. Recycling Committee

- The Recycling Committee completed the 2026 Battery Management Campaign with public and private sponsors including local governments, private sectors waste haulers, and fire departments. The America Recycles Day contest winner was awarded to Prince William County.

G. Regional Tree Canopy Subcommittee (RTCS)

- The RTCS is advancing development of the Tree Canopy Action Plan and expect to circulate a draft for review and input by the end of August.

H. Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC)

- GWRCCC is in the final contract phase for a regional project to test EV charging stations in response to decreased reliability.

I. Staff Updates

- None

J. State of the Climate Update – Sunny Wescott

- A heightened risk of climate and weather impacts was identified for the coming months, including increased flash flooding, stronger thunderstorms, worsening drought conditions, elevated wildfire risk, and more frequent severe wind events. Current climate conditions were compared to the strong 2015–2016 El Niño period, with expectations for heavier rainfall events and increased flooding potential.
- Wildfire smoke and airborne particulates were highlighted as growing concerns due to impacts on air quality, building filtration systems, public health, agriculture, and water resources. Increased evaporative demand and prolonged heat were identified as stressors on regional forests, with reports of weakened vegetation, early fall colors, and increased susceptibility to storm damage and wildfire spread.
- Recent trends show increasing numbers and intensity of severe weather events, including windstorms, tornadoes, hail, and lightning. Warmer temperatures and altered atmospheric conditions are expected to increase the likelihood of damaging storms, wildfire ignitions, and infrastructure impacts. Persistent low river flows and drought conditions were also identified as ongoing concerns despite periods of heavy rainfall.
- Attention was also drawn to the interaction between climate impacts and critical infrastructure. Concerns included increased temperatures associated with data center operations, flood vulnerability in low-lying areas, and continued pressure on water resources. Looking ahead, tropical cyclone activity is expected to produce heavier rainfall and greater flooding impacts, with storm intensity and precipitation presenting greater risks than traditional storm category ratings alone.

3. FAIRFAX COUNTY CLEAN ENERGY SUCCESSES

John Morrill, Director, Fairfax County Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination

Implementation of Fairfax County’s climate and energy initiatives has been guided by collaboration across agencies, community partners, and regional networks. Over the past five years, the county has adopted complementary plans focused on county operations, community-wide emissions reductions, and climate resilience, with staff from dozens of agencies coordinating implementation through regular cross-departmental working groups.

Progress includes investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable county facilities, as well as a range of community-facing programs supporting residents, businesses, nonprofits, homeowners’ associations, and faith communities. Efforts have focused on reducing emissions while expanding access to resources and technical assistance for clean energy adoption.

Recent resilience initiatives include updates to tree planting standards to improve long-term climate adaptability and programs addressing extreme heat impacts on vulnerable residents. A new effort providing air conditioning assistance and repair support was highlighted as an example of coordination among county agencies, community organizations, and volunteers to address gaps in existing assistance programs.

Key accomplishments also include expansion of solar energy installations, development of regional peer networks for energy and sustainability professionals, and continued integration of climate goals across county operations. Future opportunities identified include battery storage, virtual power

plants, renewable energy procurement, equitable access to electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and partnerships that leverage private-sector investment to support local clean energy development.

4. DIALOGUE ABOUT COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA'S 2026 ENERGY PLAN

Josephus Allmond, Chief Energy Officer, Office of Governor Spanberger

A new statewide energy plan is being developed to serve as a ten-year roadmap for achieving Virginia's goal of economy-wide net-zero emissions by 2045. The effort is guided by priorities focused on energy affordability, engagement in regional electricity markets, economic development, and coordination across state agencies to expand participation in energy assistance and bill-reduction programs.

For the first time, the plan will be informed by energy system modeling designed to evaluate future demand and identify cost-effective pathways for meeting energy needs while advancing long-term climate goals. Development of the plan has included a series of listening sessions across the Commonwealth, along with stakeholder focus groups representing environmental organizations, consumer advocates, large energy users, data centers, utilities, and other sectors.

Three major themes are emerging from the planning process: affordable energy, expansion of clean firm power resources, and greater deployment of distributed clean energy. Discussion highlighted shared regional concerns regarding energy affordability, large energy users, and PJM governance and planning.

Discussion: Members expressed interest in providing regional input on the plan and supported development of a comment letter highlighting CEEPC priorities. Questions also addressed coordination among state energy agencies and differences between the current planning effort and previous statewide energy strategies. Staff agreed to prepare draft comments for committee review and submission prior to completion of the plan.

5. LATEST IN SOLAR: SOLAR MARKET STRATEGIES AND BALCONY SOLAR

Cora Stryker, Co-founder, Bright Saver

Robin Dutta, Executive Director, Chesapeake Solar and Storage Association

BALCONY SOLAR

Small plug-in solar systems, also known as balcony solar, designed for renters, condominium residents, and others without access to rooftop solar were highlighted as a growing opportunity to expand access to clean energy. These systems can be connected through a standard electrical outlet, allowing residents to generate electricity without permanent rooftop installations and to take the systems with them when they move.

Growing adoption of plug-in solar in Germany was cited as an example of the technology's potential to lower energy costs, expand access to solar generation, and increase public engagement with clean energy. Recent legislation in Maryland and Virginia established pathways for deployment by exempting qualifying systems from traditional utility interconnection requirements while maintaining safety standards. Common misconceptions regarding grid safety and the potential for excess electricity exports have been debunked, with studies suggesting that generation from small systems is typically consumed locally rather than exported back to the grid.

Discussion: Members noted that system affordability remains a barrier for some households and

highlighted opportunities for rebates and incentive programs. Additional discussion focused on renter and homeowner association rights, with Virginia adopting provisions intended to support deployment in multifamily housing and Maryland expected to consider similar measures in the future.

SOLAR MARKET STRATEGIES

A regional overview of solar and battery storage policy highlighted recent progress in Virginia, including expansion of distributed generation and shared solar programs, as well as efforts in Maryland to streamline residential solar permitting. However, the industry faces challenges, including uncertainty associated with federal tax credit changes, state net-metering transitions, and renewable energy market policies.

Battery storage was identified as a rapidly growing priority due to its role in supporting grid reliability, resiliency, and increasing electricity demand. There is an emphasized need for clear local permitting, siting, and inspection processes for both solar and storage projects, along with continued efforts to streamline approvals and reduce barriers to deployment.

Discussion: Members asked about implementation in multifamily housing and the role of renter protections in facilitating adoption. Additional comments addressed renewable energy credit ownership, opportunities for public entities to pair solar with battery storage, and the importance of maximizing both economic and resiliency benefits from solar installations.

6. ADJOURN

Cindy Dyballa, CEEPC Chair

Chair Dyballa adjourned the meeting. Upcoming CEEPC meeting dates for 2026 include:

- Wednesday September 23, 2026
- Wednesday November 18, 2026

All meeting materials including speaker presentations can be found on the COG website or by clicking the link below –

<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2026/7/29/climate-energy-and-environment-policy-committee/>