

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

Mitigation Working Group

June 23, 2017 | 10:00AM - 12:00PM

Meeting Notes

Attendance: Ben Grumbles, Tad Aburn, Christine Conn, Susan Payne, Larry Kasecamp, Lisa McNeilly, Tom Ballentine, Chris Rice, Colleen Turner, Michael Powell, Mike Tidwell, Brian Hug (MDE), Stuart Kaplow (presenter, Sustainability & Green Real Estate Attorneys), Susan Rosenthal (presenter, The Energy Programs Consortium), John Fiastro (MEA), Rory Spangler (MEA), Tyler Butler (MEA), Christopher Russell (MEA), Tom Walz (DHCD), Marissa Gillett (PSC), Susanne Brogan (STO), David Costello (IEER), Cheryl Arney (Citizen's Climate Lobby), Lanny Liebesman (Citizen's Climate Lobby), Philip Quebe (Cadmus Group), Elliott Campbell (DNR), Rachel Marks (DNR), David Smedick (Sierra Club), Margie Brassil (Del. Dana Stein Leg. Director), Chris Hoagland (MDE), Chris Beck (MDE), Kaley Laleker (MDE), Luke Wisniewski (MDE), Jess Herpel (MDE), Scott Zacharko (MDE), Erick Thunell (MDE), and Lisa Nissley (MDE)

On the Phone: Tom Weissinger, Jana Davis, Jim Doyle (attorney), Pam Kasemeyer (SMWPA)

10:00AM Meeting Begins

1. Introductions

- Secretary Grumbles called the meeting to order briefly and went around the room for introductions
- Mike Powell made a short opening statement to emphasize the importance of presenting concrete suggestions during discussion

2. Panel Speakers and Innovative Financing Discussion

- Stuart Kaplow (Sustainability & Green Real Estate Attorneys) presented on the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) loan program in Maryland, providing a list of his top 12 suggestions for improvement.
 - The presentation is available under the meeting materials on the MCCC website
 - Stuart Kaplow clarified that the concern of the banks was regarding superpriority of the lien, however priority is first only to one-year's payment
 - It was brought up in discussion that the main reason for lack of implementation in Maryland was letters of concern from the bankers. Stuart Kaplow elaborated that their largest issues appear to be related to the nature of the consumer disclosures, and that if we can make it clear that the full value of the lien is not superior, this may address their concerns.
 - Stuart Kaplow emphasized that Maryland appears to lenders and banks as an unfriendly environment, and with some choice wordsmithing in the law we could attract more lenders and banks
 - NEXT STEPS: John Fiastro (MEA) to form a sub-group tasked to discuss specific proposals and formulate some actionable recommendations to bring forward to the full MWG.

- Susan Rosenthal (Energy Programs Consortium) presented on Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QECBs) and their potential in Maryland.
 - The presentation is available under the meeting materials on the MCCC website
 - Suggestion that it may be helpful for MACO to get involved in whether counties wanted to use or waive their allocations back to the State. It was noted, however, that several attempts have been made over time by various groups to reach out to the counties regarding this issue, and there tends to be a lack of response.
 - The general desire expressed was one of not wanting to take the money from the county if they are willing and able to use it, however if they do not plan to utilize the funds it may be helpful to have them reallocated for projects at the State-level.
 - There was some discussion regarding the type of waiver process that may be helpful to achieve this end. Potential was brought up for a process which sets a deadline (of appropriate length) to encourage local projects to be undertaken, after which if no action is taken funds may revert to the State.
 - Suggestions were also brought up for buying down interest rates and combining with other programs including PACE loans.
 - NEXT STEPS: Susanne Brogan volunteered to rejuvenate the discussion with the bond council on the issue of waivers, possibly in conjunction with MEA.
- General Discussion
 - Green Banks were brought up, and Cadmus offered to provide the information from their feasibility study from 2014. In addition, it was noted that Exelon has funded a Green Bank through PEPCO merger and they could be a potential resource.

4. Other Business

- Brian noted July's upcoming meeting
- No other business was brought forward

5. Public Comment

- Citizen's Climate Lobby
 - Proposed that putting a price on carbon would be the best way for Maryland to meet its goals under the GGRA.
 - Legislation has been introduced three years in a row to initiate the carbon price, to be returned as a dividend (revenue neutral)
 - They offered to make a presentation for the Working Group, and some interest was expressed in this by Mike Tidwell, who also noted that CCAN was working on a very similar bill in D.C.
- Christopher Russell (MEA) had signed up to speak but waived at this time.

12:00PM Meeting Adjourned