

**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities
(CEJSC) Meeting
9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Howard County Delegation Room 218
House Office Building (HOB)
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401**

In Attendance

- Commissioners: Arabia Davis, Steve Levitsky, Caroline Varney-Alvarado, Nancy Servatius, Cliff Mitchell, Vernice Miller Travis, Andy Fellows, Elaine McCubbin, John Quinn, Andrea Kidd-Taylor, Megan Ulrich

- Participants: Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Richard Allen, Darlene Mitchell

Introductions: Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves.

Megan Ulrich summarized the December meeting in Prince George's County.

Dawn Hawkins-Nixon discussed the County's TWEETS initiative, the sustainability program and their EJ initiative.

Andy Fellows said that he is proud of the work that is going on in Prince George's County and he thinks that Prince George's initiatives could serve as a pilot program for the rest of the State. Andy also mentioned that there was a pilot project on Sheriff Road.

Dawn asked for a summary of the Sheriff Road pilot project.

Richard Allen said that he wants to do an EJ plan at DNR and he would like input from the CEJSC.

Business Outreach

Megan said that the Air and Radiation Management Administration at MDE is in the process of making a change to MDE's permit guide to implement environmental justice language. The language was created with input from the CEJSC and the changes are being coupled with language changes to MDE permit forms. It is the same language that was previously circulated to all Commissioners.

Vernice Miller-Travis said this is a big step for MDE and is great news. She asked Megan to re-circulate the language to the CEJSC.

Elaine McCubbin said that she reached out to her co-worker on the possibility of doing a DBED blog post. She subsequently found out that her article on Sustainable Maryland Certified, on ways that Maryland cities and towns can become certified as a sustainable community, will be published on the Governor's Smart Green and Growing website. Elaine will send Megan a link when the article is published.

Elaine also asked for any other input on blog outreach, specifically on ways to target businesses. She will coordinate with Laura Armstrong at MDE and will try to think of ways for businesses to be more environmentally responsible.

Vernice said that the website Triple Pundit is a good online blog. She did 10 weeks of EJ posts for that blog.

Cliff Mitchell said that the Green Building Council and the Dept. of Education would be good groups to reach out to on school siting. He said that there is a disconnect between the business world and EJ advocates.

Richard Allen said it would be helpful to stay connected with Delegate Adrienne Jones on the issue.

Academic Community

Caroline Varney-Alvarado said that DHCD and DHMH created a letter on banning smoking in public housing units that is going out to the Executive Directors of public housing authorities. The letter will also have information on resources for quitting smoking.

Vernice asked if there are any First Amendment issues with that.

Cliff said no, there is statutory authority to ban smoking in public housing.

Caroline said that the local Executive Directors can tell people not to smoke in public housing. There is a policy on not smoking in public and private places.

Andrea Kidd-Taylor asked if the quitting resources are free for residents.

Cliff said that some of the quitting resources are free.

Caroline said that she has three internship proposals that she is going to talk to Dr. Sacoby Wilson about and she asked Megan to send her MDE's internship proposal.

Cliff offered to help Caroline with the proposals.

Legislative Outreach

Megan said that she has been tracking legislation and she has not seen any EJ related legislation to date.

Cliff said he hasn't seen any either.

Andy said that he thinks stormwater is an EJ issue. He also asked if anything has been introduced on pesticides.

Megan said not yet. The interim report was just submitted in December.

Andy said that there are two bills that Senator Middleton is sponsoring that affect incineration. One promotes incineration to a Tier 1 RPS, the other penalizes waste diversion and creates a study group. He said to keep an eye out for them. He also suggested that the CEJSC may want someone to come speak to it about zero waste. He said Andy Galli from Clean Water Action could come speak.

Vernice asked John Quinn if someone from the Chamber could come speak about it at the February meeting.

John Quinn said yes.

Vernice asked if someone from MDE can come speak about it as well.

Megan said she would look into that, but that typically we have been scheduling conference calls for speakers instead of scheduling speakers at monthly meetings.

John Quinn said that if the CEJSC wants to get involved in the bill they will have to move fast because the bill will be scheduled in the next few weeks once it comes out. He suggested the CEJSC provide a letter of information on how the issue affects EJ.

Megan asked if the Commission still wants to have people come speak about the bill since the hearing will likely be before the February meeting.

Andy and Vernice said yes.

County Outreach

Arabia will follow up with Megan about having an EJ-101 presentation at an upcoming Planner's meeting.

Cliff said some other ideas for county outreach are to speak at MACo.

Vernice said that the CEJSC did that a few years ago, but it would be good to do again.

Title VI

Vernice summarized Robin's letter for the group. She said that Robin would like to have scheduled interdisciplinary meetings on Title VI implementation with the state agencies that serve on the CEJSC.

Vernice would like to meet with MDE Deputy Secretary Kathy Kinsey on what MDE is doing to implement Title VI. EPA is just now starting a new list of recommendations on how to implement Title VI. You don't have to prove outright discrimination under Title VI, you just have to prove that the dollars/permits have a discriminatory impact. She said that state agencies have probably struggled with this because EPA has not been clear previously.

Darlene Mitchell said that there is a newly formed Multicultural Committee at MDE. She also asked if there is clarification for state agencies on Title VI and how Vernice would like to move forward.

Vernice said the plan is to meet with EPA and then meet with state agencies. Vernice will send Megan dates she is available to meet with Kathy Kinsey. Megan will also include Darlene on future emails.

Richard Allen said it would be good to elevate Title VI concerns to the Governor's office.

Vernice said MDOT does a really good job on Title VI because they have been sued a bunch of times.

CEHPAC Report

Cliff said that CEHPAC continues to have their annual meeting with the CEJSC that focuses on a specific issue. Currently CEHPAC is looking at the following issues: indoor environmental issues, such as smoking in public housing; DHCD's weatherization program; and the new CDC recommendations for the level of lead in housing.

Cliff also discussed indoor air quality and how there is a gap between LEED standards and indoor air quality standards for school construction.

Andrea Kidd-Taylor said she is working on these issues as well.

Elaine asked what LEED standards are not good from a child health standpoint.

Cliff said there is a lot of green washing and that it is not that LEED standards are bad, but there is a need to think beyond LEED certification.

Steve Levitsky said one of the potential issues with LEED is that you must meet certain minimum standards within each section of the LEED standard you are following, but they

allow the user to decide on what other points they want to obtain from that section. So, if you decide to only go for LEED certification and not silver, gold or platinum then you can leave certain initiatives out. So, just because an organization has a LEED Certified building does not mean all green building issues are addressed.

Caroline said that the DGS standard is that buildings have to be LEED Silver. She also said that the Green Buildings Council is looking at adopting IGCC code language which would better address indoor air quality. Also LEED version four is coming out soon.

Andrea Kidd-Taylor said that 133 schools in Baltimore are starting construction soon. Would there be an opportunity for the CEJSC to have input on this?

Cliff said that the CEJSC might not be the right vehicle for that. People from Hopkins or Morgan State might be the better people to follow-up with this issue.

Andrea said that she would go back and talk to people at Morgan State about it.

Vernice said there needs to be more linkage between the children's environmental health networks and EJ advocates.

Cliff said that some should really be engaged with this issue on a daily basis.

Vernice said that the PTAs/Nursing Associations do a really good job working together on this.

Other Business

Cliff said he had three notes on what DHMH is doing on EJ. First, in regard to climate change, four counties are looking into the utility/value of incorporating health issues in their climate action plans. Secondly, the University of Maryland is working on a Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative which looks at the potential health impacts of fracking. Thirdly, DHMH is looking at occupational exposure to pesticides. The CEJSC should have a conversation on the racial/socio-economic impacts of pesticides exposure.

Vernice asked everyone to give updates on what their group is doing.

Arabia said that she is coordinating the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commissions' Second Annual Forum and Awards. She asked Megan to re-circulate the registration information.

Steve said that Domino Sugar is continuing to work on sustainability initiatives.

Megan said MDE is working on implementing the EJ language into permits.

Vernice said that she is attending the NEJAC Conference in Denver. She will send Megan information about it.

Andy said that the 20th Anniversary of the Executive Order on EJ is coming up. Maybe we can get either Senator Ferguson or Delegate Bobo to announce that on the floor.

Andrea said that she circulated MDE's internship proposal to students and she is happy to circulate the other proposals when they are finished.

John Quinn said that the state has been experiencing record cold this winter. People's electricity bills have doubled and low income people are affected by this more than others. Everyone should be prepared for a higher bill and think about conserving electricity.

Dawn Hawkins-Nixon said that she would like to continue working with the CEJSC and plans to attend future meetings.

Richard Allen said he hopes to have someone from the CEJSC come speak to DNR.

Elaine brought up that WTE incinerators are tied to the Power Plant Research Program (PPRP) at DNR. Every energy generation project has to go through the PPRP. We could possibly have someone from the PPRP come into speak to the CEJSC.

Richard Allen said that Pete Dunbar is the Director of the PPRP. We can contact him.

Elaine said she will follow-up with someone from the PPRP and copy Megan on the emails.

Andy said he thinks it is a good idea to have a list of EJ internship ideas for the future.

Adjourn

The next CEJSC meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. in the Howard County Delegation Room 218, Annapolis, MD 21401.