

Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities (CEJSC)
Low House Office Building, Room 318
Annapolis, MD
March 24, 2015

In Attendance

- Commissioners: Lisa Nissley, Larry Polsky, Benoy Thomas, Stephan Levitsky, Andrew Fellows, Vernice Miller Travis, Rebecca Rehr, Dick Fairbanks, Merrick Moise, Arabia Davis, Subha Chander for Cliff Mitchell

- Participants: Elizabeth Dissen, Richard Allen, Akosua Dosu, Darlene Mitchell

Introductions

Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves.

Updates

Lisa updated on SB 693/HB 987: Environment - Ambient Air Quality Control - Cumulative Air Impact Analysis. The bills were heard by their respective committees earlier this month. EHE has not voted on the bill. The bill has been held in ENT as the sponsor is suggesting amendments to create a workgroup. Lisa shared that no matter what happens with the bill, MDE will reconvene the Cumulative Impact Workgroup during the interim.

Rebecca and Lisa also shared that MDE and the advocates met to discuss technical issues with the bill and had a good conversation. Vernice suggested in the future that could be done earlier in the process. Rebecca agreed.

CEHPAC

Benoy has officially been appointed to serve on both CEHPAC and CEJSC. He will continue to help coordinate between the two organizations.

Discussion on Priorities & Goals

The Commission continued to discuss next steps and goals for the year, given the change of Administration and the changes within the legislature.

There is agreement the Commission would like to do more outreach with the Legislative Black Caucus and caucuses. Perhaps a panel or briefing at their November event. It was mentioned that Cory McCray and Antonio Hayes may be good legislators to reach out to. Other potential outreach could happen with the Latino Caucus and the Asian/Pacific American Caucus that is newly forming. Perhaps the Women's Caucus too.

The Commission also discussed Executive Branch Outreach. Commissioners suggested setting up meetings with new Secretaries (esp. those on CEJSC) to hear their environmental justice priorities. Lisa suggested each agency representative could make suggestions particular to communicating with their agency. She is also working on getting the April or May meeting on Secretary Grumbles' schedule. There are EJ provisions of the Chesapeake Bay Agreement. That may be a place to get involved.

Lisa and Rebecca discussed the idea of having just one Annapolis meeting next year since many members have trouble making the meeting in Annapolis. It could be a day to meet with legislators with talking points, etc. Generally people seemed to like this idea.

The Commission continued its discussion on CEJSC tangible materials. Is there something we can produce? Lisa reminded the Commission of the information sheets MDE developed with the help of the Commission. Those are online and they may want to take a look.

During a discussion on membership, Lisa reminded the group that most Commissioners will be up for reappointment in October. The Governor will need to appoint a new Chair. Both legislative seats are still open.

Adjourn