

**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities
(CEJSC) Meeting
October 28th, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Maryland Department of the Environment
Aqua Conference Room
1800 Washington Blvd., Baltimore 21230**

In Attendance

- Commissioners: Lisa Nissley, Andy Fellows, Dick Fairbanks, Vernice Miller-Travis, Larissa Johnson, Robin Underwood, John Quinn
- Participants: Megan Ulrich, Stephanie Cobb-Williams, Jeaneen Logan, Richard Allen, Lauren Rodgers, Dorothy Robinson

Introductions: Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves.

Black Caucus Reception

Larissa said that she contacted the Legislative Black Caucus staffer about the CEJSC participating in Annual Legislative Black Caucus Conference. The CEJSC does not have the capacity to host a reception this year. The Agenda for the Conference is already completed, so the CEJSC cannot host a panel either.

Vernice said we can talk to the Legislative Black Caucus about setting up a panel for next year.

Richard Allen asked what the date is for the Annual Legislative Black Caucus Conference?

Lisa said it is November 13th - 15th.

Joint Hearing

Lisa said the legislative committee chairs are likely to change and we don't know the committees make-up yet. Lisa said that both Environmental Matters and the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee have been engaged with environmental issues over the summer. Chairman McIntosh's staffer came to the last few cumulative impact and CEJSC meetings and Senator Joan Carter Conway came to the last CEJSC meeting.

Identify Relevant Data Sets

Lisa said that Rebecca Rehr is looking into the health enterprise zones and trying to get in touch with people to discuss how the zones could be used in an EJ context.

Sea Level Rise

Lisa asked Dick if he talked to Arabia on sea level rise.

Dick said he had not been able to connect with Arabia yet. He recently returned from a trip to the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Lisa said she would check with Arabia who is communicating with Zoe Johnson at DNR to see if Zoe was available to speak to the CEJSC.

Andy Fellows said he is going to the UM Symposium and leading a discussion on communities and climate change. He asked if it is related.

Lisa and Megan said it might be related. At the retreat Arabia said that she initially became interested in the issue because of a presentation about sea level rise affecting communities on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Cumulative Impact Workgroup

Lisa gave a summary on the Cumulative Impact Workgroup. She said that the first two meetings of the Cumulative Impact Workgroup were meant to provide a background on cumulative impacts. There were presentations on what MDE has done so far in regard to EJ (including multiple mapping exercises), what other states are doing on cumulative impacts, and the state of the science of cumulative impact assessments. Additionally, the department prepared a one-pager on what cumulative impact work the EPA is doing. The third meeting was a discussion of what processes the states of Connecticut, Minnesota, and California use for cumulative impact or enhanced public outreach and how these processes could work in Maryland. The discussion was not very robust. Some of the stakeholders did not volunteer a lot of discussion points. After the third meeting Lisa and Megan started talking to people in smaller groups to get input on permits, geographic area, and a potential process.

Andy asked if any potential EJ areas came out MDE's mapping exercise?

Lisa said MDE did update the maps and that no EJ areas immediately were immediately apparent based on the permitting data alone. Lisa and Megan just participated in a webinar on EJSCREEN. EJSCREEN is EPA's new tool that they intend will be used to identify areas that might require some further examination. EJSCREEN is not released to the public yet, for the time being it is only available on an EPA computer. The tool is supposed to be released by the end of the month. Once EJSCREEN is available MDE would like to do a public webinar on it. MDE could also potentially add local information into EJSCREEN to use that as a tool in Maryland.

Vernice said MDE should invite Dr. Devon Payne-Sturgis to come and speak. She helped develop EJSCREEN and would do a great job explaining it.

Lisa said that that Cliff Mitchell reached out to Dr. Devon Payne-Sturgis to speak at the second Cumulative Impact Workgroup meeting. She gave him information, but she could not attend the meeting.

Lisa also said that she and Megan talked to Minnesota about their cumulative impact assessment. They had two projects go through the assessment and the best part of the process was that there was dialogue between the company and the community that resulted in better outcomes for the community. They are currently considering revising their process to include an enhanced public participation program.

Vernice said one part of that is if the public engagement is voluntary that would be bad. The public outreach has to be required.

Dick agreed and asked if Lisa and Megan can send the link to the cumulative impact workgroup page.

Lisa said she or Megan would re-send the link.

Environmental Champion

Andy asked what the environmental champion would do? Would he or she focus on cumulative impact work or in EJ in general?

Lisa said that cumulative impact work would definitely be a big part because it is a major focus issue right now.

CEHPAC update

Lisa said no one was present to give the CEHPAC update.

Other Business

Dick said he had questions about the minutes. He asked about the vertical gardening at Montgomery Park.

Lisa said she can look for more information on it.

Dick said on the Eastern Shore, the waves were pretty high and the storms are getting worse. He summarized an article from USA today about a report that the Union of Concerned Scientists issued on nuisance flooding. It relates to days when the flooding is much higher than it should be. We need to be aware of it.

Vernice said that she recently sat through a meeting on that issue. The Delmarva Peninsula is amongst the worst hit in the country. The NAACP and the Union of Concerned Scientists are having a meeting November 13th in Baltimore. The NAACP is involved with the issue because the communities that will be some of the hardest hit are historically African American

communities and there needs to be better communication to the communities. Vernice will send a link to the Union of Concerned Scientists' Report. NEJAC just finished a report on this issue as well and they will be issuing it within the next 30 days.

Stephanie thanked Vernice for clarifying the issue and asked her to send the links to both reports to Lisa.

Richard Allen asked if the CEJSC should be reaching out to insurance companies?

Vernice said yes, at least to the federal flood insurance program.

Andy said there is also an economic piece to the issue.

Lisa said she also has the tentative agenda for the UM symposium. She will share that in the weekly email. The Symposium is December 6th and 7th.

Vernice mentioned that there is a Green 2.0 report on diversity and how can we diversify the environmental community. Vernice will send links to the report.

Richard Allen said that there was a STEM fair this past week. Morgan has received some money to enhance STEM programs.

Robin said that she at the retreat she requested to work with CEPHAC about reaching out to children on Title VI. Robin is willing to take the lead on the issue.

Lisa said she would look into it.

Lisa also reminded everyone that November CEJSC meeting is going to be held a week early on Nov. 18th due the Thanksgiving holiday.

Adjourn