

**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities
(CEJSC) Meeting**

**February 28, 2012 8:30a.m.-10:00a.m.
Annapolis, MD**

In Attendance:

- Commissioners: Lisa Nissley, Cliff Mitchell, Arabia Davis, Stephanie Cobb-Williams, Scot Spencer, Andrew Fellows, Jennifer Petersen, Robin Underwood, Rebecca Rehr, Delegate Elizabeth Bobo, and John Kotoski

- Participants: Robert Jackson, and James Willett

Introductions: The meeting began with introductions of participants.

Other Business:

Chairman Scot Spencer called the meeting to order and Lisa Nissley began the meeting by going over the agenda items that were to be covered during the meeting. Lisa is still working on the Internal EJ Workgroup memo. She also mentioned that although the problem/solution statement was finished that it could be considered a living document that would evolve and should be revisited regularly at meetings if everyone was okay with that.

Rebecca Rehr briefed the Commission with her progress on the Academic Subcommittee. The next step for this is setting up a lunch date. This would likely be on April 27th at 1 in the afternoon and last between 1-2 hours. Carpooling is encouraged, and Rebecca is looking at the possibility of setting up a conference call for anyone who cannot attend the lunch meeting. For those who can attend parking codes will be provided. Members of the Academic Subcommittee as well as members from her department were invited.

Robin Underwood updated the Commission on the Title VI Disciplinary Team saying that there would be a meeting scheduled for March and she would provide updates along the way that were related to EJ issues.

The next item on the agenda was SMART techniques. The focus of this was to ensure that as a commission we were using SMART techniques to help achieve our goals and mark our progress. Cliff Mitchell said that the state cancer plan used a formal SMART technique, and one of the things their plan did was to pick one goal and two initiatives to work on so that there was a limit on goals. One idea may be to pick a goal and two initiatives per area or per agency to keep the commission focused. Lisa agreed and noted

that it has been hard for the Commission to prioritize with several goals, but also noted that the commission has been recognizing success with techniques similar to SMART.

Cliff then asked if the Commission had a data goal. Lisa said that we did not have one yet, but through Rebecca we were going to academics for data. Then Cliff discussed the idea of having an articulated common set of data and themes that the Commission thinks agencies ought to consider when discussing projects that might have an EJ impact. This concept ties in with our impact concept, it would be like creating a dashboard for agencies. Robin concurred with his point and said that the Title VI meeting examined a similar idea. Andrew Fellows asked if there was a final outcome of this Commission's EJ identification initiative. Cliff responded saying that most agencies have some kind of dashboard and that the Commission is in a position to think differently about the demographics. He noted that most agencies haven't figured out how to do that in the context of their own operations. This provides an opportunity for us to get this to get agencies to incorporate consideration for EJ into their projects. Other states are already doing this; Massachusetts requires a health impact assessment. Currently DHMH has tracking for data, and they are talking to UMD and other academics on how to scale those down to a county level. Lisa suggested that we could consider DHMH's work a pilot and get it refined before asking the agencies to take it on.

Scot mentioned that the Commission could use SMART techniques to figure out how to manage larger problems and coordinate them with local governments and work those up the ladder to other levels. Andrew asked if it would be easier to list, track and prioritize long-term projects that the Commission works on. It was suggested that James would work with Scot to create a standard document to track SMART goals for the Commission. Scot and Rebecca agreed and stated that this would be a good step towards organizing our annual reports. It was noted that although a few years ago the Commission was behind on reporting it was now fully caught up.

The next item on the agenda was the draft letter to the Intermodal Communities. This issue is over a year old and much has happened regarding it. The communities at Elkridge have held meetings for outreach; however, it is unclear who was targeted for the outreach and what the message was. It was agreed that the Commission could draft a letter for suggestive or informative purposes and ask questions to the community to help. Because of the elapsed time between the origin of this EJ issue and the current proceedings that the Commission is taking it was discussed how effective any efforts would be. Arabia Davis said that MDP does do a clearinghouse for projects, and will be giving a short presentation on it next meeting. Scot suggested that the Commission compose a lessons learned document for handling EJ issues in a timely manner. There was discussion about the difference in size and scope between an EIS and EA.

The next item on the agenda was to examine bills that were of interest to the Commission. Delegate Bobo suggested SB358, the Public Private Partnerships bill. Scot suggested the Commission follow HB439, the Maryland Health Improvement and Disparities Reduction Act of 2012 and HB523, the Economic Inclusion Plans bill.

Andrew suggested that the Commission add SB475, the Dredging – Testing for Toxic Substances bill.

John Kotoski asked if the Commission made a stand on any bills. Lisa answered that the Commission does not take stances on bills, but does address EJ issues in testimony and brings them to the attention of legislators who may not realize. There was some discussion about whether the septic bill had an EJ slant on it.

Scot brought up a new item about the Baltimore region being awarded a Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Award. The region signed a cooperative agreement with HUD to produce a work-plan within 60 days and to produce a memorandum of understanding within 120 days following the 60-day deadline. Because it is a regional planning grant, it requires broad community outreach and the Commission's attention on this issue is welcome. The Commission decided they should keep current on this item. In the next 30 days the Steering Committee for this project is deciding what the right outcomes are for outreach. Jennifer Petersen mentioned that the EPA has done work with respect to this process which could serve as guidance to the process. Rebecca said that she would ask Dr. Wilson if he had any input for Scot. Robin suggested that the Baltimore MPL would be involved, and that SHA and MTA had models to follow, including a survey that gets the demographics of the surveyed. The overall goal of the plan is to produce a 20 year plan for the Baltimore Region toward sustainability that addresses housing, transportation, workforce disparity, and protecting the environment.

Adjourn: - The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.

The next CEJSC meeting is scheduled for March 27th at 8:30 a.m. in Annapolis, MD in the House Office Building, room 218.