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

**Annual Joint Meeting with**

**Children’s Environmental Health and Protection Advisory Council (CEHPAC)**

**May 22, 2012**

**Aeris Conference Room 1800 Washington Blvd.**

**Baltimore, MD**

In Attendance:

CEJSC Commissioners: Lisa Nissley, Jennifer Bevan Dangel, Arabia Davis, Dick Fairbanks, Robert Sklar, Andrew Fellows, Clifford Mitchell, Rebecca Rehr, Jennifer Peterson, Caroline Varney Alvarado, Delora Sanchez

Participants: Paula Montgomery, Julian Levy, Nancy Servatius, Richard Allen, Veronika Carella, Suzanne Collins, Crystal Heide, Stephanie Cobb Williams, Megan Ulrich, David Skinner, Ben Gitterman, Karin Russ, Sacoby Wilson, Rebecca Ruggle, D'Ann Williams, Jesse Negherbon, Jed Miller, Jullian Levy

Introductions: The meeting began with introductions of Commissioners from each group and participants.

Cliff Mitchell began the meeting by describing the statutory charge each organization has to work coordinate efforts on issues of common interest.

Lisa Nissley gave an update on the work of the CEJSC. The Commission has concentrated on using a new approach to handling business using SMART techniques (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely). Doing so, the Commission has recognized the limited nature of our resources and has concentrated on taking on setting goals, creating action plans for achieving those goals, naming Commissioners as leads on issues, and doing more work between meetings. Meetings have become a time to report back on work that has been done between meetings rather than a time for speakers. Instead, the Commission has done conference calls and special meetings for members that are interested in particular topics to come together and discuss the topic. Recently, the Commission has made comments on Plan Maryland and met with MDP about the policy, hosted an event for the business community, and hosted a lunch discussion with members of the academic community. The Commission has also advised MDE on various efforts of the Department.

The Commissioners submitted comments and met with staff at MDP to advise on Plan Maryland, led by Arabia Davis. Arabia discussed the Commissions thought that the document doesn’t have strong metrics or indicators on children’s environmental health. Veronika mentioned – LEED and IAQ – is there a thought about IAQ and schools as part of Plan Maryland? Arabia and Cliff explained that Plan Maryland is about where to place growth, not the individual developments. Veronika asked how Plan MD deals with HOAs or areas like Columbia. Arabia answered this is done through the county. (was this Veronika’s question?)

Bob Sklar described the business outreach efforts of the Commission. There is an event planned for the business community on June 11th at DBED’s WTC Office. The Lt. Governor will be speaking and it is cosponsored by the Maryland Chamber of Commerce. We hope to have a discussion on how businesses can involve communities in expansion decisions. Sue Brigham of Waste Management will also speak.

Rebecca described efforts to do academic outreach with the thought that the research being done in the academic community could be related to the goals of the Commission. She suggested that the new Center on Community Engagement, Environmental Justice, and Health (CEEJH) being formed at UMD School of Public Health may be a natural academic arm of the Commission. Ben asked if medical schools have been involved; Rebecca answered no, but they would be a natural partner. Another guests mentioned that nursing schools would also and Rebecca agreed. Dr. Sacoby Wilson of UMD and CEEJH described some of the issues CEEJH would like to work on including STEM activities, community engagement, engagement on environmental justice – service learning – issues: working on back yard issues (Anacostia, Chesapeake, eastern shore, poultry and pesticides, infrastructure issues, food justice, recreational issues), equity risk mapping (facility location, poultry operations, etc), and poultry – risk mapping for NPDES-permitted facilities. The Center will also be looking at environmental education (note EPHT curriculum development, other educational activities).

The discussion on Title VI was deferred as a member was not present to provide details.

Lisa described MDE internal work group looked at priorities given existing resources. The Commission has been helpful and she is gearing up post session to get things running again.

Dr. Cliff Mitchell discussed issues CEHPAC has been working on and following. He described the new law that passed during session. The lead prevention program will now cover pre-1978 rental properties, instead of pre-1950. State is submitting an application to take delegation of RRP law from EPA. The bill also gives local health departments the authority to issue abatement orders and MDE now has ability to enforce locally issued orders. Meetings are taking place now with local health officers about local authority. Veronika asked about settlement issues and the lawyers present described them as private tort issues. Dr. Wilson mentioned that CDC has lost some of its funding related to lead prevention. Dr. Mitchell explained that SB 644 also doubled registration fees for properties which we hope will help MD to be better situated than other states.

Tyrone Hill (MDE fair practice officer) came into the meeting and asked if anyone was present from Coalition to End Lead Poisoning and told the representative he needed to speak with them a concern regarding their contract that should be corrected. The person present said they would look into it.

No permits have been issued for drilling in the Marcellus Shale. There are applications that have been submitted to MDE, but the Department will not be issuing permits until many questions about safety are resolved. An executive order established an Advisory Council to advise the Department on issues surrounding best practices; the Council meeting monthly in Garrett County. There are consultants looking at safe practices. Reports are due at the end of December. A bill to fund the studies did not pass. MDE and DNR are using existing resources. DNR and MGIS are looking at baseline studies. Is it possible to look at what DNR is collecting right now? Lisa will share the information that is online and if need be could have someone from MDE speak to the groups. Richard Fairbank – is industry involved in the Commission; Lisa answered yes. Dr. Wilson mentioned ATSDR also looking at the issue including what chemicals are being used, which drives what kind of monitoring to do? Part of EPA rule? Cliff mentioned that industry trying to get trade secret protections. Stephanie Cobb Williams shared information about a website called Frack-Focus which the industry would like to use as a clearinghouse. May be MCLs for some chemicals; SDWA has some exemptions. It was suggested that the two groups might submit a letter about concerns and bring exemptions to the attention of policy makers. Julian stated that we need to be careful about putting the cart before the horse since we do not know what the studies are looking at. We want to be sure to ask the right questions – need to look at air, water, land.

Power plant research fund. Could use fees from industry to monitor populations that are protentially affected. Sacoby – what about nutritional biomarkers (combination of the two might have particular impact on children). Chemical and nutritional biomarkers. National nutritional biomarkers remark. Sorry I can’t recall this part and had no written notes on this discussion.

Dr. Wilson mentioned that UMD may have funding for a center that will have biomonitoring for people who fish.

Ben Gitterman discussed a report on pediatric environmental health specialty units, a clinical resource for the U.S. Now over 10 years old. National children’s study – still at risk of being zero funded. Family enrollment ongoing in Maryland.

Jed stated that he sees fracking a challenge but one with opportunities. Need to provide good advice. Ben has had collaborations with outside groups – we are very close to the legislative and academic centers in PA, which are closer to the fracking issue. Could we engage them in part of our discussion? Could we engage them in the discussion? Should engage how people are thinking about the issues (health, environmental justice). Dr. Wilson mentioned that Curtis Bay also potentially an opportunity for applying health in all policies in Curtis Bay (a primary EJ issue)?

New Business Veronika spoke about HB 1019 which corrected greenwashing of design for environment. There is opportunity for CEHPAC or MDE to address school policies that have to be developed in that schools need guidance on soaps, hand cleaners, etc. Carolyn Varney asked does it include pesticides (no). Also, new law there is requirement for environmental literacy prior to graduation.

Rebecca Ruggles mentioned that Children’s Environmental Health Network will issue a report card soon.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

**The next CEJSC meeting is scheduled for June 26th at 9:30 a.m. at Baltimore, MD.**