

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

April 24, 2012

**Aeris Conference Room 1800 Washington Blvd.
Baltimore, MD**

In Attendance:

- Commissioners: Scot Spencer, John Quinn, Andrew Fellows, Caroline Varney-Alvarado, Karen Forbes, Arabia Davis, Rebecca Rehr, Cliff Mitchell, Dick Fairbanks, Lisa Nissley, Bob Sklar, Stephanie Cobb Williams, Robin Underwood, Vernice Miller-Travis and Jennifer Petersen
- Participants: James Willett, Edward Dexter, and Sybil Wojcio

Introductions: The meeting began with introductions of Commissioners and Participants.

Agenda Items: Chairman Scot Spencer called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. Vernice Miller-Travis and Jennifer Petersen joined via conference phone. The first discussion point was an update from Vernice about the Demolition Advisory Panel. This project involves Baltimore City, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and East Baltimore Demolition Inc. (EBDI), which is in the process of demolishing and deconstructing several homes and structures in east Baltimore. The Panel suggested low-cost methods to contain dust-fall.

The scope of the project from the Panels standpoint was to engage the community in the process, and develop standards to minimize the levels of lead and dust-fall in the area. The Panel focused on providing EBDI engineers, project planners, and workers with cost-effective ways to reduce these risks to the health of the impacted area. The work of the panel was a success; the community felt engaged and informed and the dust-fall and lead levels were kept at a minimum.

Vernice also mentioned that the Panel was examining the issue of dust-fall impacting communities that the trucks transporting debris traveled through. Ed Dexter mentioned that for transporting debris and landfills there are different standards for controlling dust-fall. Scot Spencer mentioned that this was part of the lessons learned from phase one of the EBDI project, and was perhaps something to take up with the City or MDE. The eventual goal from this development project is to mandate these demolition and deconstruction standards through legislation. Cliff Mitchell mentioned that these same practices and standards that were applied to lead could be applied to asbestos as well. Cliff also said that the work of the Panel was much like a health impact assessment in the sense that there were baselines and measurements of impacts from the project, as well as community engagement and feedback from the community.

The next order of business was to approve the minutes of the meeting from January, February, and March. These minutes were provided to the Commissioners via email and were approved unanimously.

Next, Lisa Nissley gave updates on agenda items for the MDE Internal Workgroup. Currently a memo with the recommendations of the Workgroup is being approved by senior staff and will be made public. Robert Jackson, the MDE intern who recently finished his internship had completed a draft for the county two-pager memo that Lisa will complete. The monthly conference call between agencies has been set for the second Tuesday in each month, starting in the month of May. For the local jurisdiction agenda item Lisa will be starting on a two-pager and contacting Calvin Ball to proceed.

A request has been sent for a date that the Lt. Governor would be able to join the Commission and the Maryland Business Roundtable to create a discussion about how businesses can address potential environmental justice issues in a manner that is beneficial to the environment and the businesses. Bob Sklar mentioned that leading off with an EJ issue may help start the dialogue. John Quinn said that the basis is that decisions have to be made at the time that the investment decisions are made, and that EJ issues are not always recognized at that time. Cliff said that it was perhaps easier to frame the discussion around a case instead of discussing the general theory of EJ. John agreed with the idea of having case studies, but suggested that the overall idea was getting these people into a room and then frame the discussion with them.

Andy Fellows mentioned that the discussion should be framed in the context of environmental justice as well as sustainable communities. Cliff built onto that idea by suggesting that the discussion should not just focus on regulatory policy but also on how it is financially and publicly beneficial for businesses to take something from this meeting. John agreed and mentioned that Sue Brighams would give a talk about why it makes sense to involve the community in the business process. Scot Spencer agreed, noting that Sue works with the second largest waste management company in the nation and that every business contributes to or is affected by the waste stream. Sue Brighams is in the best position to help the Commission lead the discussion. Dick Fairbanks suggested that perhaps the conversation should include success examples of this practice, citing that public relations are important to businesses.

Next order of business was the lunch meeting with Dr. Sacoby Wilson at College Park on Friday. Rebecca Rehr encouraged the participation of all the Commissioners and participants and mentioned that she would provide parking permits to attendees. Andy and Vernice said that this lunch meeting with Dr. Wilson was a tremendous opportunity for the Commission. Rebecca also filled out the tracking progress form for her project.

Robin Underwood spoke to the importance of this opportunity and the importance of working with Communities and smaller jurisdictions because some may not understand their Title VI rights. She then gave an update on her Title VI agenda items stating that hopefully by the next meeting the fair practice representatives will have had their first phone call on Title VI to discuss who is working in it, what they are doing with it.

Vernice said that at some point she would like to brief the Commission on Plan EJ 2014 in terms of implementing it at the federal level and how it relates to Title VI.

Next order of business was the 2012 Legislative Session wrap-up, in which Lisa and other Commissioners discussed bills that the Commission was tracking. Andy mentioned that Clean Water Action has been working for three and a half years for a stormwater requirement local funding mechanism. Which is an EJ issue considering the bay as a whole and the pollutants that run into it; the focus is mostly on pollutants from agriculture, but stormwater is a priority too. For rivers like the Anacostia and the Patapsco to be healthy would required large-scale retro-fitting in many urban areas. He suggested that the Commission could think about how to get private sector developers to invest in lower class and urban communities and have them resist sprawling out. Dick Fairbanks mentioned that in a parking lot near his residence was just completed and there were excellent stormwater and runoff control implementations put in by the city.

Scot mentioned that in Maryland, the state started working toward the community in the red line and purple line area where one half of one percent of federally provided funds is dedicated toward job training for when construction begins. This creates a pathway to opportunity for folks who are usually negatively impacted by transportation projects.

Lisa shared information about the Marcellus Shale presumption of impact bill was amended to change the presumptive impact area from 2650 feet to 2500 feet, which matches Pennsylvania. Lisa mentioned that the effort on lead bills was very successful. The House sent three bills to address liability issues to the Senate; one that came out was a workgroup to study it. Another bill passed that would increase the fee for property. In terms of stormwater, septics passed on a tiered basis. The asbestos worker protection bill passed; this bill creates fund that goes back into the protection program. Vernice mentioned that SB 708 and HB 1019, both passed, and modify requirements of procurement of green cleaning products in schools.

Cliff mentioned SB 234, the Health Enterprise Zones bill. This bill creates local health indicators, because of health disparities, to identify health enterprise zones, the goal and mechanism is to identify areas with disproportionately high health impacts that impact disadvantaged populations. Karen Forbes asked if the part of the purpose of this bill was to place green spaces and walking zones in areas that are developing. Cliff replied that the department was specifically looking at areas that had less access to health care. Rebecca added that the bill was structured in a way that would provide incentives to doctors to practice in shortage areas. Scot concluded by saying that this topic and the topic of GIS would be great topics for discussion at the retreat.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

The next CEJSC meeting is scheduled for May 22nd at 9:30 a.m. at Baltimore, MD.