

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

**January 24th, 2012 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.
Baltimore, MD**

In Attendance:

- Commissioners: Lisa Nissley, Nancy Servatius, Arabia Davis, Scot Spencer, Rebecca Rehr, Vernice Miller-Travis, Delora Sanchez, Ann Goldscher, Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Kim Pruum, Jennifer Peterson, Bob Sklar

- Participants: James Willett

Introductions: The meeting began with introductions of new participants. Ann Goldscher was in attendance for Delegate Bobo, and Kim Pruum was in attendance for Calvin Ball.

Other Business:

Lisa requested an approval of the minutes from the December meeting, however, Vernice requested to make amendments pertaining to sections about Title VI.

Scot began a discussion on EJ and the business community. The focus of this was that the business community does not like being approached in what they felt was a negative manner. This spurred an action-item in which the Commission is to set a mark for how to engage the business community in the future.

Scot went on to discuss a recent conference he went to for transportation. There are four freight train lines in Maryland that are proposed to have tunnels for them expanded so that they can carry twice the cargo they are now on double-stacked carts. Nancy asked Scot if the Transportation Research Board Conference (TRBC) addressed the double freight lines in Howard County, Anne Arundel County, and Baltimore County in their meeting. Scot replied that they did not and that they had a very loose definition for freight. That definition seemed to incorporate trucks that transport products, trains and other sources of transportation. As a comparison, Scot explained that port authorities used bond money to raise bridges to accommodate new transport ships.

Vernice drew upon Scot's port example and mentioned the court case *Bus Riders Union v. City of Los Angeles* which is an EJ case reliant upon Title VI. Vernice explained that Title VI requires that every dollar of federal money must be spent equally among constituents for any large projects. Vernice also said that it was likely for one of the intermodal rail facilities to be in violation of Title VI and subject to litigation.

Scot continued the discussion of the intermodal rail facilities by asking if there was an engagement process in an EJ community there was, or if there was an EJ scan. Kim Prum replied that there was the NEPA scan which involved examining the impact on transportation and having community workshops. She also mentioned that the community had felt as though some information was being withheld or obscured from it. For example, the prices for each project could vary depending on who the community was asking. Several of the Commission members had commented that Elkridge was the cheapest project, according to CSX. Kim mentioned that the DOT website was a useful site for information and that the intermodal website offered email updates.

The general consensus of the Commission was to draft a letter to the community with recommended steps to take to protect their interests. Kim explained that this operation is a joint operation between CSX and the DOT. DOT has a final say on the location of the project because they provide funding for it. Scot raised the question if we would need to send a letter to the DOT as well, and it was suggested that we send a letter to the Secretary of the DOT. Kim then mentioned that they were in the NEPA scan process, which could take a maximum of 18 months. Currently the process is in phase two, community involvement. It was also mentioned by Kim that CSX was purchasing land in that area.

With regards to creating an academic library Rebecca mentioned that the response is generally optimistic on EJ. She has accumulated a large bibliography, but no library yet. One problem she is having is that anything retrieved from the UMD subscription is not available for public use. Vernice commended Rebecca for her work and mentioned that the EPA Plan EJ 2014 had an excellent culmination of research and science.

Jennifer Bevan-Dangel mentioned that Towson had a grant to study how smart growth impacts people in terms of transportation and living. She then proposed that the Commission should work towards a forum with an academic subcommittee. Scot added that it would be a good idea to invite legislators and the Mayor of College Park. The meeting would likely take place after session in the end of April.

Towards the end of the meeting the idea was proposed that the CEJSC draft a legislative agenda for legislators and drop it off at their offices. The agenda would contain upcoming bills, related information to bills, and information for them to consider about the issues. Among these issues the Commission mentioned that lead issues and facing issues would be included in this legislative agenda.

Adjourn

The next CEJSC meeting is scheduled for February 28th, 2012 at the House Office Building Room 218.