

**Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice & Sustainable Communities
(CEJSC)
Tuesday, September 24, 2013
Montgomery Park, Baltimore, MD**

In Attendance

- Commissioners: Calvin Ball, Dick Fairbanks, Andrew Fellows, Andrea Kidd Taylor, Elaine McCubbin, Lisa Nissley, John Quinn, Caroline Varney-Alvarado, Arabia Davis, Chris Hill, Vernice Miller Travis, Nancy Servatius

- Participants: Michelle Romney, Megan Ulrich, Allyson Black, Yvette Williams, Andy Galli, Whilliam Fadely, Stephanie Cobb Williams, Jamie Bridges, Destiny Watford, Greg Sawtell, Crystal Heide, Angelo Bianca, Richard Allen, Victor Ukpolo

Introductions

Each member and guest introduced themselves and their relationship to the Commission.

Lisa introduced Megan Ulrich who will be working with the Department while Lisa is on maternity leave. She will be assisting with the Commission since she has previously worked with Lisa on these issues.

Legislative Outreach

Chris Hill reported ideas she has had about outreach to the Legislative Black Caucus. She thought some sort of reception at the upcoming annual conference would be a good idea and reached out to staff. There is a very good opportunity to host an event from 5-6 on November 1st. It is between two other popular events so it is likely to be well attended. The only concern is how we would pay for food. The state agencies don't have a budget that allows them to help with that. Vernice asked if Scot may have some access to funds, but Lisa had already checked in with him and the funds are more for policy events than social events. Everyone agreed this was a great idea, but we needed a few days to work on funding issues. It was mentioned we should invite the secretaries and also needed Commissioners to attend.

At July retreat it was suggested that Lisa do a presentation on the state agencies' legislative process so the group understands how Administration positions are developed. Lisa invited Allyson Black, her counterpart from the Department of Human Resources to join her in the presentation so they could hear from two agencies. Lisa presented a power point (attached) describing the interactions between agencies and the Governor's Legislative Office. The following questions were asked:

- Andy asked what we meant by “strategize” being a role of the legislative office. Lisa answered that basically this meant prioritize and decide how to act on a bill.
- It was asked how long it takes to develop Administration bills. Lisa answered this can vary. It can be a long time in the making, or response to a recent occurrence.
- Vernice asked how this is related to the advocate’s agenda and how we break into that. Lisa answered that it may or may not be related depending on the issue. There are a lot of moving parts. Sometimes the advocates pick something related to the Governor’s agenda, but surely at times they are reaching out to the Governor and encouraging him to choose a certain issue as his own priority. She asked why lead is not a bigger priority. Lisa pointed out that this was the first year in 15 sessions that a lead related bill did not pass. These bills have had the support of the Governor.

Calvin shared that in light of our discussion at the retreat that we’d like to be in better communication with the Governor’s office, he had reached out to the Deputy Chief of Staff, Ashley Valis. Lisa and he have both spoken to her about the Commissions work and agreed Lisa would brief Ashley and MDE’s legislative officer after each meeting so they are up to speed with the issues they discuss. We have already seen pay off from this effort as Lisa was asked to add EJ information to a briefing memo being prepared for the Governor for a meeting.

Business Outreach

Elaine reported she has not been able to get the blog project moving because of changes in DBED’s IT Department, however as that settles down she hopes to move things forward.

John Quinn described a meeting he had with MDE personnel in order to move forward the idea of incorporating EJ language into existing permitting documents. He met with Deputy Secretary Kathy Kinsey, ARMA Deputy Director Angelo Bianca, Fair Practices Officer Michelle Romney, and Lisa and made suggestions for documents related to Air Quality Permits. The staff is drafting language for both and the Commission will get to review as well. Everyone hopes to wrap this up pretty quickly. Elaine mentioned that info like this might be a good blog entry. Vernice asked if EPA guidance will be included. John explained this is a very simple effort and brief. Lisa added that to the extent the 101 was influenced by the EPA guidance and is being used, yes, some of the themes will be included. Angelo added that the hope is to move the discussion toward EJ and participation and by including some simple questions we can do that. Elaine said that sometimes you need to answer the question how “does this help me?”

Dick raised concerns about some projects in Baltimore City, where he thinks perhaps the local government is the larger issue than the business. He referred mainly to how the Horseshoe Casino is being developed at a former industrial site in the Westport area. He said that the city did not address community concerns as it moved ahead to get the casino built. Additionally, he expressed concerns that the same attitude seems to have happened before regarding Harbor Point and the large CSX Intermodal facility. He said the city

could have gained community support, if they had approached the affected community and listened to community concerns up front.

Academic Outreach

This conversation has been delayed because Dr. Wilson was not able to participate today. Lisa also further explained that due to scheduling/workload issues, the Retreat minutes are not complete and we could not circle back on some items related to the academic outreach effort. An effort to reach out to Dr. Wilson before the next meeting will occur.

Dr. Taylor mentioned she would like to help get the internship idea off the ground. Lisa needs more ideas of what is needed to do that. They will talk offline.

County Outreach

Calvin shared the Local Government 101 via a letter to each of the County Planning Directors. He has not received feedback from anyone so it is thought we should target certain counties to reach out to next. This can happen between meetings. Arabia mentioned that the Planning Directors meeting out of MDP might be a good place to discuss it. Lisa and she will work to set something up for their next meeting.

Lisa reached out to Adam and he is able and willing to meet with the group in December to discuss his ideas for addressing EJ in Prince George's County. Megan will take over setting this up when she starts with the Department.

Richard Allen asked if a permit has ever been denied because of EJ. Vernice said not here, but in other areas, such as California. Calvin said it may have been, but perhaps not called that. John Quinn pointed out that there is often not authority to deny a permit based on EJ alone.

Title VI

Vernice said that she has not been able to meet with Robin since the July retreat, but they have spoke and plan to in the next couple weeks. They will bring something to the next meeting.

CEHPAC

Nancy shared the items CEHPAC has been working on:

- TRIS Regulations
- Updating the form for underage tanning
- Adjusting the acceptable lead level for children
- Looking at what chemicals are replacing BPA in children's products
- Children's exposure to fracking chemicals
- Asthma control plan

Other News:

A representative from the Baltimore Metro Council said that the organization is working on a regional network that is data driven to identify EJ and Title VI communities to make sure that new transportation projects are not disproportionately affecting these areas in a negative way.

Greg Satwell of United Workers is interested in the incinerator project in Curtis Bay. They recently wrote a letter to MDE asking for information. It was sent to Karen Irons. Lisa will check on the status of the response.