

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

Wednesday, October 19, 2005

## MINUTES

### IN ATTENDANCE:

#### **Commission Members & Designees**

Vernice Miller-Travis (Designee-Chair for Scot Spencer), Stephen Pattison (Designee for Kendl Philbrick) & Dorothy Morrison, Carlita Lindsey (Designee for Audrey Scott), Diane Matuszak (Designee for Anthony McCann), Kelly Pfeifer, Douglas Edwards, Rose Burnstein

#### **Commission Participants**

Stephanie Cobb Williams, Nan Lyon, Dawnn McCleary, Nadine Jackson-Bey, Shahatra Allen, Paul Oberle, Roger Taylor, Arthur Ray, Betty Dabney, Robert Maddox

### Open Remarks

Vernice opened the meeting up with a brief introduction. She chaired the meeting on behalf of Scot. Everyone introduced themselves.

### Tasks from June Retreat

- Pursue communication with the current administration to ensure that the Commission is knowledgeable of the Governor's agenda.
- The Commission is tasked to invite interested parties, as participants, to the commission meetings.

### Work plan

- Each workgroup gave an update on their work plan for the upcoming year. The Community Involvement and Health Workgroups overlap in work, as reflected in their Work Plans. This is an indication that the various workgroups should work collaboratively, not in isolation.
- Conference calls among workgroup chairpersons before full Commission meetings was discussed. This coordinated effort would assure that everyone is aware of tasks that each workgroup is currently working on.
- The Community Involvement Workgroup has agreed to assist communities, when possible, with recommending resources, i.e. non-profit legal services.

### Annual Report

This report will reflect:

- Attendance
- Legislative review for 2005
- EBD update

- East Baltimore Demolition Protocol
- Workgroup work plan for 2006
- Recommendations from 2004 Annual Report
- Summary for June retreat
- Update on the training held with MDE Senior Staff
- Funding needs for Health and Environmental Research Committee work

## Outreach Updates

- Steve and Dorothy met with the Director of the Maryland Municipal League (MML). Dorothy updated everyone on the meeting and the plans to organize local government workshop at the annual MML Conference scheduled for June 2006 to raise environmental justice issues in land use. Arthur suggested that incentives be given when dealing with the local government at MML, along with education and outreach.
- Dorothy plans on contacting the Director for MACo to schedule a meeting to discuss outreach opportunities.
- Vernice suggested that everyone let Dorothy know of other avenues/organizations to participate in EJ Community Workgroup or act with community organizations outreach.
- CEJSC will encourage outreach to other groups for collaboration.
- Betty recommended a Comment Toolbox be placed on the website.
- MDE's Environmental Justice Program is currently working on distributing a Public Participation Guide (PPG). Dorothy will forward a draft copy of the PPG to the Commissioners and participates for review.

## Resolving EJ concerns presented to the State

There was discussion on the need to establish a process to address environmental justice concerns presented to the State; in addition, the need to assist communities build capacity was discussed too. Examples are:

- How to effect environmental decision-making?
- How to effect local land use planning?
- Understanding permit processes and timeline.
- Understanding a zoning and land permit (refer to PPG).

Several issues were raised as to why a formal process would not be needed for addressing EJ concerns. It was decided that after the problem is defined, a process (process=regulation) to address it would be created. Then find an already existing resource that could possibly address the problem possibly eliminating the need for creating a new process.

- The Critical Area Commission (a heavily funded group with 18 members and regulatory authority) will have a meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday in November. Dawnn suggested that Scott, Dorothy, and other interested commissioners attend it in order to shadow the Critical Area Commission. The question came up as to whether or not CEJSC could model after the Critical Area Commission, which has regulatory authority and the CEJSC are "advisory" in nature.
- Community EJ Issue - Odenton Landfill is a historical community that is immediately adjacent to a site near a proposed landfill with potential impact to private wells and historic character. Residents would like support for regulators to re-introduce bills to prevent landfills in certain areas. The feasibility for the Commission to play an active role was discussed.

## Election of Vice-Chair

The Commissioners and participants discussed the nomination process to elect a vice-chair. It was decided that full attendance from the Commissioners would be needed in order to make this important decision. Everyone agreed that the vice-chair would be decided at the upcoming CEJSC meeting in November. The chair will provide nominees and Commissioners will vote by secret ballot.

## Next Meeting:

The next CEJSC meeting will be held on November 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 – 11:30 in the Patuxent Conference Room, located at MDE.

## November Agenda topics so far:

### Vice-Chair Election

Calendar- schedule for next year's meetings—location to be determined

Stephanie will investigate legal parameters for CEJSC to receive funds.

Dorothy spoke with Scot after the meeting:

Action Items --> Draft letter to Lieut. Gov. requesting a visit with CEJSC chair and staff.

## Special Mention:

Barbara Sattler went to New Orleans to assist in Hurricane Katrina Relief efforts. Upon her attendance at the next commission meeting, a request to update everyone on her experiences would be appreciated.