

Baltimore County Commission on Environmental Quality

Minutes of Meeting Held November 11, 2008, DEPRM Conference Room

Present: Kathy Martin, Jerry Jurick, Ray Davis, Mike Pierce, Don Outen, Lois Jacobs, Joan Norman, Nell Strachan, Brian Fath, Joan Plisko, Tom Moore, Linda Davis.

Absent: Rex Wright, Willie Grier, Russ Donnelly, Steve Schreiner
New member Jerry Jurick was welcomed.

Presentation: Joan Norman made a presentation on agriculture in Baltimore County. Her farm, One Straw Farm, is a certified organic vegetable farm, selling through distributors, to Whole Foods, through CSA and at farmer markets. The number of farms in Baltimore County has declined, and there is concern about having enough locally grown food to sustain the population in case of a national emergency. She emphasized also that “the closer you are to your food, the better it tastes.” A number of new initiatives to focus on locally grown food and to increase farming were discussed. She also described a program to eliminate plastic bags at the Kenilworth farmers market.

Committee reports.

Sustainability Network. Kathy reported on the kickoff meeting held Nov. 18, 2008. A public meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Dec 2, 2008 at the Towson Unitarian Universalist Church, and sustainable practices will be discussed, focusing on the Baltimore County sustainability plan. Four CEQ members are serving on committees (Kathy Martin on Management of natural resources; Joan Plisko on Operations of county facilities; Rex Wright on the “built” environment; and Brian Fath on public education and outreach.) There is a work plan planning group, on which Kathy Martin will serve. The initial focus is on greenhouse gas emissions, based on the study Pat Brady study.

The county has approximately 6 months to develop its plan.

A press conference is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 21 at 10:30 AM.

Md. cap and trade auction. Maryland conducted its first auction, which raised \$16 million, which is to go to support improved energy efficiency and sustainable practices for low income families. Ideas for programs should go to Rex Wright. This will be a quarterly auction. Joan Plisko suggested that we look into Baltimore County “green” job development possibilities.

Storm water management. Topic has been thoroughly covered and studied, committee will assess what has been/is actually being done. Committee is Nell, Russ, Steve and Tom. Committee will schedule a meeting with Al Wirth, who has comprehensive knowledge of the current laws, plans and programs.

Don Outen advised that each county is to submit a water resource management plan by spring 2009, per legislation passed in the last session. A work group is working on a draft for the county now.

Tours. Mike Pierce reported on the planned 3rd district tour. Lois Jacobs reported on the 2nd district tour. Ray Davis discussed issues for the district 6 tour.

New Business. Calendar of meetings discussed. 12/2 for the sustainability public meeting, no CEQ meeting in Dec.; 1/28/09 meeting with Kevin Koepenick presenting on ground water. Snow policy—follow the county school closings.

Website: Kathy reported on an inquiry from the CEQ website. Kathy reported on preliminary feedback on the proposed revised solid waste management plan on which we provided comments. Brian Fath asked about follow up on the Conservation Landscaping report, which should be forwarded to the members of the county council.

Adjourned at 9 PM