

Virginia Council on Environmental Justice

Thursday, August 5, 2021 10am – 4pm

10:15am Brian Ball, Secretary of Commerce and Trade

Stephen Moret, Virginia Economic Development Partnership

- (Sect. Ball) Sect. of Commerce and Trade oversees agencies that deal with topics such as housing, eviction prevention funding, broadband expansion, tourism, energy and clean energy – all with goal of economic development.
 - Stated support for environmental justice but expressed concerns about potential road blocks to economic development, particularly in regard to attracting foreign direct investment to the Commonwealth.
 - “The question becomes – how do we address environmental justice and maintain economic development?” Should we reexamine zoning (local process)? What are EJ goals for localities? How do we measure progress? Are certain [EJ communities] off limits for certain kinds of development? What is the role of the state? Should DEQ develop a process to credential local governments and/or their zoning plans?
- (Mr. Moret) Goal is to align projects with what the local community wants, in terms of economic development. It’s best to figure this out early in the process. Expressed strong support for EJ and a desire to collaborate.
- (Dr. Phoenix) Invites Sect. Ball and Mr. Moret to further discussion with the Community Health & Public Participation Committee.

10:30am Committee Leadership Discussion

- Need in person quorums
- **Subcommittee Process:** Subcommittees bring forth draft recommendations to the entire Council to achieve consensus on final recommendations. Subcommittee members put the recommendations in writing for the final report.
- **To get started** – subcommittee co-chairs should poll their members and set up an initial meeting.
- **Membership** – Council members can join as many committees as they have time to commit, there is not maximum limit. We hope every member will join at least one.
- **Leadership**
 - Public & Community Health & Public Participation
 - Janet, Ronald, Theresa, Katie
 - Co-Chairs: Katie and Theresa
 - Infrastructure and Just Transition
 - Karen C, Tom B, Aliya, Phil, Theresa, Harrison, Clarence
 - Co-chairs: Clarence?
 - Emerging Issues
 - Aliya, Mike E, Karen C, Faith, Lisa, Harrison, Janet
 - Co-chairs: ?

11:30am VAEJ Mapping Tool Presentation

Queen Shabazz, Environmental Justice Collaborative

(Queen Shabazz, Monica Esparza, Adam Buchholz, Wanda Roberts and LaVeesha Pollins) Walked through the new EJ mapping tool they have developed. [link to site] The map has data layers for socioeconomic, sensitive populations, potential exposures, and environmental effects. There are also “story map” links that highlight certain areas with more detail; the team hopes to continue adding more. Showed the area in Charles City County where (originally two, now one) natural gas power plant is proposed nearby a landfill also proposing expansion. They need funding to do further studies.

[LUNCH]

1:15pm Public Comment

Kenda Hanuman, Buckingham County, spoke against gold mining and agreed with earlier conversation about the role of local governments in working towards EJ.

Carolyn White, Chesapeake Civic League, spoke about lack of utility sewer service and flooding concerns in the area around the border of Suffolk and Chesapeake, wants the Council to make a site visit.

Jessica Sims, Appalachian Voices, repeated concerns from June 25th meeting about the lack of hybrid public meeting options, specifically in regard to the proposed Lambert compressor station in Pittsylvania County. Claims Air Board has delayed the public hearing to Sep 17; Ms. Sims asks the Council to weigh in on this permit decision by the Board/DEQ.

Kely Hengler, Suffolk Civic League, spoke about lack of utility sewer service and flooding concerns in the area around the border of Suffolk and Chesapeake, claims local communities are being left out of decisions, new development in the area is making it worse.

Pamela Brandy, VP of Hughesville City League (Chesapeake), spoke about lack of utility sewer service and flooding concerns in the area around the border of Suffolk and Chesapeake, these citizens are paying stormwater fees with no benefit, tried asking local officials for help, not getting a response, not opposed to growth and new development but their neighborhood should not have to be flooded out

Meryem Karad - Brought up state has flood resiliency \$ and is trying to connect with areas of need.

2:30pm Getting to Carbon-Free Electric Generation at Least Cost to VA Ratepayers

DMME, DEQ and Research Partners

- (Carrie Hearn, DMME, Energy Equity) explains background – the VCEA requires a report be prepared, in consultation with the SCC and the EJ Council, and presented to the VA Legislature by Jan 2022. The report is required to contain a recommendation on whether the GA should permanently ban the construction of new fossil fuel based electric generation facilities. There will be a public comment period on the report as well.
- Franz Litz, Georgetown Climate Center, explains the modeling approach
 - The reference model is basically an equation that relates changes in one variable to outcomes in another. In this model, input variables include supply, demand and cost

- related estimates (including VCEA requirements) to predict future outcomes for electricity generation in VA, and in the 12-state RGGI region.
- Once the reference case model is final, they can apply scenarios (“sensitivity cases” and “policy cases”) to test out how different approaches might influence future outcomes.
 - Today we were presented reference case model outputs for electricity generation by fuel type, and projected CO2 emissions with VCEA goals.
 - See Slide 14 – for a list of questions for the Council members. Carrie’s team is seeking our input on the model and policy measures for test cases.
 - Dr. Harris – asked whether the social cost of carbon was being considered. Response was no, not in the reference model shown today, but it could be a potential test case.
 - Ms. MacCormick – Asked whether the model reflects the reliability of the electric grid. Response was no, the model parameters are set to assume reliability in all cases. Basically, the model is not built to consider this aspect of electric generation.
 - Dr. Phoenix – Would have liked more time to review materials ahead of time. Invites the modeling team to meet again with the Infrastructure & Just Transition Subcommittee.

3:30pm October Site Visit Discussion