**Baltimore Commission on Sustainability February 2017 Meeting Report**

**Date:** Tuesday, February 21, 2017, from 4-6 pm

**Location:** 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore MD 21201

**Subject:** Commission on Sustainability February 2017 General Meeting

**In Attendance**: (Commissioners) – Avis Ransom (meeting chair), John Ciekot, Miriam Avins, Inez Robb, Michael Furbish, Peter Doo, Councilman Ryan Dorsey, Tom Stosur.

**Chair Welcome and Report**:

* Avis acknowledged ambassadors and Plan Update meeting attendees and asked them to stay engaged.
* We are in the midst of change:
* Reappointments of Commission
* Plan Update will be different – broader and may change how we work
* New administration - may impact our work
* Let Anne know if you want to stay on the Commission.
* Recap by Anne/Inez on good first meeting with Mayor Pugh

**Staff Updates**:

* EPA Brownfields Grant - $200K. Phase 1 assessment. New part time staffer at Sustainability Office on a 1-year contract. Sites being selected by suggestions from the community: then investigate viability. 6 sites to be evaluated.
* Sustainability Director – interviews in mid-March
* New Plan Timeline – Draft will be presented at April 18th Town Hall meeting
	+ Plan Update Equity Committee –Equity is not a stand-alone goal: just like a financial goal, every initiative needs to be looked at with its impact on equity.
		- History and its impact
		- Investment across the city by neighborhood
		- Understanding of investment/disinvestment
		- More creativity working closely with the community
		- Disaggregate data in ways we have not done
		- We are sworn to equity as a commission.
			* Our racial equity and class lens is evolving
			* We want the city to grow and the work of the commission to be holistic and meaningful to all the residents
			* Continue to engage residents in the process.

Legislative Updates:

* Scientist March on Washington set for Earth Day/April 22nd
	+ <http://time.com/4656630/scientists-march-on-washington-date/>
* People’s Climate March on Washington April 29th
* <https://peoplesclimate.org/>
* Polystyrene Ban HB/SB –
	+ City Council resolution supported the ban (02/27/2017)
	+ City Hall Rally on Friday, March 3rd – 100 participants including key council representatives
* Forest Conservation Act – The state is proposing to make the act more stringent – no net loss of forest.
	+ Proposed upgrades in the planting ratio.
	+ Currently, there is an exemption for a utility right of way.
	+ Propose increasing fee in lieu. Baltimore’s fees are already higher.
	+ Propose 40,000 square feet minimum. Baltimore’s minimum requirement is already 20,000 sf.
* Clean Energy Job Act Override
	+ Both the Commission and the City supported the override
	+ 25% renewable by 2020 (instead of 25% by 2022)

**Complete Streets Ordinance** – Councilman Ryan Dorsey and Liz Cornish, Bikemore

* Bold legislation
* The 1st in country to imbed racial equity
* Aligned with the goals of the Commission and the Plan
* 33% of city residents lack access to a car. Zip car is not in their neighborhood.
* More than 50% of residents in historically redlined neighborhoods do not have access to a car
* 130 cities in U.S. have complete streets policies
* 2010 Resolution (sponsored by Mary Pat Clarke)
	+ Projects reviewed for complete streets but often did not happen
	+ This would create a systematic process with more accountability.
* Aspects to the ordinance
	+ Where are crashes happening? How can roads be designed more equitably and safer? (Baltimore has a disproportionate number of crashes and a disproportionate occur in communities of color).
	+ Implementation – when you repave or doing significant work, a process is triggered
	+ Reporting - xx dollars spent in xx statistical areas – evaluate where and how much resources are allocated
* Question:
	+ Will this slow the repaving planned streets?
		- We currently bear the costs of bad design
			* Access to jobs
			* Air Quality
			* Improves local business by 90%
			* Adds only 3-5% to cost.
* Question:
	+ Skeptical that only 3-5% cost increase and about space constraints on city streets.
* Answer:
	+ If we plan from the beginning, it saves on costs. Line painting in-house is less expensive. We must look at our procurement process. Where can we work in-house? Inexpensive application but due to city procurement process – list of approved vendors, they won’t bid on a project with a low dollar amount. We must be creative about working on low cost projects. Resurfacing we can do with no extra cost (striping).
	+ DOT improvements are hard won grant dollars. DOT needs more support. Grant money left on the table because not enough resources to apply
	+ Every 2 years DOT surveys the condition of street repayment and works with BGE gas line replacement or major redevelopment projects
* How to step back from car centric way i.e. track trailers who use our streets for business
* How do we remove traffic capacity without impacting transit riders?
* The City has good intentions / real constraints
* We need a comprehensive transportation vision to change the paradigm.

Audience Comments:

* Lens on how we want our city to be – livability, businesses, bringing people to businesses, the bill is more than just streets, it’s about sidewalks, the speed cars are driving, safe street crossing. Lens on rebalancing our transportation and equity needs with a focus on people.

Policy Paper and website: <https://www.bikemore.net/completestreets/>

**Next Sustainability Commission Meeting:**

Date: Tuesday, March 21st, 4:00-6:00
Locations: **Openworks, 1400 Greenmount Avenue**

Parking: Lot and street parking

<http://www.openworksbmore.com/>