

**Baltimore Commission on Sustainability  
October 25, 2011 Meeting Report**

**Date:** Tuesday, October 25, 2011 from 4-6 pm

**Location:** Department of Planning Boardroom, 417 E. Fayette St. 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

**Subject:** Commission on Sustainability October 2011 General Meeting

**In Attendance:** (*Commissioners*) – Davis Bookhart, Cheryl Casciani, Peter Doo, Ray Ehrlich, Lynn Heller, Keith Losoya, Patrick McMahon, Sharon Middleton, John Quinn, Jake Ruppert, Scot Spencer, Tom Stosur, Mary Washington,  
(*Staff*) - Beth Strommen, Alice Kennedy, Abby Cocke

**Topics addressed:**

- Minutes approved September 2011 meeting. Patrick moves and Scot seconds.
- Chair Report
  - Welcome
  - Time of year when Council committees work through back log of bills. That is why there has been an increase in the number of legislative items coming through email.
    - Alice & Beth will give staff opinion and background
    - Bills will come from Cheryl either as voice of Legislative sub-committee or as Chair of Commission.
    - Current Legislative subcommittee is Scot Spencer, John Quinn, Ray Ehrlich, and Ruth Ann Norton. Would anyone like to be added?
    - Add Mary Washington to Legislative sub-committee
- Staff Report
  - Climate Action Plan – approved by Board of Estimates. First team meeting scheduled, formal kick-off will occur in January.
  - City Schools Sustainability Day November 12<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm
  - Applications are available for Sustainability Challenge grants, as well as Healthy Food grants, and BEC energy hub school grants.
- Priority Discussion
  - Lynn met with Cheryl, Beth & Alice to sift through various items from last Commission meeting to see what top areas make sense to be priority areas
  - This meeting, and next to do investigation
  - When recommending priorities, if no commission member willing to step up to take on as a priority area, then item will be taken off of the list.
  - Staff vs. Commission difference
    - What can Commission do that complements operational roles
    - Does not have to be legislation – can be convening, advocacy, education
  - Five areas that rose to the top out of our last discussion
    - Energy: Impact on residential solar, like to advance agenda
    - Trees: vision bad cop vs. good cop issue, who is in charge? Who needs to care?
    - Stormwater Fee: surface water division main lead, this is going to be controversial, for the Commission to be silent would be hard to imagine. But what should we do?
    - Plastic Bag Fee: Del. McIntosh noted multiple fee bills. Do we need this? Where are places we can learn from?

- Green Infrastructure: would advance stormwater agenda, trying to advance at a big level, advance the vision, support Beth & Tom who are hanging out with it.
  - More responsive role: continue educating, that never stops, still responsible for the whole plan.
  - Davis: how does this tie to CAP Task Force recommendations?
  - Lynn: groups work together on items
  - Cheryl: time is right to be active on this.
  - Lynn: These are priorities for coming year. What are issues coming up at State & City level? How to know Commission lending biggest bang?
  - Beth: Green Infrastructure is a general comprehensive greening strategy for the City. Way of layering on cost effective way to implement stormwater management.
  - Plastic Bag Bill – identified as a litter issue. TMDL for trash, have to address litter and broader perspective.
  - Cheryl: Mary – what is your perspective on the short list?
  - Mary Washington: A lot of challenges are regional. Develop relationships which give opportunity to collaborate. Filling educational & affinity gap. Unusual to have collection of people doing this work.
  - Tom Stosur: Green Infrastructure and Stormwater, whole idea of mitigation bank persuading state should be allowed. Advocate for flexibility. Stormwater fee – have to understand how funding is used to reduce stormwater impacts.
  - Cheryl: Philly is an example, water utility leading vision.
  - Beth: important to note though, Baltimore does not have a combined sewer, and that is a disadvantage
  - Councilwoman Middleton: Green Infrastructure includes Land Use & Urban Affairs committee sees a lot of parking lots. Parking lot going to be built, what kind of material for parking lot to make it a green parking lot
  - Peter Doo: BCGBS last year initiative to have adopted by State as equivalent to LEED for State requirements. If MD accepts, then GSA will accept for State. Bring issue back up so that State will adopt.
  - Rebecca Ruggles (community member): Continuing lack of health perspective. Health & Environmental problems in terms of air quality, implications for asthma, exercise.
  - Inter-agency Health Task Force for Healthy Baltimore 2015
  - Tom: Air Quality Baltimore Metropolitan Council Regional Planning process occurring now.
  - Scot: Transportation agenda, Air shed regional issue, understand the complexity & work.
  - Schedule presentation from Health Department Inter-Agency Task Force
  - Lynn: gas tax. Clearly a sustainability issue, in some circles controversial.
  - Commissioners interested in working on following issues to determine specific tasks, action items as part of priority agenda for 2012:
    - Trees: Mary, Sharon, Jake, Davis, Alice, John Ciekot
    - Energy: Peter, John, Keith, Anne, Jake
    - Stormwater: Scot, Cheryl, Mary, Lynn, Ray, Dana, Beth
    - Green Infrastructure: Patrick, Beth, Tom, Peter, Davis, Jake, Beth
  - Davis: procedural question- only Commissioners?
  - Cheryl: we started there but need to talk to others interested in working on these issues let Beth & Alice know
- Transportation Update – Patrick McMahon
  - Transportation Goals

- Goal #1: Improve public transit service
- Goal #2: Make Baltimore bicycle and pedestrian friendly
- Goal #3: Facilitate shared-vehicle usage
- Goal #4: Measure and improve the equity of transportation
- Goal #5: Increase transportation funding for sustainable modes of travel
- **Goal #1** Update on Strategies (red = nothing, yellow = some movement, green = really happening)
  - Make software upgrades to allow for transit signal priority YELLOW
  - Implement an integrated system of downtown shuttle and trolley routes GREEN
  - Work with the MTA to expand QuickBuses to more high-volume transit corridors YELLOW
  - Bring the Red Line Transit project to Baltimore GREEN
  - Work with the MTA to develop and implement an ideal transit service profile for MTA routes YELLOW
- **Goal #2** Update on Strategies (red = nothing, yellow = some movement, green = really happening)
  - Implement the Baltimore Bicycle Master Plan GREEN
  - Develop a Bike to Work program for Baltimore GREEN
  - Evaluate the creation of a bicycle sharing service GREEN
  - Expand the Safe Routes to Schools program GREEN
  - Implement ‘Sunday Streets’ recreational street closure program YELLOW
  - Improve public infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians GREEN
- **Goal #3** Update on Strategies (red = nothing, yellow = some movement, green = really happening)
  - Establish Baltimore CarShare program GREEN
  - Expand the CityCommute Rideshare program GREEN
  - Leverage new Baltimore Green Building Standards to increase shared vehicle use RED
- **Goal #4** Update on Strategies (red = nothing, yellow = some movement, green = really happening)
  - Track the disparity of transportation costs by neighborhood relative to income RED
  - Identify strategies to reduce the disparity in cost of transportation relative to income RED
  - Work with the MTA to measure the quality of transit service in Baltimore neighborhoods YELLOW
- **Goal #4** Update on Strategies (red = nothing, yellow = some movement, green = really happening)
  - Advocate for more funding for transit and sustainable transportation YELLOW
  - Implement goals of the Mayor’s Transportation Investment Commission (TIC) report YELLOW
  - Explore options for a new regional transit funding source and a larger local role in managing the MTA RED
  - Expand eligible expenses under sustainable transportation programs RED
  - Advocate shifting funding from roadway capacity expansion to transit, bicycling, and walking projects YELLOW
- Sustainable Design for Baltimore’s Red Line – Anna Ricklin, DOT
  - The planned Red Line is a 14.5-mile light rail transit line
  - Critical east-west link identified as priority within Regional Rail System Plan

- Serve more than 60,000 people per day, take 44 minutes to travel end to end, and include a total of 20 stations, 15 surface and 5 underground.
- The Red Line will pass through a highly diverse set of neighborhoods.
  - Western half: from a suburban area in Baltimore County that includes a large shopping mall, through working-class neighborhoods in far west Baltimore City, to historic but highly disinvested areas closer to the city's core.
  - Eastern half pass through revitalized areas, including historic Fells Point, and areas with the largest ethnic populations in the city.
- City's Role on the Red Line
  - Team: Red Line Coordinator, Economic Empowerment Officer, Health & Environment Specialist
  - Spearheading innovative community involvement (Red Line Summit, Community Compact, partnership with SAACs)
  - Represent best interests of Baltimore City residents and promote holistic project outcomes
- Red Line Community Compact
  - 2008: success of the Red Line was defined with the Red Line Community Compact
  - A landmark agreement among the City of Baltimore, the Maryland Transit Administration, non-profit organizations, foundations, numerous community associations.
  - Outlines a series of goals and guiding principles for economic empowerment, environmental sustainability, transit-oriented development, and construction mitigation.
  - Since 2008, the **City of Baltimore** has been leading the implementation of the Compact along with a Steering Committee
  - Red Line Community Compact
    - Put Baltimore to Work on the Red Line
    - Making the Red Line Green
    - Transit-Centered Community Development and Station Stewardship
    - Aggressively Manage Construction Impacts
  - Making the Red Line Green [and Safe]
    - Construction and operation of the Red Line will have a wide range of health and environmental impacts
    - Instead of the conventional approach, the Red Line provides the opportunity for improving the quality of the air, water and health of the City and its residents.
    - To the extent economically possible, the Red Line should improve the air and water quality, increase green space and improve the quality of life in the City
  - Health and Environmental Priorities
    - Assessed the public health impacts of the Red Line
    - Completed 2008
    - Looked at three main areas:
      - Air quality
      - Construction impacts
      - Opportunities for physical activity
  - Tree Canopy: We can create a greenbelt across the white "tree deficit" area of the city.
  - Citywide "Green" Initiatives

- Baltimore City Sustainability Plan
  - TreeBaltimore
  - Baltimore Watershed Agreement
  - Bicycle Master Plan
  - Comprehensive Master Plan
  - Red Line
- Design Green! Sustainable, Safe Design for the Red Line
  - Menu of design elements that support goals in the Community Compact
  - Non-exhaustive list of design for safety, accessibility, SWM, and general greening
  - **Preliminary Engineering:** Opportunity to implement Compact & City goals
  - *Design Green!* is a starting point
- Development and Partners
  - Mahan Rykel, Center Watershed Protection, Parks and People, Chesapeake Sustainable Business Alliance, Baltimore Tree Trust, JHSPH, Assoc Black Charities, Patterson Park Neighborhood Assoc, Southeast CDC, Doo Consulting, Baltimore Medical Systems DPW, more developed by the Department of Transportation in collaboration with numerous environmental and public health community partners, in addition to partners from the MTA, the Department of Planning and the Department of Public Works
- NEXT STEPS
  - Work with MTA to implement *Design Green!* and other “sustainability” practices into plans during PE
  - Introduce to SAACs for incorporation in station areas
  - Analyze and assess cost effective, workable solutions
  - Coordinate with other City agencies and community organizations to distribute responsibility for future maintenance and operations
  - Investigate supplemental funding sources
- Comments
  - Scot Spencer
    - Observed efficiency of transportation systems. Philadelphia has a sign, right when you drive in that states that it is a “Bike Friendly City”. It would be great if we could do that. The transportation conference at Morgan, talked about Circulator and that it doesn’t charge a fee. Perception that it being free invites a different, less desirable crowd. MTA income disparity around transit. There needs to be some way to figure out how to get monthly passes to low income residents due to cash flow.
    - CMTA – Brookings transit study 89% access to 23% of the jobs
    - DC poor air shed, \$ in transit enhancement increased transit services, 70% off road, regional perspective – how can Baltimore benefit?
    - Red Line Compact – national model of how to get things done. Everyone wants to figure out how to do that. Feather in Baltimore’s cap.
  - Anna asked CoS to submit a letter of support for Design Green Document to MTA
    - Alice to work on with Anna
- Legislation
  - Beth: conversations about PUDs, zoning code can’t support cost effective development, which is one reason why we need Transform Baltimore. Before Commission sees the

- PUD legislation a tremendous amount of work takes place both from an agency and community perspective.
- Do have an obligation to respond.
  - 11-0788 PUD Holabird Condominiums
    - Recommendation not to address until project is further along through Planning Commission process
  - 11-0763 PUD Hollander 95 Business Park
    - John moves to support, Lynn seconds, vote passes
  - 11-0672 PUD 6709 Pulaski Highway
    - Mary moves, Scot seconds, vote passes
  - 11-0761 BCP PUD
    - Mary moves, Scot seconds, vote passes
  - Next Steps & Follow Up
    - Send Schools event notice
    - Alice, Beth, and Anne organize priority team meetings
    - Health Presentation
    - Peter BCGBS & GSA Alice & Beth to follow up
    - Alice & Anna draft letter of support for Red Line green design

**Upcoming Events:**

- Next Commission on Sustainability Meeting: Tuesday, November 22, 2011, 4 PM at 417 East Fayette Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor