

**Baltimore Commission on Sustainability
November 2009 Meeting Report**

Date: Tuesday, November 24th, 2009 from 4-6 pm

Location: Department of Planning Boardroom, 417 E. Fayette St.

Subject: Commission on Sustainability November 2009 General Meeting

In Attendance: (*Commissioners*) - Davis Bookhart, Cheryl Casciani, John Ciekot, Raymond Ehrlich, Lynn Heller, Keith Losoya, Patrick McMahon, Sarah Norman, John Quinn, Jake Ruppert, Scot Spencer, Tom Stosur, Alyson Taylor. (*Staff*) - Brett Buikema, Beth Strommen, Sarah Zaleski.

Topics addressed:

- Minutes from October, 2009 meeting are approved without amendment
- Chair Report
 - Cheryl Casciani reviewed the attendance policy which reads: Any member of any City board or commission appointed by the Mayor, who fails to attend at least 50% of the meetings of the board or commission of which he is a member during any period of 12 consecutive months shall be considered to have resigned.
 - Cheryl reported that the Baltimore Community Foundation contributed the \$4,000 necessary to fully fund all 16 school teams in the City Schools Cleaner, Greener Sustainability Challenge. A recommendation was made that the CoS invite the students awarded the grants to come in and present their projects in the spring of 2010.
- Staff Report
 - Beth Strommen asked the CoS about their position on City Council bill #08-0055. The CoS position of not supporting the bill did not change. Beth is going to send out the CoS memo, bill, and amendments to the CoS.
 - Beth again brought up the concept of a CoS legislative sub-committee. Scot Spencer, Ray Erlich, Ruth Ann Norton, and John Quinn all volunteered to serve on this sub-committee.
 - Beth reminded the CoS that another legislative hearing will be held on the City Council's proposed bag bills on January 5th at 11 am.
 - Sarah Zaleski introduced Alan Bush, a new intern working with the Office of Sustainability.
 - Sarah informed shared that Lorraine Doo will be helping out the Office of Sustainability to develop metrics for the Sustainability Plan goals. These metrics will be essential to the website and the annual sustainability report.
- Report outs
 - Breakout groups had convened before the meeting to discuss the CoS's appropriate role in moving forward the five focus goals. The subgroups meet to discuss the following questions:
 - What role could the Sustainability Commission play to advance this goal? That is, what do you think we are uniquely qualified to do?
 - Consider among the possible roles the following: monitoring, convening, drafting legislation, making/drafting policy changes, doing education and outreach, and fundraising. Do not limit yourselves to these roles; the list is only offered as examples.
 - If we were to take up the role you suggest, what would you propose at the next steps?

- Finally, think of the action agenda as one we would pursue over the next year.
- Food Goal
 - Many strategies have action already underway and Baltimore has the potential to be national leaders if we can effectively craft an effective urban agriculture zoning code.
 - The CoS could take up an advocacy role and support existing efforts through:
 - Supplying letters of support for related organizations and grants
 - Helping engage the public around this goal, potentially by hosting presentations
 - Developing a food night
 - Developing a “food team” concept
 - Helping to carve out more time and spaces for those working in this arena to share information
- Schools Goal
 - BCPSS is doing a lot of work around green school but is still searching for a clear champion.
 - Recommendation was made that the CoS request a copy of the Green School plan from the BCPSS.
 - The CoS will send letters to schools winning the City Schools Cleaner, Greener Sustainability Challenge.
 - There may be state legislative coming out soon around green schools that the CoS may want to support.
 - Other potential roles for the CoS in forwarding green schools discussed included mentoring City schools on sustainability, convening all the entity working on green schools to share information, and having individual CoS members speak as sustainability experts in schools.
- Litter Goal
 - Discussion began by distinguishing between properly disposed of waste (trashcans and recycling) and improperly disposed of waste (litter).
 - One key role the CoS could play to help eliminate litter is to assist in measuring and indexing the source of litter.
 - Actionable next steps to assist in this way include convening a meeting about current resources and the CleanGreener Baltimore Initiative’s work and building on the work of participating parties.
 - A goal of having data collected by the end of 2010 second quarter was set.
- Energy Goal
 - The energy reduction goal should be looked at in close connection with the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal.
 - The CoS could play a strong monitoring role on the City’s energy use measured against the established 2007 baseline.
 - The energy subgroup proposes to convene two separate meetings (transportation and buildings) to discuss ways to “move the energy needle” in these two energy-using sectors.
 - At these meetings, the CoS would hope to gain some ideas of what they could put their political weight behind to move the needle on Baltimore’s energy use.
- Tree Goal
 - Tree Baltimore is obviously the primary partner in this goal.
 - The tree subgroup met with Tree Baltimore to hear from them on how they thought the CoS could be most helpful in progressing our shared goals.
 - Two areas they need help in is fundraising and maintenance. The subgroup suggested a model to raise funds through offering fee-based tree maintenance

services to entities currently subcontracting that work to private landscaping companies.

- Another area that the CoS may be able to assist is in education and outreach.
 - The public engagement/ Sustainability Ambassador model utilized while developing the Sustainability Plan may be an appropriate vehicle to raise awareness about trees in Baltimore.
 - The CoS maintained that they would like to keep the ambitious goal of doubling the tree canopy over 30 years.
- In synthesis, the clusters of roles suggested for the CoS in the current focus goals include:
- Monitoring
 - Convening
 - Lending expertise
 - Educating and outreach
 - Lending political support

Next Meeting: December Commission on Sustainability Meeting: Tuesday, December 22, 4pm.