

<p style="text-align: center;">Baltimore Commission on Sustainability October 2009 Meeting Report</p>

Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2009 from 4-6 pm

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

Subject: Commission on Sustainability September 2009 General Meeting

In Attendance: (*Commissioners*) - Davis Bookhart, Cheryl Casciani, Raymond Ehrlich, Lynn Heller, Patrick McMahon, John Quinn, Jake Ruppert, Ali Smith, Scot Spencer, Alyson Taylor, Mary Washington. (*Staff*) - Brett Buikema, Beth Strommen, Sarah Zaleski, Seema Iyer.

Topics addressed:

- Minutes from September 22, 2009 meeting will be sent out for approval due to lack of quorum opportunity at meeting.
- Chair Report
 - Cheryl Casciani updated the CoS on the goal focusing process. In light of the CoS's mandate to create an annual report, discussions have begun around the form and content of this report. Minneapolis's sustainability program produces an annual report that many deem to be a good, fair, and comprehensive example.
- Staff Report
 - Beth Strommen overviewed the municipal bonds that were currently under development including projects around the tree canopy, water quality, and composting. Also, the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Office of Sustainability (BOS) partnered to create a new proposal under the outcomes based budgeting process to fund an urban agriculture position. Lastly, Beth reported on the meeting between BOS staff and the City Council President's office where staff shared the five focus goal areas and discussed which legislation should be referred to the CoS for review.
 - Sarah Zaleski reported on the various energy related grants for which the City was applying. The City was awarded \$6.3 M under the DoE's formula Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants. A total of 18 separate projects are proposed for these funds, including competitive grants for community groups, retrofits for City buildings, the Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge, and the Climate Action Plan. In addition, the City will be applying for a very large (~\$40 M) competitive grant from the DoE to do a large-scale, community-based retrofit program.
- Focus Goal Report Outs
 - The CoS decided to focus their proactive efforts on the following five Sustainability Plan goals in the next year:
 - RC Goal #1: Reduce Baltimore's energy use by 15% by 2015
 - GR Goal #2: Establish Baltimore as a leader in sustainable, local food systems
 - CL Goal #1: Eliminate litter throughout the City
 - GR Goal #1: Double Baltimore's Tree Canopy by 2037
 - EA Goal #1: Turn every school in Baltimore City into a green school
 - As a next step, Commissioners volunteered to do a quick assessment of each of the priority goals to understand the status of the goals in terms of who is doing what on the strategies, potential metrics, availability of data, and potential roles the CoS could play. The results of these quick assessments were presented at this meeting. All the populated

- templates and narratives for these five goals will be posted on the CoS Collective X site.
- Food Goal
 - Seema Iyer presented the recommendations of the Food Policy Task Force.
 - The Food Subgroup reported that while there is lots of energy and interest around sustainable food systems, one thing that is missing is a robust public education effort around healthy eating. Also, while there is some solid data available along some aspects of food systems, there is a lack of understanding and measurement around quantity of land under cultivation.
 - Schools Goal
 - Brett Buikema presented the Cleaner Greener Sustainable Baltimore City Schools Challenge program. Competitive grants of \$1,000 will be awarded to students who develop to institute in their schools. The proposal response has been greater than anticipated, and the CoS discussed potential ways to raise additional funds to raise number of projects eligible for funding.
 - The Green Schools Subgroup reported that there is a voluntary state environmental curriculum that is looking for increased public school participation, but there are some serious funding gaps to integrating changes into the existing school programming.
 - Litter Goal
 - The Litter Subgroup stated that there was obvious overlap with this goal and the CleanerGreener Baltimore Initiative. The goal of eliminating litter requires vigilant efforts and cannot simply be checked off a “complete” list. It was suggested that the CoS look at the “Keep American Beautiful” letter index as a potential way to monitor and track progress on this goal.
 - Energy Goal
 - The Energy Subgroup reported out on the narrative they pulled together. The narrative looked at the status, key players, and role for a potential energy working group for each of the seven strategies outlined under the goal. An updated version of the narrative will be distributed after the meeting.
 - Tree Goal
 - The Tree Subgroup reported that recent surveys have revealed the City’s actual tree cover is 27.4%, higher than the 20% originally estimated. This finding, along with other assessments on the cost and feasibility of doubling the tree canopy in 30 years, has caused TreeBaltimore to redefine its goal from doubling, to “increasing the tree canopy”. TreeBaltimore has been quite busy raising money, creating a neighborhood-based tree map, and launching a new marketing campaign. A major obstacle to the tree goal is maintaining and nurturing newly-planted trees. One idea is to have a two-person tree maintenance crew with year-round responsibilities to plant, water, and prune trees in the public right of way.
 - Next Steps
 - As a next step, the CoS will discuss their appropriate role in moving forward the five focus goals. Over the next month, subgroups will 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.
- Recommendations of these discussions will be presented at the November 24th CoS meeting.

Upcoming Events:

- Next Commission on Sustainability General Meeting – Tuesday, November 24th, 4pm