

**Environmental Justice Advisory Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 14, 2007 (*amended*)**

In attendance: Stewart Abrams, Ana Baptista, Theodore (Ted) Carrington, Colandus (Kelly) Francis, Joann Held, Mujahid Majeed, Kevin Moore, Valorie Caffee, Chair; and Maria Franco-Spera & Dev Ganguly, DEP EJ Office

Absent: Don McCloskey, Kim Gaddy, Kathy Abbott, Zachary Lewis, Juanita Joyner, and Rafael Zabala

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Caffee at 1:10 PM.

Adoption of the Agenda

It was suggested that we move the Subcommittee meetings to follow the Coordinators report.

Adoption of the Feb. 7, 2007 Minutes

Kevin Moore moved that the minutes be adopted, and Kelly Francis seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

After adoption two additional items were noted.

Note 1: As per the minutes, the EJAC would like to prepare comments on the DEP Plan of Action. Council members should e-mail suggestions to Valorie.

Note 2: Rohini Gandhi, an intern with the EJ Office, is looking into the legal aspects of Cumulative Impact Analysis. Her work will be reflected in a chapter of the White Paper that the DEP is preparing.

February 26 Letter Re: EJ Task Force

On February 26, 2007, Jeanne Herb sent a letter to Valorie responding to the EJAC letter to Commissioner Jackson about reconstituting the EJ Task Force. In it she stated that the Commissioner anticipates reconvening the Task Force in late April.

- The Council would like to see more overt support from Governor Corzine. Perhaps he could reaffirm the Executive Order, or investigate making it law.

Valorie may follow up on this issue with the Governor's office to get more activity from other Departments beyond the DEP.

February 27 Diesel Meeting

On Feb. 27, 2007, the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) Diesel Committee met with DEP Diesel program staff.

- NJEJA has drafted an Executive Order (EO) that would extend the current state diesel reduction program to companies that have state contracts. If this plan were implemented, state reductions in diesel emissions would be about twice what can be achieved by the current program. The Draft EO also

includes provisions for very low interest loans for small businesses. The Governor's office is interested in meeting with NJEJA.

- Other recommendations from the NJEJA Diesel Committee include:
  - Adopting a state PM2.5 standard of 12 ug/m<sup>3</sup> (annual average) instead of the current National Ambient Air Quality Standard, which is set at 15 ug/m<sup>3</sup>.
  - Get support from DEP to do more community-based monitoring, using technology like that used by High School students around the state last year. This gives community members a chance to participate.
- Members of the NJEJA Diesel Committee will be invited to speak at a future EJAC meeting (perhaps in April).

#### March 16 Environmental Constituency Meeting

Site Remediation is already on the Agenda for the Environmental Constituency meeting with Commissioner Jackson on March 16. During the open discussion at the end, we would like to bring up two subjects.

- DEP Commitment to EJ in terms of staffing, leading the Task Force, and general support. (Kevin volunteered to take the lead in raising this issue.)
- Describing our Cumulative Impact Committee activities. (Joann Held will take the lead.)

#### Cumulative Impact Committee Report (Ana Baptista)

Committee members are writing summaries of what we are each reviewing related to community and state approaches to cumulative impact. At the next EJAC meeting we hope to share these with the whole Council. Maria can forward summaries to the full Council as they are ready.

- The Committee expressed an interest in Public Health Tracking approaches. Maria will invite Steve Anderson (DEP) to be on a future committee call to tell us what is being done in NJ.
- The current schedule is: a) have an internal forum with some easily accessible experts in May; b) hold a public forum in September; and c) have final recommendations for the Commissioner in December.

#### Site Remediation Committee Report (Valorie Caffee)

On February 20, Irene Kropp chaired a DEP Site Remediation Round Table in the State Department Annex. EJ representatives who were present were disappointed in the lack of diversity of attendees. We would like to see more representatives from affected communities invited to participate in these discussions.

### EJ Coordinator's Report (Maria Franco-Spera)

Maria Franco-Spera reported on the status of the 5 active petitions.

- Ringwood
  - There is an Interagency Group meeting monthly to work on issues arising in Ringwood. It includes the DEP (EJ, Site Remediation, and Fish, Game & Wildlife), DHSS, Labor (to address mining issues), Community Affairs (focus on sink holes), the Governor's Office, Legislative Representatives, and the Geological Survey.
  - Legal issues are currently causing many delays.
  - EPA is planning a public meeting on how EPA programs have failed this community.
  - Deer that were tested were not found to be contaminated.
- Linden: An ACO, which designates the Greenway, was signed on March 13.
- Webpage
  - Jeremie Johnson is working with Dev Ganguly on his recommended webpage changes. Jeremie has forwarded them to IT staff.
  - EJAC members are asked to review the webpage and forward suggestions to Maria.
  - They plan to add pictures of council members, and may take pictures when we meet in April.
  - The Camden Action Plan presentation, which was prepared for the Community meeting last November, will be posted at this site.

### Announcements

#### **Clean Air Council** (Valorie Caffee)

The Clean Air Council Public Hearing will be on April 11 at 9:30am in the DEP Hearing Room. The topic this year is: Improving Air Quality through Energy Efficiency and Conservation. More information is available in the brochure at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/cleanair/>

#### **Garden State Preservation Trust** (Kevin Moore)

Contact Kevin to get a copy of the resolution calling for renewal of the Garden State Preservation Trust. So far 60 municipalities have signed it.

#### **Regional Equity Coalition** (Kelly Francis)

The Coalition is sponsoring a rally for Affordable Housing on March 15.

#### **Global Climate Change Conference** (Ana Baptista)

This conference will be held in Newark on July 10, 11 & 12, with International speakers and panelists. Ana is organizing plenary sessions on EJ & Climate Change.

**Intent to Sue (Ana Baptista)**

ICC & Greenfaith have sent a letter of intent to sue Covanta, Inc, which operates the Essex County Municipal Waste Incinerator.

**Coalition of Black Trade Unionists Conference (Mujahid Majeed)**

The Coalition will hold its annual conference in Chicago on May 23-28. The conference will include training for CARAT Team Leaders. (CARAT is Community Action in Response Against Toxics.) There are currently 22 CARAT teams across the US, including one in Central/Northern Jersey.

**GreenFaith Tour (Ted Carrington)**

An Environmental Health and Justice Tour will be held on April 18. The tour will begin in New Brunswick. It is sponsored by GreenFaith and the Edison Wetlands Association. Co-sponsors include the New Brunswick Area Branch of the NAACP, the Environmental Research Foundation, and the Central Jersey branch of the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance.

**Jeremee Johnson**

Jeremee is leaving the DEP to take a job at Rutgers. She preceded Maria as EJ coordinator and blazed many new trails. We especially appreciate her work in Camden and in reaching out to so many to become involved in EJ issues. EJAC members would like Jeremee to know that it was a pleasure working with her and that we wish her well in her new endeavors.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:55.

The next meeting is on April 4, 2007 in the 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room at DEP. We will gather at 9:30am and the meeting will begin at 10am.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Joann Held, Secretary.