

Environmental Justice Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2007

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

Absent: Stewart Abrams, Kim Gaddy, Juanita Joyner, Don McCloskey, Rafael Zabala

Guests: Steve Anderson (DEP), Sharon Kubiak & Jim Brownlee (DHSS), Victor Corronado (WEC)

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Caffee at 10:15 am.

Adoption of the Agenda
Accepted as proposed.

Adoption of Previous Minutes

May 2, 2007: Maria Franco-Spera asked that the second sentence regarding attendance at the EJ Task Force meeting be clarified, and that the word urban be added to the note about the Commissioner's interest in arranging environmental presentations in urban schools.

June 6, 2007: The affiliation for Jason Corburn listed in the Cumulative Impacts Committee Report is incorrect. It should be Columbia University (not NYU).

Kevin Moore moved that both sets of minutes be adopted as corrected, and Kelly Francis seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Cumulative Impacts Committee Report (Ana Baptista)

Ana reported that the Committee continued to meet over the summer, and also had some joint meetings with the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA). The Alliance is also working on the topic of Cumulative Impacts in EJ Communities.

The next step is a Public Meeting, which will be held on October 5 in the NJDEP Public Hearing Room. In the morning there will be presentations providing background information and summarizing the work of the Committee. In the afternoon participants will break up into discussion groups and then report back on their joint recommendations.

All EJAC members are encouraged to attend, and are also invited to help facilitate the discussion groups. Also, please urge your colleagues to attend.

Advertising: The meeting brochure will be finalized later today. Assistance with advertising this public meeting is needed. Target audiences are the NJDEP Environmental Constituency group, ANJEC members, and the NJEJA. EJAC members

are asked to share the brochure with their constituencies. Jim Brownlee and Sharon Kubiak offered to circulate the brochure within DHSS.

Future Funding: Jim Brownlee noted that EPA has some small grants to support meetings which are designed to get input or to provide outreach/training. The funds can cover printing costs, facility expenses, and refreshments. EJAC may wish to apply for a grant to support future public meetings and other outreach.

Site Remediation Committee Report

Stakeholder White papers have been prepared as part of the DEP Site Remediation review process. They are now available for comment. The Comment Period ends on September 24.

Greenfaith Interfaith Youth Tour (Ted Carrington)

The NJEJ Interfaith Youth Tour will take place on October 13. The participants will travel by bus to both Ringwood & Newark. This event will provide the youth with a comparison of rural EJ issues and urban EJ issues.

Zach Lewis mentioned that he works with a Youth Group in Ocean County, and that they might be interested in participating in the Greenfaith Bus Tour.

Visiting Ringwood: Ted has visited Ringwood in preparation for the Bus Tour, and suggested that the EJAC visit Ringwood sometime. EJAC members expressed interest in visiting Ringwood, and the November 7 meeting was suggested as a possible date.

Hope VI Housing Project Update (Kelly Francis)

Michaels Development Corporation has started to prepare the ground for construction at the site, which is just east of Route 676 in the Centerville neighborhood of Camden. A lawsuit has been initiated which will attempt to get a Court order to stop Michaels Development before houses are actually built at the site. Opponents of this development are also trying to meet with the Governor to get his support.

NAACP Crisis Magazine: Kelly also distributed copies of the July/August 2007 issue of "The Crisis" which was a special issue dealing with EJ Issues. He noted that several EJ-related resolutions were passed at the NAACP national convention in Detroit.

DHSS Report (Jim Brownlee)

1. Follow-up on of the Tremley Point EJ petition which was submitted by the Tremley Point Alliance
 - Among other things, the Alliance requested an Asthma study. In July, Jim sent the Alliance (via e-mail) a DHSS proposal for an alternative pilot project. The pilot project would focus on Tools for Schools and Outreach to School Nurses. (Jim provided a copy of his e-mail message.) He has not yet received a reply from the Alliance.
2. DHSS involvement in EJAC

- Last week, Jim addressed the DHSS Senior Staff Meeting and discussed DHSS involvement in EJAC. The end result should be EJAC interaction with more staff from additional programs in DHSS.

EJ Coordinator's Report (Maria)

- DEP Cumulative Impact report: The DEP has been doing a web-based exploration of how other states are addressing Cumulative Impact in their EJ programs. After initial screening of all 50 states, they focused on 7 states for follow-up: MD, MA, PA, NY, CA, IN, and CT. Their conclusion is that no state has a comprehensive plan – most are piecemeal. California seems to be ahead of the other states because they have a working definition of “Cumulative Impact” and have gone through a hearing process. This work, which Dev Ganguly has been doing, will be contained in the DEP White Paper. Maria hopes to circulate a draft within the Department in about 2 weeks. Maria also noted that they had hoped to have a chapter on legal issues in the White Paper, but that has not materialized since their law student was not able to complete her work.
- Camden Waterfront South: The DEP plans to go back to Waterfront South to update the community on the Action Plan in October or November. They expect to focus this year on the results of scientific studies, such as the personal monitoring study done by EOHSI. They also expect to talk about Site Remediation. EJAC members recommended that the meeting stay focused and be kept short.

St. Lawrence Cement (SLC) Meeting with DEP (Valorie)

Some representatives of EJAC and of Waterfront South met with the DEP over the summer to urge the DEP to deny the permits requested by SLC. The DEP, however, expects to grant the permits. They contend that they have already put more restrictions in the permits than in those permits issued for other facilities, in an attempt to protect or improve air quality in the neighborhood.

Announcements

1. On October 19, the DEP will be holding another Environmental Constituency meeting with Commissioner Jackson. It is important to recommend topics for the Commissioner to address at these meetings.
2. On October 20, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists will hold their 9th Annual Mini-Conference on Toxics. The meeting is co-sponsored by NJ WEC. It will be held in Edison from 8:30am to 3pm. One of the primary topics will be “Wal-Mart’s Toxic Impact on our Jobs, Health, Environment, & Communities.” For more information contact Valorie Caffee or Mujahid Majeed.
3. The National Environmental Justice Advisory Committee will hold its annual meeting in Baltimore on September 18-20. Is anyone from New Jersey attending? The Goods Movement discussion is especially relevant to New Jersey.
4. The Aerospace Redesign proposals which would re-route take-off patterns at Newark and LaGuardia Airports were adopted by the FAA. There were no changes made to address environmental issues. (Kathy Abbott)

5. Greenfaith will hold its Annual Reception at the Newark Club (near Penn Station) on October 24. Valorie commented that last year's reception was a great model of sustainability. (Kathy)
6. The next EJ Task Force meeting will be held on September 24 and will be hosted by DHSS. Some EJAC members may attend.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:20 pm.

The next meeting is on Oct. 3, 2007 in the 7th 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.