Subject: FW: Feedback CAP

Date: Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 5:09:09 PM Eastern Standard Time

From: Climate

To: Wejnert-Depue, Camille, Kallgren, Sarah

From: ██

Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 4:33 PM

To: Climate <Climate@montgomerycountymd.gov>

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From: ███████████████████████████

Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 4:26 PM

To: ██

Subject: Feedback CAP

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hello,

First let me congratulate you on a very comprehensive and much needed draV Climate AcWon plan. Had you asked me in the fall, I would have said it's too ambiWous. Now, with acWviWes/support also on the federal and state - levels, I would say there is no Wme to lose to get the ball rolling. ImplementaWon will be the huge challenge and it cannot be business as usual. For this reason I will focus on issues related to implementaWon.

I preSy much agree with the contents and really can't idenWfy gaps, except maybe:

- local level issues such as regulaWons, zoning, tree laws, including on private property, etc that affect overall consumpWon and/or embodied carbon emissions. Do these issues need more aSenWon?

(For example, we adopt electric cars, but conWnue to buy large numbers of cars; we switch to all-electric housing, but the houses are becoming increasingly bigger requiring more energy and "stuff" to fill them, leading to increased consumpWon and leaving less space for trees and a healthy green scape, and on it goes. Can we "afford" tearing down perfectly sound houses and buildings and rebuild instead of reusing and renovaWng?)

I have quesWons about scores in various figures, parWcularly Fig 15, and how you got to those scores, and I have a similar comments for Fig 26.

While I understand the jusWficaWon of selecWng, public health, environmental stewardship, economic prosperity and racial equity and social jusWce, is there not an overriding social good - either there is or there is not a livable future for all?

ImplementaWon-related:
1)   Take immediate acWon to promote all-electric buildings to builders, developers, homeowners, and retailersNOW. Some can be done as permit requests come in, but also through acWve outreach. You will prevent wasteful and expensive rework for people and reach solar, all-electric, and other goals sooner. (It won't necessarily be easy:

hSps://www.motherjones.com/environment/2021/02/how-the-fossil-fuel-industry-convinced-americans-tolove-gas-stoves/?utm_source=mj-newsleSers&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily-newsleSer-02-11-2021)

2)   Review current barriers in regulaWons that prevent people in installing solar. For example, I live in atownhouse that's crying out for solar with a very sunny roof. Possible soluWons: use carrot and sWck to get condominiums and big buildings to install solar, or maybe rent their roofs to solar companies? This is probably a more effecWve soluWon than having individual owners install solar. For example, in our development, you have a total of 161 roofs (some might not have enough sun but the majority does). PotenWal income from renWng the roofs could be spent on making energy-saving and other green improvements, such as charging staWons, safe parking for bikes, improved insulaWon, effecWve stormwater systems, recWfying bad gardening pracWces, etc. Rental income would presumably be a big incenWve to adopt solar;

3)   Review the current rule in Downtown Bethesda development about 35 percent green cover (see p 61 inthe Bethesda Downtown Masterplan). It is set up as a compeWWon between green roofs and street trees.

Too few street trees and inadequate greenscapes run counter to the goal of micro-mobility and quality of life and also negaWvely affect stormwater runoff, air quality, etc. For example, I use my car more in summer than at other Wmes of the year to run errands in Bethesda because it is so uncomfortable with insufficient street trees and shade (and unsafe condiWons for pedestrians and cyclists).

QuesWon: how adequate is the expensive infrastructure now being constructed/ reworked at this moment in Bethesda (and elsewhere in MoCo) because of new development as well as Vision Zero? Is it sufficiently sound considering what you describe in the CAP? (As far as I can tell, there is insufficient thought to these issues in the current construcWon of sidewalks and bike paths).

4)   Engage ASAP all those responsible - GSA, MCDOT, MDOT, DPS, BUP (or similar), etc. - in idenWfying what'sneeded to reduce heat islands in infrastructure and on county property for which they are responsible. So much infrastructure (sidewalks, streets, bike paths) are being installed (and county-owned properWes being inadequately managed) today with insufficient aSenWon to environmental issues. Sadly, many of these investments are likely to be torn up and redone to become "greener" - what a waste - what if we could prevent it? Considering how uncomfortable Bethesda's and many other communiWes' streets are on hot days, I despair when I see Figure 7 indicaWng the number of days above 95F in the future and your goals for micro mobility.

5) Carbon sequestraWon. Urban trees, forests, etc. are inadequately protected with current laws, and theprice for cuvng trees down is too cheap. The price should be increased to beSer fund and expand the Montgomery County tree programs (including MCDOT for street trees). These great programs tend to have waiWng lists. There should also be a greater effort to replant in parks, on plazas, and on private urban properWes.

6) While there are DEP efforts to encourage more environmentally friendly gardening pracWces, there appearto be excepWons for condominiums. Why?

7) Provide more technical assistance and promote transparency and clarity re: billing, contracts, and whatalternaWve energy investments cost. As you point out, one of the issues that hamper clean energy decisions is the complexity as well as cost. Making mistakes is expensive. Anything you can do in this area will benefit clean energy development as described on pages 86 and onwards.

8) I am one of those who went against installing solar in the Ag Reserve because I believe we need to makesure decisions are based on science, not pushed by solar companies without understanding repercussions on agriculture and other.

9) Much more needs to be done with traffic management systems to Wme lights both to slow speeding carsand increase traffic flow. Combined with traffic calming measures these intervenWons would support micromobility (p132).

10) T-12 - how about charging vehicles according to miles driven? In addiWon to congesWon pricing, thesewould seem to be good opWons for increasing use of public transportaWon, which, as pointed out in the CAP needs improvement in reliability and frequency. It is also an effecWve equity-enhancing measure. I can't see that micro-mobility will really be improved unless there are fewer cars in busy areas.

11) Carbon sequestraWon - these acWons are such win-win intervenWons for the climate as well as humanhealth and well-bring. We don't do nearly enough. As I menWoned below, review current plans and infrastructure improvements to ensure they meet future requirements. EPA should review and work with MDOT and MCDOT to ensure we get the greenest results possible. How can current projects include as liSle green cover as I observe here in Bethesda?

12) Green infrastructure - if I understand exisWng regulaWons correctly, exisWng condominiums are exempt.There are far too many invasive species being planted, bad lawns and bad pracWces being supported. This is also the case for SFH - both new and exisWng gardens. I see too many properWes with hardly anything but lawns. Why do builders and owners get away with this?
(A-13 - is anybody checking compliance?)

Landscaping companies perpetuate bad pracWces. Maybe expand the efforts (carrot and sWck) to improve landscapers' pracWces and help enhance the advice nurseries. Could sales of invasive plants be prohibited and sale of naWve plants encouraged?

13) A-12 - maybe such stormwater retenWon credit trading could be spent in the general area wheredevelopment is taking place? For example, Bethesda has parks and urban spaces that should be prioriWzed. I am also wondering if nearby properWes could be included to increase the areas that are "healthy and green"? This would contribute to cleaner watersheds and provide greener urban areas.

There is definitely a huge need for ensuring coordinaWon among MoCo staff to implement and enforce greener pracWces.

I'm sorry this is so long. I hope I've been clear - don't hesitate to contact me if not. I so wish I could make the aging TH development in which we live greener and more sustainable. So far I've only been successful with tree planWng. I would love to see solar roofs, green landscaping pracWces and improved stormwater management.

Thank you,
Maj-BriS (Dohlie)
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