

EAQAC Minutes

November 2, 2011

Present: Paul Bubbosh, Melitta Carter, Bernie Bloom, Jim McDonnell, Sam Biondo, Ken Cantor, Jody Foster, Aaron Cutler, Betsy O'Brian, Eric Coffman

Absent: Steve Gibb, Ed Barbour Stephen Shaw, Tim Whitehouse

September minutes were approved.

A new member, Betsy O'Brian, introduced herself.

Continuing Issues:

The letter drafted by Bernie Bloom requesting a meeting with Bob Hoyt concerning indoor air quality was sent. It was agreed that the meeting should be with Bob Hoyt alone, and at this time not a group meeting with other interested parties. Meetings with other interested parties may follow.

DEP Update:

- To date, 299 projects have been approved under the Residential Rebate Program, with about 36% of the total funding accounted for. Applications are arriving and being approved on a regular basis. Eric projects that the program will continue through January or February of 2012.
- The current MD legislative initiative for offshore wind is supported by the County (Executive & Council). An informational meeting on the topic, sponsored by the Dept. of Economic Development, will be held on November 3, 2011.
- Building Operators Training, discussed last month, is moving forward. The program will be supported 50% by the County and 50% by PEPCO. Funding is available to subsidize the training of 80-100 operators.

Discussion Items:

1) We discussed the new proposed building Code, not yet adapted by Montgomery County, which calls for fewer than 0.25 air exchanges per hour in new home construction in the interest of saving energy. Bernie Bloom pointed out that this air exchange rate is considered to be unhealthy, and that levels of less than 0.25 require mechanical venting, which has multiple problems including upkeep and energy consumption which may partially or fully negate the energy savings gained from lower air exchange rates. Bernie will present the issue to the MD National Capital Building Industry Association Codes Committee on November 9. The

committee feels that it would be premature for the County to adopt this section of the Code before further data are available, as its consequences appear to be contrary to the best interests of health and safety in the County.

2) It was proposed that the EAQAC sponsor and participate in a public meeting on a topic or topics of interest to the EAQAC. Topics could be indoor air, radon, installation of solar panels, geothermal installations, solar hot water, etc. Such a gathering could be held at Montgomery College. This activity is authorized under the legislation governing the EAQAC which states that one of our purposes is to “Educate the public and private sectors about the efficient use of energy and its direct benefits for improved air quality.” Following a discussion of this proposal, a subcommittee was established to contact interested persons at Montgomery College to evaluate the feasibility of holding such a meeting. (Subcommittee members Sam Biondo, Jody Foster and Melitta Carter).

Action Items:

1. Committee for public meeting will communicate with Montgomery College Dept. of Sustainable Architecture.