

SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
July 21, 2015
Meeting Summary

MORPC
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Attendees: Steve Stolte, Jack Knapp, Dale Arnold, Tom Pendrey, Tony Collins, Scott Griffin and Erin Miller.

MORPC Staff: William Murdock, Claire Jennings, Kerstin Carr, Christina O’Keeffe, Amanda McEldowney, Brandi Whetstone, Brian Williams, Evelyn Ebert, David Rutter, Rachel Beeman, Sandy Sechang, and Marion Dean.

1. **Welcome & Updates.** Chair Steve Stolte called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. and welcomed guests. Congratulations were made to the City of Columbus on winning the National Sustainability Award for Green Community Initiatives for its Green Memo.

MORPC is currently working with its design firm to design the Regional Sustainability Agenda as a public document to be handed out at the Summit on Sustainability & Environment on October 2, 2015. If you have any questions or comments about the agenda, please contact Claire.

2. **Meet our members.** *Jack Knapp, Accurate IT Services,* Accurate IT Services is a Columbus based R2 Certified electronic recycling company, focused on keeping electronics out of landfills. They work with clients of all sizes and types; the service is free, except for some special services, such as hard drive shredding. Accurate IT takes old computer equipment, refurbishes the equipment, and sells it to area schools and businesses at a lower cost. Accurate IT is committed to the environment and has been a strong partner of the [Take Five for Clean Air](#) program.
3. **Summit on Sustainability.** The [Summit on Sustainability](#) will be held on October 2, 2015 from 8 am-4 pm at the Downtown Hilton. The theme of the Summit is “Regions Matter” and will highlight the sustainability efforts via four tracks: policy, energy and environment, transportation, and land use. The Sustainability Advisory Committee will be highlighted at the meeting. Ballots were passed out for the voting of the Green Region Awards: a total of six (6) green leader nominations and five (5) collaborative nominations were submitted. Award winners will be announced at the event.
4. **Discussion on WOTUS (Waters of the United States) & future policy**
Mr. Stolte shared that on June 29, 2015, the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) released a new Clean Water Rule, commonly referred to as Waters of the United States (WOTUS). The rule strives to protect water quality, better define terms, and simplify the permit review process. In early July, MORPC’s [Regional Policy Roundtable](#) and the SAC held a joint conference call to discuss all sides of this issue, as it was divisive amongst MORPC’s membership.

After a special MORPC Executive Committee meeting on July 9th and a vote at MORPC’s Commission meeting that same day, MORPC members tasked MORPC to issue [an interested party statement](#) to our Congressional members.

SAC members thanked MORPC's leadership and staff for their work on making the decision fair for everyone involved. Discussion ensued on best approach for MORPC to navigate similar issues in the future and to prioritize topics as staff may not always be aware of issues. SAC members are encouraged to help identify potential issues as they arise.

5. **Working Group Updates.** Updates were given by the following working groups (please see the attachment for more details).
6. **Organics Diversion Subcommittee Findings.** The organics diversion subcommittee is a joint effort of the Materials Management Working Group and the Regional Food Council, with about twenty members who have been meeting regularly over the course of three (3) months to discuss the lack of organic waste facilities and identify potential business solutions. A document summarizing the process, findings, and recommendations will be forthcoming in August.
7. **Program Outlook.**
Carr shared that the [Sustaining Scioto](#) study has been completed. The project studied the impact of climate change on our region's water resources and identified adaptive management strategies so that our communities can be prepared. The final report, along with the technical memoranda and an executive summary, is available at www.morpc.org/sustainingscioto.

Carr also briefly presented the results of the [Impact of Trails Study](#). This 18-month project showed that residents, businesses, and community leaders alike value Central Ohio's trail system and that trails have a positive impact on our businesses, communities, and residents. The final report, along with technical memoranda and individual factsheets, is available at www.morpc.org/trailstudy.

O'Keeffe mentioned that ozone season started in April and there was an [Air Quality Alert](#) on May 8. No additional alerts have been issued to date likely due to increased rainfall and cooler temperatures. In June, MORPC ramped up marketing & educational efforts on air quality through a partnership with ABC6 with the creation of several public service announcements, email and social media campaigns, and a TV appearance on Good Day Marketplace, where William Murdock was interviewed. The region is experiencing improved air quality based on these efforts along with those of MORPC's partners working both locally and regionally. Staff is anticipating the new final ozone rules to be announced in October.

O'Keeffe also discussed that at the request of its member communities, MORPC had identified PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) as financing tool for accessing capital for energy efficiency and other alternative energy improvements to non-residential properties. Communities include City of Columbus, City of Bexley, City of Dublin, City of Upper Arlington, City of Worthington and Franklin County. PACE allows property owners to finance energy improvements through a voluntary assessment on their tax bill. The financing provides up front capital and the tax assessment provides extra security on the loan by placing a lien on the property. This financing tool is attractive because it is "off the books", meaning that it does not count as debt. PACE is administered through the formation of an energy special improvement district, or E-SID. MORPC is working with the Finance Authority, which has been doing the legwork to collect templates needed for the administration of an E-SID and sharing these resources to MORPC in order to set-up the district.

There are two bills in the Statehouse dealing with PACE. One is House Bill (HB) 72, which would enhance and expand the ability to create E-SIDs in Ohio and expands eligible energy special improvement projects. HB 72 also allows noncontiguous jurisdictions to join an E-SID

(currently jurisdictions have to be contiguous). MORPC is supportive of HB 72 and testified to Ohio House Public Utilities Committee on May 6. The second bill is Senate Bill (SB) 185, which streamlines the process and expands pathways. It removes PACE from SID section of the ORC, and removes the contiguous requirement if jurisdictions join a regional district. MORPC will continue to work on a regional approach to implement PACE as a tool for financing building energy improvements.

O’Keeffe also mentioned that MORPC concluded the [Materials + Economy + Energy + Environment \(ME3\)](#) program in April. ME3 is a U.S. EPA funded sustainability program to help manufacturing companies save money and reduce their environmental footprint. MORPC facilitated low-cost technical services to deliver energy, lean, and environmental assessments to participating companies. Participating manufacturing facilities are realizing more than \$800,000 in cost savings from implemented projects. The ME3 report provides information about overall program outcomes, which resulted in financial savings for companies well as reductions in energy usage, CO2 emissions, water consumption and waste sent to the landfill. The final report and case study, featuring Momentive Performance Materials, are both available at www.morpc.org/me3.

8. **Adjourn.** Steve Stolte adjourned the meeting at 3:30pm. Next meeting will be October 20, 2015.

Chair: Steve Stolte
Vice Chair: Jim Schimmer

Central Ohio Greenways & Water Quality (Chair: Maryellen O'Shaughnessy)

- Previous meeting held May 1. Next meeting is Sept. 4.
- ODNR and Ohio EPA have new initiatives to support stream restoration and water quality improvement programs. In the current 319 grant cycle the State is looking for regional organizations that they can funnel federal 319 grant monies through, which are to be used for projects leading to water quality improvements in our rivers and streams. MORPC is working with Franklin Soil and Water to put together an application that would support local government and non-profit projects that lead to water quality improvements, increased local education, and stream restoration.
- With the issuance of the WOTUS rule the working group will be taking up discussion of this at our next meeting in September.
- **Riverfest:** [Riverfest](#) has been underway this summer. Two of the five paddles had to be rescheduled due to high water. There is no date for the northern Olentangy paddle but the Scioto paddle is rescheduled for Sunday August 9nd from 2-5 pm.

Central Ohio Greenways Board (Chair: Tony Collins)

- The **Central Ohio Greenways Board** will hold their first meeting in July. The board is made up of representatives from local jurisdictions, businesses and advocacy.
- **The Impact of Trails Study** concluded on June 30th. A press conference will be held on Wednesday, July 22 at the Scioto Audubon Center at 9am to announce the findings of the report. The final report will be available July 22.

Energy & Air Quality (Chair: Dale Arnold)

- Previous meeting held May 26. Next meeting is July 28.
- **Clean Data Letter:** On February 20, Ohio EPA sent U.S. EPA a clean data letter showing attainment of the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS for the Columbus area (75 parts per billion). Ohio EPA will follow up with a request for redesignation of the nonattainment area to attainment. They are working now to get the needed modeling. This is a testament to the continual improvement of air quality in the region.
- **Columbus Public Health: Air Quality and Health Stakeholder Group Update**
The group was formed this year as a follow-up to a 2014 seminar on air quality and climate change. MORPC staff has been engaged with this group. Members wanted to explore additional initiatives on air quality that would positively impact health. The resulting coalition has developed a mission statement, "To Improve Ohio's Air Quality, and subsequently, the Ohio population's health." The group is currently recruiting physicians and other health care workers who would be interested in participating. Updates will be included at each working group meeting.
- **Business Financing Options through Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA).** Chad Smith, Executive Director of the OAQDA, presented information about their financing options

via conduit bonds for a broad range of energy and air quality projects. They finance air quality facilities for small and large businesses, utilities, government, and universities. More information can be found at <http://www.ohioairquality.org/>.

Food Council (Co-chairs: Mark Barbash, Tony Logan)

- Previous meeting held July 8. Next meeting is Sept. 9.
- Mark Barbash, Brian Williams, and Tony Logan held meetings with food business and industry leaders in recent months: DNO Produce, Sanfillipo Produce, Donato's, Jeni's Ice Cream, Sygma, Ohio Grocers Association, Farm Credit Mid-America, and Keystone Meats. Some common themes that arose from those meetings dealt with sufficient quantity, quality, and pricing of local food to meet the demand of large buyers; and with the business viability – market readiness and loan readiness – of local-food farmers and providers.

Materials Management (Chair: Jack Knapp)

- Previous meeting held May 27. Next meeting is July 22 which will feature a tour of the Rumpke Material Recovery Facility.
- Mike Long and Dr. Neil Drobny presented about RecycleNow, a new mobile application developed by a team at OSU that analyzes community-specific Municipal Solid Waste recycling scenarios in terms of economic, environmental and social impacts. The project was funded by the Alcoa Foundation with Dr. Neil Drobny leading a team of students, professors, and community leaders. The team hopes to develop the app to a commercially available tool for use by municipalities across the country.
- **Organics Diversion Sub-committee:**
This joint sub-committee of the Materials Management Working Group and Regional Food Council held their last meeting on June 17. Brandi will be discussing more about this further in the meeting.