

## EAQAC Minutes

September 7, 2011

Present: Paul Bubbosh, Steve Gibb, Melitta Carter, Bernie Bloom, Stephen Shaw, Jim McDonnell, Ed Barbour, Sam Raker, Sam Biondo, Stan Edwards (standing in for Eric Coffman)

Absent: Alan Miller, Ken Cantor, Jody Foster, Eric Coffman

After some additions and modifications, July minutes were approved.

From this month on, both Absent and Present members will be noted in the minutes.

### **Continuing Issues:**

Spray Insulation: Bernie received a response from Steve Owens (EPA) suggesting that there is a need to work with ASTM and that EPA was not going to devote resources to remediating SPF jobs. Bernie will forward the response to EAQAC.

Representatives from the EPA division responsible for implementation of TSCA (Toxic Substances Control Act) visited a house in Chevy Chase upon which Bernie is currently involved in remediation work owing to incorrectly applied spray insulation three months previously.

A Green Buildings Advisor, Martin Holloday is carrying out case studies on spray insulation.

Bernie also informed the committee that DPS is considering action.

It was suggested that DPS could be shown examples of best practice from other countries, such as Germany where spray insulation is regulated successfully.

### **Chairman notes:**

Paul asked members what issues they would like to focus on during the next session.

Jim suggested focusing on energy issues for small and medium commercial enterprises. SMEs are all different, therefore they each have to be looked at and analyzed individually, unlike residential, which have the same dozen of issues applicable to most. Also large commercial tend to be big enough to deal with their issues in-house. With SMEs, there are limited funds available for energy-saving issues. Additionally, he suggested it was best to focus on issues which do not require subsidies, where the payback for investment is of a short enough time period, such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP). In addition to educational programs, the county could help by decreasing obstacles to installation by using Permit by Rule. Jim also

noted the increasing commercialization of microturbines (e.g., 30 kW range) in terms of scale such a unit will supply the energy of small facility (e.g., fast food restaurant).

Sam Biondo commented to the effect that if microturbines were to be considered, that the discussion should be broadened to consider alternatives such as fuel cells and other CHP.

When comparing technologies it is important to review:

- NOx emissions
- Noise and vibration
- Capital Cost
- Efficiency with and without recuperation

Bernie suggested that Jim develop a hypothetical case study demonstrating the obstacles generally faced.

Ed said that Expedited Permitting could be an option instead of Permit by Rule.

Paul said he would be interested in finding out more about the 43 projects to be funded by the Commercial and Multi-Family Rebate Program. Stan Edwards (in lieu of Eric Coffman as DEP representative) said that he will check to see if Eric can update us on that issue next meeting.

Sam Raker said that he was part of a new non-profit education and advocacy group focusing on transportation in the county, called Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance (SMTA). The main focus is congestion relief. He would update EAQAC on progress at the end of the year.

More suggestions will be taken from members next meeting.

#### DEP Update:

Stan said that of the 119 applications, 43 projects had been accepted under the Commercial and Multi-Family Rebate Program and 41 were already underway. The Residential Program had launched with 66 applications so far, 43 of which had been approved. They expected to be able to undertake 300-500. Case studies will be undertaken on some of these.

Diane Schwartz has been nominated as the new DPS director.

The three new EAQAC candidates are on the agenda for approval at a Council Meeting this month.

An update was requested about the program to train building operators. Stan said Eric can update us on that next month.

## **Issues to Address:**

### **Improvements to DEP Website: Links to Indoor Air Quality Professionals (Bernie Bloom)**

Bernie produced a letter specifying two principal categories of providers. This letter was signed by the Chair and given to Stan Edwards. Bernie will add to the list for radon reduction providers. Steve Gibb commented that DEP should ensure that the public is aware that the businesses listed are not endorsed in any way by DEP.

### **Air Quality Impacts of New Residential Building and Energy Conservation Codes (Bernie Bloom)**

Bernie gave a Powerpoint presentation on this issue, which will be uploaded on EAQAC's website.

In brief, he posited that it is the responsibility of DEP to be involved in this issue because these changes will affect indoor air quality and because indoor air quality is part of the sustainable environmental mission adopted by DEP. This issue is relevant now, because the International Codes Council (ICC) has just released new codes. MoCo has until the start of 2013 to adopt something, and Bernie believes EAQAC and DEP should start to be involved in the decision making now. The IECC code changes require stricter tightness limits in new homes (ach less than 0.15 ach), whereby natural ventilation will be insufficient to supply sufficient air for health requirements. The new IRC would require whole house mechanical ventilation for houses tighter than 0.25 ach. But the new IRC may not require enough outside air to make new houses healthy homes.

Apart from potential negative health impacts, if mechanical ventilation is used, then energy savings from a tighter home may be offset by energy use of the mechanical ventilators. A further problem is that mechanical ventilators' lifespan is only about 8-10 years, and may fail before that. The homeowner will not easily be aware that it has failed and will then be exposed to unhealthy air.

Bernie suggested, and the members agreed, that a letter should be sent to Bob Hoyt outlining the issues and suggesting DEP/DPS consultation to reach a positive outcome. Bernie will draft this letter, and depending on timing, Bob Hoyt will be invited to a future EAQAC meeting.

## **Action Items:**

1. Bernie to forward the response from Steve Owens to EAQAC
2. Jim to produce a hypothetical case study of issues facing SMEs in energy efficiency.
3. Stan to check with Eric on the status of building operators' training.

4. Bernie to forward list of radon reduction operators to Eric.
5. Bernie to write letter about IRC and IECC code changes to Bob Hoyt.