

MEPA Advisory Committee

June 10, 2022, 10:00AM-12noon

Remote Meeting

Organizations Represented/In Attendance

- Alternatives for Community and Environment
- American Council of Engineering Companies of MA/Stantec
- Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
- Charles River Watershed Association
- Conservation Law Foundation
- Environmental Business Council
- Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Massachusetts
- MassAudubon
- Massachusetts Municipal Association
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association of MA
- National Grid
- Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Commission
- Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA), New England Chapter
- VHB

State agency/authority attendees

- CZM
- DCR
- DHCD/OCD
- EEA EJ Director
- MassDEP
- MassPort
- MWRA
- NHESP

Meeting Summary

Discussion of MEPA's "Phase II" regulatory review effort continued with presentations regarding the MEPA Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Policy. The presentations covered potential policy updates related to stationary sources, land alteration, and mobile sources.

Regarding stationary sources, a representative of the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) discussed results from the MEPA process gained in the last two years of reviews and potential next steps for policy updates. A new "opt out" provision for projects meeting certain MEPA best practices was discussed.

Regarding land alteration, the MEPA Director discussed the role of carbon sequestration in the state's planning process for GHG emissions reductions, and presented data on MEPA projects exceeding certain land thresholds. Potential options for policy updates were discussed.

Regarding mobile sources, a representative from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) discussed the limitations of current MEPA protocols, and the benefits of moving to a "VMT" (vehicles miles traveled) approach for assessing mobile source emissions impacts of projects. The potential for refining MEPA methodology to require a VMT "per household" or "per employee" number was discussed.

Next Steps

No further meetings of the MEPA Advisory Committee will be scheduled until late Summer to Fall 2022. The MEPA Office will be holding technical sessions on climate resiliency and GHG emissions policies in Summer 2022, and will continue to hold informal discussions with stakeholders on the MEPA regulatory review process. Any future meetings and power point presentations used at each MEPA advisory committee meeting will be publicized on the MEPA website at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mepa-advisory-committee>.