



May 1, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mark Pfefferle, Acting Director, Environmental Planning/Green

**FROM: Derek Jones,
Danny McGrath,
Zane Reynolds,
Brian Rice,
Jessica Sedgwick**

SUBJECT: George Washington University M.P.P. Capstone Project

Purpose:

To present to the Montgomery County Planning Board the report, *“Strategies for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions During Development and Redevelopment in Montgomery County, Maryland”*. The report was prepared as part of the Master’s in Public Policy program at George Washington University.

Introduction:

On Earth Day 2008, Montgomery County adopted legislation to codify its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals. In doing so, the county established a Sustainability Working Group (SWG) and charged it with creating the County’s Climate Protection Plan (CPP). This paper offers an analysis of potential actions that could be taken by the County with respect to new development and redevelopment projects in order to address the County’s greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Recommendations:

1. Offsetting a new fee or existing APFO fees with incentive policies is more suited to Montgomery County than direct regulation.
2. Consider the following suggestions for constructing the GHG Reduction Schedule:

- Focus on including GHG Reduction Actions that actually reduce emissions such as the 16 that the Group has selected based on their ability to meet certain criteria in the List of Actions and are included in Appendix C.
 - Begin with a voluntary schedule and provide incentive policies for compliance.
 - Develop a suite of schedules that are tailored to the specific types of development.
 - Consider special exclusions to the program based on local needs such as a size minimum.
 - Encourage participation and compliance beyond minimal requirement or threshold.
 - Consider Montgomery County budget constraints.
 - Ensure actions included in the Soft and Hard Schedules address CPP goals.
3. Consider the following suggestions for developing the GHG Emissions Quantification and Reporting System:
- Reporting System- Montgomery County should model its methodology for collecting data on emissions reductions from GHG Reduction Actions in the Soft Schedule after King County's worksheet.
 - Quantification System- Montgomery County should follow Massachusetts' example by reviewing and approving software for developers to utilize when quantifying GHG emissions from re/development. It appears Massachusetts is introducing its developers to the process of calculating GHG emissions with an eye toward GHG regulation in the future.
 - Seek Authority to Mandate Quantification and Reporting- Montgomery County should determine whether it can require GHG quantification and reporting for re/development under MEPA as has King County and Massachusetts.