

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Department of Energy and Environment

Green Building Advisory Council

Meeting Date: August 2, 2023 at 3pm

Meeting Location: Online – WebEx

Recording: <https://dcnet.webex.com/dcnet/ldr.php?RCID=24a548dfc1012bc04415307526be8b31>

Attendees (all by Webex/phone)

GBAC Members Present: Jenn Hatch (DOEE), Joseph Knackstedt (DHCD), Michael Brown (DOB), June Marshall (Private Sector), Billy Grayson (ULI), Anica Landreneau (HOK), Linda Toth (Arup), Mansi Talwar (GWU)

GBAC Members Absent: Matt Floca (DGS), Cliff Majersik (IMT), Stephen Gyor (OP)

Other Attendees: Brian Hanlon (DOB), Richard Jackson (DOEE), Connor Rattey (DOEE), Jennifer Johnston (DOEE), Andrea Foss (Steven Winter Associates), Andre Javier-Barry (DCSEU), Francisco Matiella (DOEE), Jamie Donovan (DOEE), Cristine Gibney (DOEE), Hari Karne (DOEE), Michael Feldman-Wieneck (DOEE), Aykut Yilmaz (DOEE), Antonio Yaquian (DOEE), Maribeth DeLorenzo (DOEE), Vanessa Bertelli (Electrify DC), Kimberly Brown, Mark Bryan (DCSEU), Webley Bowles (NBI)

Administrative updates – *Connor Rattey, DOEE*

- The GBAC currently has one vacancy for a nonprofit sector representative and one vacancy for a representative to be appointed by Council.
 - Interested candidates may apply here:
<https://motboards.applytojob.com/apply/CDm4XF/Green-Building-Advisory-Council>

Dialogue with the Directors: **DOB Acting Director Brian Hanlon and DOEE Acting Director Richard Jackson**

- Director Jackson opening remarks
 - BEPS program has 80% compliance and lots of great stakeholder engagement. DOEE is committed to supporting the codes process as it progresses toward the net-zero energy codes. Will be hiring new staff to support this soon. Clean Energy 2.0 still a major focus for DOEE.
- Director Hanlon opening remarks
 - Intent is to build out a much more robust presence within DOB to better engage with community. Very enthusiastic about collaborating with DOEE and GBAC.
- Anica: Will DOB play a bigger role in BEPS?
 - DOB would like to be more engaged and work with DOEE and the community on all green building-related issues, including BEPS. Can support with enforcement, but want to make sure that there are robust outreach and engagement programs in place first.
- Billy: How is business? Volume of new permits? More renovations?

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- DOB is close to pre-pandemic levels for residential project permitting. Expect a dip to come soon based on regular trends and based on high interest rates. Commercial project permitting slowing down.
- Linda: Building decarbonization:
 - 1. how do both feel about BEPS shift to GHG metric?
 - 2. building electrification codes for the city? Feelings on operational and embodied carbon and how this concept plays between both agencies?
- Similar to other cities, operational carbon has been at the forefront and embodied carbon has been in the background. DOEE's upcoming Carbon Free DC plan will be the first place where embodied carbon gets specifically featured.
- DOB is interested in playing a bigger role in advancing these objectives, and is exploring where/how to play a role.
- Other Q&A from this discussion available in the meeting recording at the top of this document.

Office-to-Residential Conversions – *Billy Grayson, ULI*

- Resources:
 - ULI Report: "[The Feasibility of Converting Commercial Real Estate to Multifamily](#)"
 - [DMPED FY24 Proposed Housing in Downtown \(HID\) Program](#) - includes a tax abatement to support building conversions
 - [DCFPI article describing the FY24 HID tax abatement](#)
 - DowntownDC BID Report: "[State of Downtown 2022](#)"
 - [Downtown Action Plan](#)
 - [National stats and trends in office conversions](#)
 - [Downtown D.C. Is Still Struggling To Attract Office Workers, New Development](#) (DCist)
- Billy: ULI has done some research on this topic and produced a report called "Behind the Façade" (link in resources above). Wanted to see which/how many buildings are being converted in the absence of any incentives.
 - Interviewed these projects to see what motivated adaptive reuse vs. teardown – of the 30 interviews, only 2 brought up environmental considerations and 0 brought up embodied carbon.
 - We've been looking at drivers of adaptive reuse through an adaptive reuse and sustainability lens. Cities that are thinking this will solve their housing crisis may overestimate the feasibility/cost of converting office spaces to residential spaces – at least under current financial incentives.
 - Vancouver has instituted an adaptive reuse program that considers embodied carbon, with a \$40,000 credit. Calgary also has some of the highest incentives for adaptive reuse at \$75/sq ft.
 - There have been various tools developed to quantify the benefits of adaptive reuse and embodied carbon.
- Anica: Care Tool was developed by Architecture 2030: <https://architecture2030.org/caretool/> . The idea of getting 'carbon credit' for investment in existing buildings is a really interesting one.

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But many questions of what this would look like – great opportunity to see what kind of incentives/right mix of incentives might be best to encourage investment in adaptive reuse.

- [DMPED Housing in Downtown Program](#)
 - HID is a competitive program aimed at catalyzing new residential development downtown (via conversion or tear-down) through financial and regulatory relief.
 - Mayor's Downtown Comeback Plan sets a goal of adding 15,000 residents downtown by 2028.
 - [Map of DC Downtown Comeback Plan Boundary](#)
 - 20-year property tax abatement
 - 10% affordable at 60% MFI OR 18% affordable at 80% MFI
 - Exempt from First Source requirements for construction
 - Exempt from TOPA requirements on first sale or within 10 years
 - DMPED is currently drafting regulations and expects to publish them for public comment soon.
 - Program may be used by projects that are demolishing as well, not just adaptive reuse.
- June: Developer clients have voiced that tax abatement is not long enough and incentive is not great enough. Affordable housing advocates don't really want more housing downtown because that area doesn't have the other amenities that are typically needed by this population. Many developers don't like TOPA because it can take over a year to complete a sale to the tenants.
- Joe: there are buildings downtown that can't be converted to residential, and the only option is to demolish and rebuild. Even with these incentives, many of the buildings downtown won't be able to make it financially feasible to convert to housing because of how their floorplates are designed.
- Antonio: The city wants 15,000 new residences downtown. Downtown has about 600 buildings – would need about 100 buildings to be converted to have a favorable tenant-to-worker ratio. However, its estimated that only 10% of the buildings downtown are eligible to be converted to residential.

Roundtable Updates – All

- Those interested in applying to join the GBAC can apply here:
<https://motaboards.applytojob.com/apply/CDm4XF/Green-Building-Advisory-Council>
- Mike Brown: DOB has an open plan reviewer position. Particularly interested in structural plan reviewer with an eye toward energy and green building codes. Job posting available [here](#). Deadline to apply is August 10.
- Jenn: Will have new Green Building positions open soon.
- Joe: DHCD released our 2023 Qualified Allocation Plans and Consolidated RFP (the main 2 tools to rehab and build new affordable housing).
- Billy: We just completed our second year of technical assistance initiatives for our net zero initiative. Developed a report "[Net Zero For All](#)" (what we've seen from communities that are saying "prioritize equity in climate action", and what some are actually doing to do it). ULI recently upgraded its

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[parking policy innovation database](#) – a list of 100+ examples of cities reducing parking while bringing benefit to downtowns.

- Webyl: California Building Commission voted to approve the embodied carbon requirement. Big deal because it's the first state to require this, many years in the making! It goes into effect in July 2024. They offer 3 options: building reuse, whole building LCA, and something that resembles a typical Buy Clean policy.
- Jennifer: DOEE put out a [Request for Partners: Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund](#) (GGRF).
- Michael Feldman-Wiencek: Managing a grant on equitable engagement on building electrification. Our grantee has been working to “walk the talk” on equity – they’ve just started community engagement with affordable housing communities. What does a fair, carbon-free electrified future look like for them, and making sure those residents have a seat at the table as the city plans for this. Will be plugging into Clean Energy DC and other policies that are developing. Hope to have some preliminary findings to share at the next meeting.
- Mark Bryan: DCSEU Train Green program – SWA has crafted a couple new on-demand online courses for contractors:
 - [Multifamily Air Sealing Strategies to Pass Unit Infiltration Testing Requirements](#)
 - [Commissioning in Practice: A How-to for Code Compliance and Quality Assurance in DC](#)
 - [Register for the program access code before signing up for the course.](#)
 - Both courses are self-paced and free until Sept 30 (\$45 after that).

Meeting adjourned at 4:58 PM.

The next meeting will be:

October 4, 2023 at 3 pm