

Mandy Lee

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Opening Remarks and Introductions

Krystal Brumfield, Associate Administrator of GSA's Office of Government-wide Policy, and Kevin Kampschroer, GSA Chief Sustainability Officer, provided opening remarks and welcomed the Committee and all meeting participants.

Krystal noted the value of hearing from a diverse group of stakeholders proposing disruptive innovations. While issues like environmental justice and equity are not easy to resolve, they are worth pursuing and we need the voice of every stakeholder at the table to develop transformational plans of action. Finally, she asked stakeholders interested in continuing to improve how the federal government does business to remain engaged with GSA as we work through these important issues thoughtfully and collectively.

David Kaneda, Green Building Advisory Committee (GBAC) Chair, outlined the meeting agenda. Michael Bloom, GSA Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings (OFHPGB), spoke to GBAC's background and its establishment by EISA 2007 to develop recommendations and findings to advise the federal government on moving its portfolio to sustainability.

Committee members then introduced themselves.

Environmental Justice and Equity for Federal Green Buildings Task Group Presentation

Sarah Slaughter, Built Environment Coalition (Task Group Co-Chair) (Co-chair Projjal Dutta was not present)

David Kaneda, IdeAs Consulting

Chris Castro, City of Orlando

Jane Rohde, JSR Associates

Hilary Shelton, NAACP

Mandy Lee, NAACP Centering Equity in the Sustainable Building Sector

Andrea O'Neal, GSA

The task group's mission is to help federal agencies identify and implement effective approaches to improve environmental justice and equity in federal building processes to eliminate persistent inequities found in the local community and enhance engagement with diverse local communities and key partners throughout the building lifecycle that is responsive to the true needs of the local community.

The Task Group advanced Seven Guiding Principles for Environmental Justice and Equity for Federal Buildings that apply to the management and operation of public buildings, sites, and related real property assets including parks, landmarks, and trails.

- Provide direct, long-lasting, and significant benefits to the diverse group of local communities.
- Respect, reflect, and champion the culture, identity, and traditions of the diverse groups of local communities.
- Incorporate the rights of diverse groups of local communities to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement, and evaluation.
- Develop and report transparent accountability measures of environmental justice and equity for building processes and operational performance, working with the diverse groups of local communities, particularly those with the greatest need.
- Accessibly, transparently, and openly share data and information about building processes and ongoing operations performance so it can be leveraged to develop local capabilities and leadership.
- Ensure easy, affordable, and direct access for the diverse groups of local communities, building occupants, and visitors traveling by foot, bicycle, wheelchair, public transportation, or other means.
- Work with diverse groups of local communities, particularly those most impacted and those with the greatest need, to rapidly reduce and/or eliminate the existing or potential environmental, economic, or social harms and risks.

The Guiding Principles for Environmental Justice and Equity for Federal Buildings intersect with three major cross-cutting themes for environmental justice and equity in federal buildings:

1. Health, safety, well being;
2. Resilience to disruption and disasters;
3. Economic opportunity and economic development.

These cross-cutting themes ensure that the health of the communities and neighborhoods around the facilities are prioritized, that resilience to disruptions and disasters for diverse local communities is addressed, and that economic opportunities and economic development for diverse local communities is supported.

The process for community focused collaboration for advancing environmental justice and equity in federal buildings includes three objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Enable federal agencies to apply and implement the Guiding Principles for Environmental Justice and Equity in Federal Buildings as a means for accomplishing strategic planning.
- **Objective 2:** Engage and maintain collaborative dialogue amongst diverse groups of local communities and stakeholders throughout the life cycle of Federal facilities as a means for using systematic frameworks for gleaning information and establishing an on-going communication system.

- **Objective 3:** Correlate and align project needs with community needs for every project - identify positive impacts to the community at-large. Use the process as a means to support inclusive environments, provide access to services and amenities, and establish opportunities for healthy interdependence.

The NAACP, led by its Centering Equity in the Sustainable Building Sector (CESBS) program, was a participant in the Environmental Equity and Equity Task Group. Hillary Shelton, the organization's Director, Washington Bureau/Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Policy, thanked GSA for including the NAACP in these discussions and said that he looks forward to continuing this partnership, as there is more work to be done.

NAACP CESBS program manager, Mandy Lee, provided a detailed set of recommendations for public and partner engagement approaches including:

- Establish a foundation for frontline community engagement to advance environmental and climate justice, Justice 40 initiatives, and equitable development with GSA and the federal government.
- Restructure the make-up of GBAC and all Task Groups for diversity, equity, inclusion, and frontline representation.
- Establish or designate a new Federal agency hub dedicated to EJ&E in the context of the built environment, tasked with responding to Justice40, leading co-creation/ development, decision making, and management of related EJ&E policy, actions, or programs. Ensure leadership and make-up is primarily BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) women and EJ&E leaders, with both lived experience and qualifications.
- Resource frontline communities, individual BIPOC experts/climate justice organizations, and community-based organizations to co-design a national learning tour and suggest/host racial equity and other training for GSA.
- Hire local environmental and climate justice advocates to perform community needs assessments and racial equity impact assessments that includes development of new complementary tools to identify environmental justice solution potentials by GSA and other federal government agency actions or policy shifts.
- Initiate a process for reparations dialogues with impacted communities, including both federally recognized and unrecognized tribes.
- Develop a set of processes for frontline community engagement in design, implementation, and evaluation, with decision-making authority, throughout all GSA processes.

- Develop a method of community-to-government agreements/contracts and templates for community benefits agreements to be modified by communities according to their context and community needs in partnership with tribes, local governments, utilities, other public agencies, and community-based organizations (CBOs), environmental justice (EJ) organizations and other local grassroots groups.
- Adopt/refine equity criteria and requirements to screen for potential to achieve more equitable outcomes in evaluating development/leasing proposals.
- Develop and implement specific environmental justice requirements during team and site selection/acquisition/feasibility study /procurement/scoping-programming/design/construction/ operations/disposition-disposal.
- More deeply prioritize Minority, Women Owned, and other Disadvantaged Businesses, particularly those that are local, smaller-sized (SBE), emerging, and cooperative businesses in any GSA facilities development, renovations, or building.
- Immediately remove out-of-date sustainability requirements, or those operational procedures or standards that GSA controls that perpetuate racial, gender, or other social inequities and/or cause more cumulative harm to impacted communities.
- Design for disability that exceeds the provisions of the ADA to uphold universal/inclusive design.
- Prepare historical and sociological surveys of inequities within the larger city/specific context of each site.
- Acknowledge Indigenous land and injustices to BIPOC and low-income communities in the geographical vicinity of sites.
- Identify material conditions in frontline communities to be the focus of GSA's self-evaluation of justice and equity impacts.
- Carry out a series of pilot projects that embody zero carbon, regenerative and equitable development that supports building resilience in the most impacted low income communities of color.
- As a leading user, advocate for leading green building organizations to adopt more equity credits in their rating systems and consider requiring them as prerequisites for all federal projects, new construction and major renovations; OR alternatively, develop new federal performance standards/criteria for integration of EJ&E in all GSA actions as a requirement.
- Support changes in national building codes and model zoning laws to align with science-based targets for carbon emissions reductions in the building sector that prioritize equity and environmental justice in the applications.

- Release data and share information supporting regenerative and equitable policies, practices, and innovative programs for local and state governments to follow and scale up.

The 6 page Executive Summary of the NAACP CESBS EJ&E recommendations and the full 30 page list of recommendations are available through the NAACP website.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1h8P-_fv4ohI-lor6UvpSIEsngjFkg6G4

Andrea O'Neal, Senior Adviser to the GSA Administrator for Equity, then outlined current and potential next steps for GSA and other Federal agencies to advance environmental justice and equity for Federal facilities...

Committee Discussion

Issues raised by Green Building Advisory Committee members included:

- Equitable processes, including planning, design, and construction should/could be incorporated throughout GSA rather than business as usual (BAU), "best practice" community participatory processes. Time, leadership and BIPOC expertise should inform these process changes.
- Data as a determinant of next steps needs to be considered in the context of how this information is extracted and what is the intent of the application of the information. The data might be considered "objective" but its implementation can be subjective.
- Checklists may be helpful implementation tools but are not a substitute for critical thinking. Taken alone, they may risk reinforcing business as usual and embedded systemic racism. We need to move beyond simply developing checklists to address EJ&E principles to unpack the assumptions that ground them.
- We need to ensure that health and equity are included in every GBAC proposal moving forward.
- Resiliency should be redefined as not just the resiliency of buildings, but the resiliency of building occupants and the resiliency of the local communities around them.
- The power to influence building design and operation and maintenance requires the ability to document community input at multiple points in time. This can become challenging depending on budgets and roles. It would be helpful to have Human Resources representation in this committee to discuss how building investments can also become investments in people.
- The scope of EJ&E goes well beyond the mandate of this Committee and Task Group, and therefore, some of the issues and recommendations may be more productively discussed in other, more broad-based forums.

Motion Adopted

The EJ&E Task Group should continue its work through written correspondence to complete an advice letter that incorporates the group's recommendations and allows all participants to comment and review.

Energy Storage Task Group Presentation

David Kaneda, IdeAs Consulting (Task Group Co-Chair)

The goal of this task group was to explore the use of energy storage at federal facilities, determine if energy storage should be considered for use at federal facilities, look at building-level storage systems (primarily behind-the-meter) rather than grid level storage, determine the types of storage to be considered, study potential benefits of building energy storage, determine procurement/financing options, and study barriers to deployment.

The task group found that the dominant technology in the marketplace is lithium ion batteries, while thermal storage is also worth noting. The benefits of energy storage are reduced electricity bills, grid support, reduced carbon emissions, protection of the value of renewables, resilience, and leadership. Challenges to be considered include cybersecurity, incorporation into planning processes and, for lithium ion batteries, issues of fire safety (), raw material sourcing and recycling .

Case Studies used by this task group in the formation of their recommendations include:

- Department of Defense: US Army Base, Fort Carson, Colorado Sprig GSA and FDA: White Oak Campus, Silver Spring, MD ngs, CO - completed 2019
- GSA and FDA : White Oak campus, Silver Spring, MD - completed 2013
- U.S. Marine Corps facility, Miramar, San Diego, CA - completed 2019
- Schwartz Federal building and Courthouse, San Diego, CA - completed 2018

Task Group Recommendations

- Consider the use of energy storage on all projects going forward
- Develop a "roadmap" to assist GSA staff to make decisions on deploying energy storage in buildings
- Conduct further research on non-financial benefits to stakeholders
- Develop case studies of successful projects
- Support the nascent lithium ion battery recycling industry
- Continue to track battery technology evolution

A more complete summary of this Task Group's work was presented at the GBAC's June 23, 2021 meeting. The present meeting's discussion was intended to close out the topic, in seeking the Committee's approval of the Advice Letter.

Committee Discussion

Issues raised by Committee members included:

- Embodied carbon in operational energy storage was discussed and lifecycle analyses may be the best tool to look at embodied carbon and operational energy.
- It was agreed by GBAC participants that dominant technologies are broadly thermal storage and that there has been a lot of work in condenser water storage
- It should be considered whom the federal microgrids serve and whom they could consider serving when/where there is need.

Motion Adopted

The motion to accept the advice letter passed.

Federal Building Decarbonization Task Group Presentation

Clay Nesler, WRI (Task Group Co-Chair)

Tim Unruh, National Association of Energy Service Companies (Task Group Co-Chair)

This task group's mission is to explore opportunities and challenges for reducing greenhouse gas emissions - in alignment with national climate goals and action plans - through the use of renewable energy, energy efficiency, electrification and smart building technologies at federal facilities.

The task group's scope comprises individual buildings, campuses, and supporting infrastructure, including central energy plants, distributed energy resources, and EV charging. Building decarbonization includes operational emissions, refrigerant emissions, and building life cycle emissions, including embodied carbon of materials. Primary focus is on existing buildings and actions that can be taken in the short term (3-5 years).

Key Building Decarbonization Principles

Victor Olgay, RMI

A sub-team was formed to identify key principles to implement federal building decarbonization efforts . The key principles build on GSA's commitment to 100% renewable electricity sources for the federal real estate portfolio by 2025, and should shape federal decarbonization activities and be prioritized over the next 5 years. These

principles apply to new and existing buildings, across all federal agencies (including DOD) and across all use types.

The key federal decarbonization building principles include:

1. Accelerate the rate of carbon-free building retrofits - Retrofit 6% of the federal portfolio each year between 2022 and 2030 to operational zero carbon and operational zero carbon-ready standards to reach 50% reduction by 2030.
2. To optimize for cost and impact, plan comprehensively to include efficiency, electrification, demand flexibility and solar/storage. Loading order matters, and varies with location and existing conditions.
3. Maximize the use of onsite renewable generation
4. Include embodied, refrigerant and EV charging emissions.
5. Support resilience, health and comfort.
6. Support system wide optimization to avoid unintended consequences.
7. Support equal opportunity job creation and training underpinned by equitable procurement practices.

Building Decarbonization Barriers and Solutions

Kevin Bates, Sharp Development Company

Fernando Arias, Clark Construction Group

David Kaneda, IdeAs Consulting

This sub-team identified potential barriers and solutions of federal building decarbonization for three main challenges:

- capital access and investments,
- workforce and building technologies,
- climate zones and building performance design.

Building Decarbonization Playbook

Clay Nesler, WRI

Kent Peterson, PS2 Engineering

This sub-team created a retrofit “playbook”, with objectives of providing practical guidance for GSA and practitioners to advance federal government building decarbonization goals, leveraging the work of the key principles and barriers/solutions sub-teams, and using the 80/20 principle to develop playbooks aligned with critical events in large numbers of existing federal facilities. The retrofit playbook includes a

scorecard, project development checklist, project development process and tools, with priorities focused on building types, project scenarios, and project scope. The retrofit playbook includes recommendations for all buildings, envelope repair for all buildings, and HVAC equipment for small buildings.

Draft Interim Recommendations

1. Incorporate the key decarbonization principles of into GSA policy and practices
2. Update P100 building standards to drive building decarbonization
3. Complete development of the building decarbonization scorecard and test with GSA and other agency staff
4. Develop an approach for portfolio-level implementation planning, based on facility-level technical assessments, carbon emissions impact analysis and lifecycle cost/benefit analysis incorporating health, equity and resilience impacts.

Committee Discussion

Issues raised by Committee members included:

- Environmental justice should be integrated more closely into the continued work of this task group.
- In support of Item 4(1) of the Decarbonization TG recommendations, "Invest in creating a knowledge base," the American Wood Council encourages GSA to conduct 'as-built' life-cycle analysis of some significant portion of its existing building portfolio.

Motion Adopted

Decarbonization Task Group to continue its work to produce an advice letter with a target by the end of the year, Task Group would like to work with GSA to integrate solutions and tools, and to continue the Task Group to support P100 roadmapping.

New Committee Directions & Topics to Explore

- Finishing Decarbonization Task Group and EJ&J Task Group work
- Looking at past advice letters through the lens of EJ&E
- Future of hybrid work - How are home offices in the future going to incorporate EJ&E and health principles?
- Guidance from GBAC on indoor air and environmental quality

- Consider restructuring GBAC and Task Groups to include equity and inclusion. It was expressed that a concurrent review of the GBAC structure and approach as the work continues could be the best way for going about improvement.
- Equitable Community Engagement for GSA/GBAC, equity mapping for GSA, and Inclusive Environments through development of equity and resilience hubs.
- Building Performance Standards for federal buildings
- Go beyond Task Groups and find opportunities for the Committee to engage a wider audience, e.g., with workshops
- Identify opportunities to bring education and professional training to the interdisciplinary issues of health, equity, sustainability and environmental justice in buildings.

Public Comment Period

Alice Sung, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, SEA, Greenbank Associates

Highlighted and emphasized the NAACP CESBS EJ&E recommendations that Mandy Lee covered. Recommends the federal government adopt an overall framework for looking at EJ&E more holistically, as she believes that this is something that the federal government is missing. Stressed the importance of prioritizing the NAACP recommendations (e.g., Justice 40).

Alex D. Gamble, AIA, LEED AP® BD+C, Indian Health Service

Highlighted the imperative for leadership to be skilled in moderating and guiding Equity and Justice engagements. There is a need for those at the leadership level with lived experience and diverse professionals with expertise in sustainability and environmental justice and equity, who understand actions being done on the grassroots level when it comes to the built environment.

- The NAACP and its national network of partners can provide necessary expertise as part of ongoing EJ discussions with GSA, and others, including NIBS, NIST, White House conversations, WHEJAC, NEJAC, EPA, and the CBO.

Closing Comments

David Kaneda, IdeAs Consulting

Kevin Kampschroer and Michael Bloom, GSA Office of Federal High-Performance Green Buildings

David, Michael and Kevin thanked all the participants for their valuable contributions. Kevin emphasized GSA's interest in turning recommendations into action wherever possible. Follow up steps from the meeting include:.

- GBAC participants should send follow-up comments to David Kaneda at dkaneda@ideas-c.com and Michael Bloom at michael.bloom@gsa.gov.
- GBAC meeting notes, presentation decks and final, Committee-approved Advice Letters will be sent out to Task Group participants as well as posted online at www.gsa.gov/gbac