Benchmarking Collaboration Ad Hoc Committee
Monday, November 10, 2014

CALL TO ODER/ROLL CALL
Meeting was call to order at: 4:33pm

PRESENT: Raj Shulka, Matt Phair, Chad Faber, Susan Schmitz, Manus McManus, Zach Brandon, David Ahrens (needs to leave at 5:30pm), Willa Schlecht (needs to leave at 5:30pm)

EXCUSED: John Sumi

ABSENT: Jeannette LeZaks

PUBLIC COMMENT
None

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS
None

ANNOUCEMENT FROM STAFF
None

DISCUSSION

Steve Kismohr – from MEEA spoke and provided hand-outs (will be added to Legistar.)
There was a discussion about putting Kismohr on the agenda for December.
Benchmarking is the "mileage sticker" for a building.
Benchmarking has been used since the 60's.
Energy usage – can help building owners – by tracking energy you understand how your building is performing – a doctor's check-up for your building.
Just by tracking your energy – you can save 2-3% energy use. Just through behavior change, you can save even more. And if you make changes to your building you can save even more 2-5%. Usually one year payback.

Kismohr – showed a list of cities that have benchmarking ordinances. Some only show data by building type – which helps with disclosures. Also showed information on Midwest information including state information and city that have them – and which city are starting – and which cities have a voluntary – Columbus has voluntary but will become mandatory if they don't reach the goal.

Ahrens – has some information from ASHIRE that he will share with the committee (also will be attached to Legistar.)

1.   Review of goals for the committee – including the Council President's order which is attached to #35501.

Brandon – We care about energy conservation, protect environment, reduce cost, help businesses, needs to include in private sector, we accomplish more working with business.

Ahrens – I agree with most of these but also the idea that using markets to change behavior – in this case through information.

Phair – Are we going to do this mandatory or voluntary? Columbus is interesting as they say we are going to try to do voluntary and if that does not work – then do mandatory. If we can agree and bring it to council – that would be the best.

Ahrens – If we come out with something that is not effective we have not succeeded.

Brandon – The city can still pass an ordinance if the voluntary doesn't work. We don't want to feel put upon.

There was further discussion with Brandon and Ahrens and Phair and Faber on what are our goals.

2.   Discussion with San Francisco, Minneapolis and Seattle on their benchmarking program (overview presentation by Barry Hooper (San Fran), Brendon Slotterback (Mpls.) and Rebecca Baker (Seattle) - 30-45 minutes, followed by Q&A)

Hooper – From San Francisco. Our ordinance is for 10,000 square feet or greater – CA has very strong requirements regarding disclosure. Very difficult to benchmarking multi-family.

Slotterback – During a broader discussion regarding green polices, we had a working group on green jobs with lots of industry and labor on it. We went to that group to discuss the ordinance. There was a few champions on this committee that helped when the ordinance was brought before the council.

Baker – There was a broader group a group that looked at a whole variety of polices to help implement our green plan. BOMA had already run some Kilowatt Crackdown. This was a first step to provide the information in the marketplace.

Hooper – We are looking to reduce carbon emissions as there are costs associated with not dealing with climate change. There is also the issue that funding is available to help energy in buildings and we want the funding to go to the building that need it – not just the building that "know the programs".

Hooper – People are concerned about mandates but this one is not too bad.

Baker – Our ordinance passed 2010 and we have just done a report. Disclosure piece is not full public disclosure it is to the – current, potential, tenant or if the building changed hands. This is harder for the city to track. Full public disclosure is not as scary as people think.

The information is helpful. The City wants to have this information available so we understand which buildings are under-performing so we can help them and then reduce carbon.

Shukla – How did you go through the process?

Baker – BOMA Kilowatt Crackdown had already happened here and we need to achieve carbon emissions, but we can't achieve these goals through a voluntary program because – you are not seeing the full picture. For Seattle we wanted to see where the opportunity exists. For Seattle the ordinance is for 20,000 square foot commercial and residential (multi) – the utility and the city are now working together to see where the incentives are going… and how can the incentives programs be tailored based on the benchmarking information – we could not have achieve this with a voluntary program.

Baker – There is no auditing requirement. Energy star building do have to go through that process – to become energy star certified. We do provide a lot of training. We compared self data reporting with data provided by a consultant and we were very pleased with data set from the self reporting. Then we reach out to the high and low data points with support which has helped greatly.

Hooper – San Fran reviews the data but we do not audit the date. Portfolio Manager has some tools to make sure your information is complete. First time a building submit information there are often errors. There is also tension between keeping marketing information short vs. having buildings get information correct.

Audit requirement – if a building is audited for commissioning, or some other reason then that consultant also checks the data in portfolio manager. We also look at how buildings that do go for energy star verification.

We do not have the ability to check utility data to portfolio manager.

Slotterback – Owners at times do not submit correct data. They submit data, data is then reviewed and deemed complete. We need some better coordination with the utility and some changes to the EPA portfolio manager will help.

We are looking to help buildings to go through energy star certification.

Baker – Seattle has automated data entry to portfolio manager, so if they don't have an EUI we don't download that information. City can then follow up with those businesses. Utility interaction also helps building owner understand data.

Schlecht – For a program to be successful – seems like there needs to be public disclosures for city to review. Do people know about the success?

Slotterback - This is our first year and we need to work with owners to help them get better more accurate data. Mpls is being caution.

Baker – We had a non-profit advertising firm help market the ordinance – which is phased in. We have had not a lot of press on the residential side. People who are renting are not as aware and these buildings are new to benchmarking. This is area to get more public information out. Disclosures – this information is getting asked for more often and it is not just transactional.

Hooper – Education is very information. BOMA in San Fran – they have been supportive with 60 different pieces of press, training, classes and yet there still are building owners that heard about the ordinance by getting a letter from the city.

The group that did the training for the city, they have converted their training to video EEFG is the company. EPA training is very broad so through EEFG training is around a specific ordinance.

Brandon – What have you seen in energy savings in public and private sector.

Hooper – For municipal buildings for three years running we have see reduction in energy and carbon. We found opportunities for savings and "issues" – that need to get address.

On the private side, we have not released data yet still going through internal validation.

Baker - At three to five years we expected to see changes – we have seen building owners that have made improvements – we are now able to see more buildings making improvements. For 2013, data is just coming out now. One building – a senior building gave a rebate to the residents because of the savings. We have a business district, where knowing the ordinance was coming that that everyone would be benchmarking – so they went the next step and created a super green district.

Brandon – Do you have incentives?

Baker – Utilities have programs and some of new programs seem like they are geared toward whole buildings solutions. There is also a commercial grant that the city has made available.

Hooper – There are no incentive for benchmarking – however we are helping with the auditing requirement for energy star rated buildings. There have been 600 audits and $200 million net present value of energy savings.

Slotterback – We are in the process. Not for benchmarking itself but to get energy star certified. A matching grant program – targeted to the audit but also may ask them to make an improvement – grant amount would be based on that.

Brendon – The question is how can we get building owners to actually move on energy efficiency especially buildings that are smaller like under 100,000 square feet.

Shukla – Any cost issues that we should be aware of?

Hooper – Training is key and that cost money. Administration of the ordinance that also cost money.

Phair – What do audit costs ?

Hooper – level 1 $1500-4000 – level 2 – 0.05-0.10 per square foot. More complicated building will have more cost.

McDevitt – What message is the best about getting building owners over the issue of mandatory.

Slotterback – We didn't get everyone over it. We looked at who was already publishing data through EPA portfolio and we had BOMA Kilowatt Crackdown. We had a discussion about climate/carbon. Not that we overcame, but we had been talking about climate/carbon for so long.

Baker – We showed building owners that they can benchmark – and what they can achieve through benchmarking.

Hooper – We have slowly worked on building trust with the business community.

Slotterback – Engaging everyone up-front. This is going to happen but lets talk about it.

Rebecca – We had a slow implementation period. There will be people that will not benchmark unless they are enforced to We, at first, did not enforce the ordinance, the ordinance was designed to encourage compliance. 99% compliance for 2013 data set through our outreach and tech assistance.

Hooper - Keep going!

Callers left the call.

Brendan – If this is only getting a smaller percentage of change. Why do this? This just reinforces to me that we should not doing mandatory.

Shukla – We are talking about aggregate data so the difference is savings is very different.

Manus – voluntary does not work – we talked about it last time.

Phair – I was interested in Seattle they are doing things slow because the business community wanted it to be slower.

McDevitt – EPA did a study and that study indicated that there was 2-7% savings from buildings that are benchmarking – over number of years.

Faber – So if it is mandatory, then more businesses will participate in energy improvements right?

Brandon – Can we try voluntary first and then try mandatory?

Shukla – If we are doing voluntary - how do we get the data?

McDevitt – you need a full set of data.

Brandon – Kansas City has 200 buildings in their voluntary program.

Shukla – 200 buildings is a small percentage.

3.   Additional questions that the committee would like addressed for future meetings

Need to get someone on a call to talk about voluntary programs.

Hoffman – Mentioned that a representative from ComEd has agreed to speak on automatic data upload.

Hoffman will also send out email about schedule for meetings for first Quarter of 2015.

ADJOURNMENT
Moved adjournment – Shukla
Brandon – seconded
Unanimously approved – Committee Adjourned at 6:30pm