

## Public Comment at FESAC Meeting March 12, 2015

Martin Greenwald, MIT Plasma Science and Fusion Center

I'd like to comment on the ongoing planning activities.

Getting fusion community input concerning strategic directions is good and essential. I understand the planned set of workshops are a step in that direction.

However, I am concerned about the "charter" for these workshops.

First, The topics covered are far from comprehensive – and do not really address the broader strategic questions facing us. For example: ITER with its well-known problems and its impact on the balance of the program, "the energy vs science issue with all of its implications for priorities and program timing", the role of universities in ITER era - plus a host of technical issues – sustainment for example – that are critical but absent from the discussion.

Secondly, the time frame is unnecessarily compressed (and with major community involvement after advisory committee study, rather than before it.)

We note Congressional language over several budget cycles called for the development of a strategic plan for the fusion program and suggested we use a process modeled on other communities. NP or HEP were specifically referred to.

So let's compare with other communities –

HEP in the recent planning activity that they planned took 1 ½ to 2 years. They began with preparatory work beginning in Oct. 2012, that after almost a year of effort led to a community summer study – a Snowmass type meeting – during the summer of 2013. That activity drove a subsequent charge to HEPAP which was addressed through their P5 process. There were further community workshops and town halls, leading to an interim report in 3/2014 and a final report in 5/2014.

In Nuclear Physics, their ongoing Long Range Planning activity is expected to take over 18 months. The stage of gathering input and reaching a consensus has a strong involvement of the APS/DNP, with workshops carried out through 2014. The DOE charge to NSAC was issued in 4/2014 with a report due in 10/2015.

Third; it isn't clear if the workshops as currently charged will be sufficiently "action-oriented". Previous community and FESAC activities have done a comprehensive job of identifying scientific and technical issues. What has been lacking is an equally strong technical analysis of the means to address these issues. The recent FESAC panel unfortunately did not step up to this challenge. I was glad to hear Ed's comment at the end of the last session, that the workshops would be an opportunity to discuss and assess initiatives that might be proposed. While this seems contrary to the workshop charge - which seems to entertain new initiatives only as they might fit in the context of a severely constrained budget, I hope the new position from OFES is the controlling language on this point.

Thus: the current activities should be given more time to work and their efforts considered as a first step in a more comprehensive activity. One that takes on a broader scope and works through the problem more deliberately.