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# **Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)**

## **EQUITY & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE – ADAPTATION**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

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**Meeting Date:** 8-18-20

**Meeting Time:** 3:30-5:30pm ET

**Meeting Location:** Zoom Link

<https://ctdeep.zoom.us/j/96343126023>

## ATTENDANCE

	<b>Working Group Member</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Present</b>
1.	Mark Mitchell	Professor	George Mason University	X
2.	Laura Bozzi	Professor; Director	Yale School of Public Health; Yale Program on Climate Change and Public Health	X
3.	Matthew Fulda	Executive Director	MetroCOG	X
4.	James Albis	Senior Advisor to the Commissioner	CT DEEP	X
5.	Brian Thompson	Director	Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse, CT DEEP	X
6.	Laura Cahn	Chair	NH Environmental Advisory Council	X
7.	Heather Aaron	Deputy Commissioner	CT Department of Public Health	X
8.	Lee Cruz	Director of Community Outreach	Community Foundation for a Greater New Haven	X
9.	John Truscinski	Director of Resilience Planning	Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation, UCONN	X
10.	Joanna Wozniak-Brown	Assistant Director of Resilience Planning	Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation, UCONN	X
11.	Marianne Engelman-Lado	Professor	Yale School of Public Health, VT Law School	X
12.	Diane Hoffman		Hamden Alliance for Trees	X
13.	Denise Savageau	Chair	CT Council on Soil & Water Conservation	X
14.	Steven Wallett	Environmental Sanitarian	CT Department of Public Health (CT DPH)	X
15.	Lori Mathieu	Manager	CT DPH	X
16.	Dean Caruso	Executive Director, Support Services & Sustainability	Yale New Haven Hospital	X
17.	Lynne Bonnett		Greater New Haven Green Fund	X
18.	Diane Mas	Chief Resilience Officer	Fuss & O'Neill	X
19.	Aicha Woods	Executive Director	City Plan, City of New Haven	X
20.	Goudarz Molaei	Agricultural Scientist	Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station	X

21	Mikey Hirschoff		Garden Club of New Haven	X
22	Victoria Brudz	Project Specialist	Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation, UCONN	X
23	Amanda Clark			X
24	Ralph Jones			X
25	Christine Kirchhoff	Assistant Professor	Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation, UCONN	X
26	Paul Elconin	Director of Land Conservation	Weantinoge Land Trust	X
27	Nicholas Elton	Intern	Yale Center on Climate Change and Communication	X
28	Mariana Fragomeni	Assistant Professor	UCONN Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP)	X
29	Huan Ngo	Educator, Scientist		X
30	Becca George	Graduate Student	Yale School of the Environment	X
31	Marcia Pessolano	Dietitian Nutritionist	CT DPH	X
32	Mary-Beth Hart		CT DEEP: Land and Water Resources Division	X
33	Bill Lucey	Soundkeeper	CT Save the Sound	X
34	Jeri Weiss	Team Lead, Sustainable Materials Management	USEPA	X
35	Adelaine McCloe	Environmental Intern	CT DEEP	X
36	Martha Page	Executive Director	Hartford Food System	X
37	Gannon Long	Policy and Public Affairs Director	Operation Fuel	X
38	Todd Berman	Manager of Environmental Projects	United Illuminating	X
39	Nora Rizzo	Director of Sustainability	Fusco Construction & Property	X
40	Max Ballardo	Design Associate	American Institute of Architects	X
41	Leticia Colon de Mejias	Executive Director	Energy Efficiencies Solutions	X
42	Brian Toal	Epidemiologist	CT DEEP	X
43	Nicolás Zak			X

44	Rebecca French	Director	CT DEEP: Office of Climate Planning	X
45	Diane Aye	Lecturer in Epidemiology	Yale School of Medicine	X
46	Robert Bell	Transportation Planning Director	CT Department of Transportation: Office of Policy and Planning	X
47	Dave Murphy	Manager of Water Resources Planning	Milone & MacBroom, Inc.	X
48	Jennifer Perry	Supervising Environmental Analyst	CT DEEP Engineering Services	X
49	Lloyd			X
50	Orlando Velazco	Health Equity Director	CT DPH	X
51	Stewart Chute	Toxicologist	CT DPH	X
52	Thomads St. Louis	MSPH Occupational Health Program Director	CT DPH	X
53	Kathleen Fay	Director of Community Sustainability	Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven; member of the City of New Haven's Environmental Advisory Council	X
54	Joey Wraithwall	Manager, State Director's Office	Nature Conservancy	X
55	Randy Anway	Architect		X

Associated Staff	Titl	Organization	Presen
Edith Pestana	Administrator	CT DEEP: EJ Program	X
Doris Johnson	Outreach and Program Coordinator	CT DEEP: EJ Program	X
Max Teirstein	Intern	CT DEEP: EJ Program	X

## AGENDA & NOTES

### Welcome and Announcements

- First meeting to provide feedback on working group reports!
- Not the only opportunity to provide feedback, just the first

### Public Health and Safety Working Group Presentation

*Facilitated by Public Health and Safety Co-chairs*

- Presentation linked on GC3 web page: [www.ct.gov/deep/gc3](http://www.ct.gov/deep/gc3)

### Question & Answer/Discussion, Public Comments

*Facilitated by Public Health and Safety Co-chairs*

- **Mark Mitchell**, George Mason University
  - Sharper, more detailed delineation needed of who will be carrying out the implementation of these recommendations.
  - Housing recommendations should focus on condos, apartments, other types of structures that don't fit into the energy efficiency and clean energy models. The EEJ working group should make recommendations related to housing.
- **Leticia Colon de Mejias**, Energy Efficiencies Solutions
  - [via chat] Thank you for this presentation- Indoor housing issues are prevalent in CT and are a direct barrier to drawing down our energy consumption in residential sectors. I wonder what the status of the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative is at this time? What is DPH doing on this front which impacts more than 30% of all Low and Moderate Income (LMI) housing? <https://efficiencyforall.org/wordpress/posts/>
    - Additional studies on health barriers in homes can be found here : <https://efficiencyforall.org/wordpress/2020/08/15/health-and-safety-barriers-to-weatherization-study/>  
and here [https://efficiencyforall.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/EE-Health\\_2-18-2019\\_Flyer.pdf](https://efficiencyforall.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/EE-Health_2-18-2019_Flyer.pdf)  
<https://efficiencyforall.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/h1801.pdf>
    - *No funding support within DPH for a healthy homes program. More details to come. Lots of potential for recommendations outlining some of the needs for LMI housing, those should receive more of a focus through the fall.*
      - Without looking at mitigating indoor health barriers, which are prohibitive to energy efficiency demands, we will never meet the goal to reenergize 80% of housing. Non-public, low-income housing needs support, and money was allocated for it and studies were underway, but it seems to have dropped off. Especially with the coming need to shelter in place, this needs to be addressed.
    - [via chat] The heat index is also a serious problem. Here is a link to recent study on how this harm LMI populations and links this to climate impacts <https://www.wnpr.org/post/access-air-conditioning-critical-its-also-making-climate-change-worse>
      - Hartford = 15% reduction in energy use could reduce health impacts by \$73 per capita annually 15th highest in the nation among large metro areas
- **Edith Pestana**, CT DEEP
  - Vulnerable communities also include persons with physical and mental disabilities,

persons with preexisting illness, persons with limited English proficiency, the uninsured and overburdened communities and Exposure to hazardous materials

- Are there any local health departments that are assessing health vulnerabilities via GIS analysis following the CDC guidance?

- **Gannon Long:** @Edith - you may want to reach out to Lianny Arroyo, Health & Human Services Director for City of Hartford. She is excellent, and has been leading the city's COVID response as well as Census campaign.

- **Kathleen Fay**, Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven

- There is an app called OSHA NIOSH Heat Safety Tool put out by the CDC, which calculates heat index and makes associated risk level worksite recommendations. It is very easy to use.
- Indoor air quality issues that also present direct barriers to making energy efficiency upgrades include presence of mold, asbestos, gas leaks, improperly vented combustion products and more. Additionally, offgassing materials such as adhesives and sealants, paints, varnishes, and other chemicals, and some carpeting systems and composite wood products all impact indoor air quality.
- Noting in chat that the public health impacts of Combined Sewer Outfalls/Overflows should be mentioned by this team even if recommendations on how to mitigate is addressed in more depth by another Working Group.

- **Marianne Engelmann-Lado**, Yale School of Public Health & VT Law School

- Given impact of multiple sources of pollution in overburdened communities on air quality, which affects resiliency of populations to climate change, have you considered a recommendation in support of legislation to take cumulative impacts into account in permitting?
  - *That discussion will need to happen between groups of the GC3, rather than generated from a single working group.*
  - New Jersey and other states (e.g., California) has such an initiative currently working its way through the state legislature.
- Can someone walk through how to think about vector illnesses with an equity lens? Are there particular recommendations to address issues related to vector diseases that affect particularly vulnerable populations (such as access to health care)?

- **Lynne Bonnett**,

- Food, the federal govt dept of agriculture just changed their requirements for supplying food to those in need that essentially excluded existing farm -> community supply of food. Common Ground, ecology project in New Haven boxes food to feed local families with fresh nutritious food. Essentially farmers need to be paid for providing this resource.
- How can the state of CT promote direct food supply from local farmers to residents in need?
- the new federal regulations require that food boxes include eggs, meat and milk? in addition to fresh vegetables. If the farm only supplies vegetables, they are disqualified from receiving any money from the federal program.

- **Denise Savageau**

- Food security is a major issue. Food production also creates jobs. Vermont has a great program for Fork to Table and is now working on food security. No need to reinvent the wheel. <https://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/plan/chapter/chapter-1-overview>
- There is such an overlap with the Natural and Working Land group. How do you envision that the work is coordinated?
  - Perhaps a matrix of cross benefits for recommendations.
- Heat islands and solar panels info. Solar reduces GHG emissions and also reduces heat

islands according to this report.  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5338272/>

- **Diane Mas**

- FYI - to follow up on the cumulative impact question - for state agency actions that meet certain thresholds, the CT Environmental Policy Act requires the consideration of cumulative impacts. Doesn't address cumulative impacts for permitting or for all project types, but is a precedent within the state for consideration of cumulative impacts.

- **Joanna Wozniak-Brown**

- Northwest Hills Council of Governments (COG) has a food hub to coordinate/distribute food to commercial/institutional entities.

- **Max Ballardo, AIA**

- On the housing and indoor air quality front: Connecticut Housing Funding Authority right now has a program that promotes Passive House design which main focus is to weatherize, insulate and provide better indoor air quality, unfortunately, this portion is being taken out of their funding or just merely grouped with other goals.

- *Combined with the earlier discussion about the GreenBank and healthy homes, there needs to be more of a focus in the report on housing issues.*
- **Kathy Fay:** Agree with Max Ballardo's comment that Ct Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) not be lobbied out of including extra points for financing applications that feature housing developments that adhere to PassiveHouse standards.

- **Orlando Velazco, CTDPH**

- re: GHHI, from what I found out Lori is right. The project was entering the pilot phase and in the process of identifying 2 sites to implement but could not move forward because of lack of funding.

- **Randy Anway**

- Flooding and soil absorbancy/surface permeability is a concern. Streets and driveways can contribute to flooding, as well as other issues of permeability. Has anyone been looking at this in vulnerable communities, where water can potentially accumulate in flooding events?
  - *This was discussed in the storms subgroup, but wasn't included in part because it was being recommended from the land use working group. Impact to wells and water quality is a concern and needs to be addressed through cumulative impacts analysis.*
  - There are health co-benefits to healthy soils and green infrastructure.
  - **Brian Thompson:** There are recommendations on this topic in the Infrastructure & Land Use report.

## Infrastructure and Land Use Working Group Presentation

*Facilitated by Brian Thompson (DEEP)*

- [Report linked on GC3 web page: [www.ct.gov/deep/gc3](http://www.ct.gov/deep/gc3)]
- Focus on climate effects of Sea Level Rise (SLR), changing precipitation patterns that create more intensive rainfall events, and heat impacts
- 28 recommendations, some gaps remain
  - Full working group has not yet convened to discuss the recommendations
  - Presenting tables from 9 of the 28 recommendations, 3 recommendations from each subgroup to be discussed

- Transportation subgroup
  - Defined broadly as bus service, rail service, roads, bridges, bicycles, pedestrian
  - Infrastructure and services owned and operated at every level of government (cities and towns, regionally via COGs, state-level via DOT), other owners & operators as well (private ownership, quasi-federal/Amtrak)
  - 3 categories: existing infrastructure, future infrastructure, evacuation planning for incidents
  - 6 recommendations, 3 under examination:
    - Improve statewide evacuation route planning and vulnerability assessment
      - Coordination among local, regional and state gov't on planning and establishing a database
    - Vulnerability assessment for transit
      - Focusing on public transit (rail and bus) to have coordinated equipment and infrastructure climate vulnerability assessments performed that incorporate all management entities
    - Identify geographically isolated communities that become isolated due to SLR, storm surge, and inland flooding predictions by 2050
      - Improving evacuation routes out or access to critical resources (hospitals, supermarkets, etc)
- Land Use Subgroup
  - Update state building code to address resiliency measures, based on best available science
  - Incentivize and prioritize redevelopment of previously used sites within established neighborhoods, including Brownfield remediation to reduce suburban sprawl
  - Establish an Energy Efficiency and Healthy Homes (EEHH) Equity Fund to assist low to moderately low-income households increase the energy efficiency and thermal comfort and safety of their homes and remove indoor health barriers to efficiency upgrades, such as weatherization
    - Applies not only to public housing, but to rented housing and other kinds
- Utility Infrastructure Subgroup
  - Scope includes drinking water, waste water, electricity, storm water and flood control infrastructure, dams, communications, and fuel infrastructure
    - Each one of those sectors has unique governance from the regulatory side and from the business-enterprise side
  - Inventory and geolocate vulnerable utility facilities and their service areas and overlay to prioritize vulnerable populations
  - Evaluate standing advisory council for infrastructure in EEJ communities
  - Assess, plan for, and implement actions to improve access to services and availability of electricity for people with disabilities, limited mobility, or special medical needs

### Question & Answer/Discussion, Public comments

*Facilitated by Infrastructure and Land Use Co-chairs*

- **Edith Pestana, CT DEEP**
  - is there data available that provides an estimate of the number, percentage of dwelling units and housing that have environmental barriers to weatherization? Data and references would be helpful in making a case to the legislature to create a funding source?
    - *Some information on that does exist, and further data collection will be a part of the GC3 process. New requirements for utilizing public funding for residential housing is another recommendation of this subgroup.*
- **Marianne Engelman-Lado, Yale School of Public Health and VT Law School**

- We know this is a template form, but what is the role of community members in follow up with implementation entities?
- **Denise Savageau**
  - Vulnerable communities - evacuate to where?
    - *That is part of the assessment, to identify how people will evacuate and where to.*
- **Lynne Bennett**
  - Many of the items in the utility section concern water resource issues, stormwater management, CSO, storm water authority etc. does the presenter mean to say that they are prioritizing the electrical utility needs?
    - *We did not prioritize any utility infrastructure over any other. No prioritization scheme exists, currently.*
  - UI should have the number of income eligible evaluations denied because of barriers going back years in New Haven.
- **Gannon Long, Operation FUEL**
  - regarding lack of access to power for disabled and medically vulnerable populations - the recent storm response highlighted areas for improved coordination and communication in this regard. 2 organizations that have worked on these issues very closely the past couple years are CT Legal Rights (Wendy Wanchak) and Center for Children's Advocacy (Bonnie Roswig). Kathy Flaherty of CT Legal Rights Project is also very knowledgeable.
    - Additionally, folks interested in this can refer to PURA docket 20-08-03, which features several public comments regarding impact of outages on vulnerable populations. (This is in storm context; but shutoff also applies to folks who lose utilities due to lack of payment.)
- **Mark Mitchell**
  - What is the purpose of geolocating vulnerable facilities and infrastructure?
    - *Overlayed with vulnerable communities, that's one of the first indicators of risk we have. When talking about "vulnerability," we're referring to SLR and other climate change effects. The work product of the EEJ mapping tool subcommittee can be overlayed with the mapping product from the utility subgroup to prioritize infrastructure resilience needs.*
  - Please review the recommendation on combined sewer overflows and storm surge inundation.
    - *Please provide additional comments on recommendations that have not been presented, like this one. With respect to this recommendation, there has been some effort to remove the combined sewers with stormwater and wastewater streams individually, but it's being done slowly and won't be completed soon. If more storm waters are captured at their source through technological advancements, that would alleviate the burden on the combined sewers, which currently create significant localized flooding.*
- **Ralph Jones**
  - Is there a way for the public to see the working reports of the several sub-groups? I would like to see the other Utilities points not covered just now, for example.
    - *All will be made available on the GC3 web page: [www.ct.gov/deep/gc3](http://www.ct.gov/deep/gc3)*
- **Becca George**
  - Is there a recommendation to specifically address the health and safety impacts of new development and infrastructure projects throughout the state on nearby and neighboring vulnerable communities possibly in the form of Health Impact Assessments (ex. evaluating and mitigating traffic safety concerns, air pollution, water pollution etc.)
    - *No specific recommendation addressing that health impact assessment currently, though that is a good idea. Air quality modeling exists on all transportation projects for PM2.5 and Ozone, but those are specific to transportation projects. There has been some movement on the federal level to lessen the environmental*

*impact assessments, perhaps there needs to be a cross-subgroup recommendation to work in a health impact assessment requirement and criteria for larger development projects.*

- **Randy Anway**

- Any consideration given to community standards frameworks on the built environment? National Institute for Standards on Technology has one, a living community standard from the international living future institute, and there are a couple others out there.
  - *We do have a recommendation that was not presented today which would be a community resilience standards program to create a framework for community-wide resilience planning at multiple scales (neighborhood scale included). They are built upon existing community resilience programs in the region, but we'd be happy to consider any other frameworks that exist.*

- **Ralph Jones**

- Looking at the agenda, is there a location for the preservation of the natural environment? Trees, lakes, and so on and so forth. Not sure whether it's a part of some other portion of the GC3 or if it needs more emphasis.
  - *There is a recommendation out of the Land Use and Building working group that discusses prioritizing the conservation of natural space, especially those that mitigate climate impacts. The Utility Infrastructure working group also has a recommendation that proposes to examine techniques to protect urban and suburban trees, and to ease the tension between electric utilities and the management of sub/urban trees and their impacts on the utility infrastructure. The Working and Natural Lands Workgroup will also cover aspects of this topic.*

### Next Steps and Adjourn

- All comments on these reports can be submitted to the [DEEP.ClimateChange@ct.gov](mailto:DEEP.ClimateChange@ct.gov) account, or to Dr. Mitchell at [mmitch3@gmu.edu](mailto:mmitch3@gmu.edu)
  - For more specific feedback on the Infrastructure and Land Use report, please email [mfulda@ctmetro.org](mailto:mfulda@ctmetro.org).
- See <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Climate-Change/GC3/Subcommittee-and--working-groups> for all upcoming meetings and presentations. Some upcoming meetings of note:
  - The Working and Natural Lands Working Group will be presenting to the Equity and Environmental Justice Working Group this Thursday evening at 5:30 pm.
  - Tomorrow the EEJ-Mitigation meeting will be meeting 8:30-12 pm.
  - 9:30 am on Monday, Aug 26 the GC3 Funding/Financing Workgroup will be presenting to EEJ-A.