
**Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)
FINANCING ADAPTATION WORKING GROUP
MEETING MINUTES**

**February 25, 2020
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
DEEP Russell Room
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106**

ATTENDANCE

Working Group Member	Title	Organization	Present
Katie Dykes	Commissioner	CT DEEP	✓
Rebecca French, Co-Chair	Director of Resilience	CT Dept. of Housing	✓
Andrew Mais, Co-Chair represented by Kristin Fabian	Commissioner	CT Insurance Department	✓
David Lehman, Co-Chair represented by Tommy Hyde	Commissioner	CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development	✓
Bryan Garcia, Co-Chair	President and CEO	CT Green Bank	✓
George Bradner	Director, Property and Casualty Division	CT Insurance Department	✓
George Kral	Town Planner	Town of Guilford	✓
Joseph MacDougald	Executive Director	University of CT Law School Center for Energy and Environmental Law	✓
Claire Coleman	Undersecretary for Legal Affairs	CT Office of Policy and Management	✓
James O'Donnell, represented by John Truscinski	Executive Director	CT Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA)	✓
David Sutherland	Director of Government Relations	The Nature Conservancy CT	✓
Curt Johnson	President	Save the Sound	✓
Kathy Dorgan	Principal	Dorgan Architecture & Planning	✓
Wayne Cobleigh	Vice President, Client Services GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.	CT Green Building Council	✓
Dean Audet	Senior Water Resources Engineer	Fuss & O'Neill	✓
James Albis	Senior Advisor to Commissioner Katie Dykes	CT DEEP	✓

Associated Staff/Public	Title	Organization	Present
Bettina Bronisz	Principal Debt Management Specialist	CT Office of the State Treasurer	✓

Kimberly Mason	State Revolving Fund Administrator	Office of the State Treasurer	✓
Mary-beth Hart	Sr. Environmental Planner	DEEP	✓
Lee Grannis	Coordinator	Greater New Haven Clean Cities Coalition	✓
John DiModica		NORESCO	✓
Craig Peters	Coordinator	Capitol Clean Cities	✓

AGENDA & NOTES

Welcome and Announcements

James Albis started the meeting at 1:06 pm and welcomed the working group members, who each introduced themselves.

Co-Chair French invited working group members to a private meeting with Teale Lecturer Robert Litterman at UConn/Storrs on March 5, 2020 from 2:30 pm -3:30 pm before his 4:00 pm public lecture. Dr. Litterman is from Goldman Sachs and the title of his talk is “We Are Not Pricing Climate Risk: A Wall Street Perspective.”

Overview of GC3 Process, Working Group Structure

Facilitated by Katie Dykes, DEEP

- Commissioner Dykes thanked the working group members for participating in light of everyone’s heavy workloads, but climate change is calling on us to make this a priority and help the state prepare. The topic of this working group is exciting and important. Polling indicates citizens of Connecticut are more concerned than ever about climate change and want to modernize infrastructure; the challenge is that nobody wants to pay for it.
- Commissioner Dykes explained that other GC3 working groups are focused on traditional infrastructure, green infrastructure, and natural and working lands to identify opportunities for carbon sequestration and climate preparedness in state facilities and operations.
- The Commissioner is also excited to have municipal leadership participating on the GC3 to help with the alignment of state level actions supporting municipal level actions.
- Commissioner Dykes explained that many of the recommendations in the report that will be produced by the GC3 in the fall will need money for implementation and a mechanism to drive investment. She stated that other working groups will show where there are resources that are not currently being valued that have value in terms of calculating avoided costs. Planning is the first step to understand where to direct dollars, which will include planning as well as projects.
- The Commissioner pointed out that there has been tremendous progress on the mitigation side with electric utilities and the Green Bank that we can use as models on for financing

- The Commissioner praised the membership of the Working Group as including leaders in this field, and recognized there are others that the Working Group will likely want to bring into the conversation to give presentations and share papers, models, and other mechanisms, so the group can include all good, relevant, and actionable information in the final report. The Commissioner called on Working Group Members to think about who else should be included in the conversation, and identify opportunities to bring Working Group information to other events, meetings, conferences, etc. in their networks to help get the message out about what we're doing and what the issues are.
- Commissioner Dykes pointed to the Co-Chair French's presentation as a start to the conversation examples some financing mechanisms and concepts, and also mentioned a regional dialogue highlighting Resilient Rhodey and efforts in Massachusetts.
- A question was raised about a working group deliverable. James Albis responded that Executive Order No. 3 which reconstituted the GC3 calls for 3 deliverables: (1) look at the original GC3's 2018 Climate Change Mitigation Strategies and essentially conduct a progress report, and apply an Equity/Environmental Justice lens to the updated report; (2) conduct a similar update to the 2011 Climate Change Preparedness Plan that focused on adaptation and resilience, and both progress reports will be combined into one report that is due to the Governor by January 15, 2021; and (3) an inventory of state assets that are vulnerable to climate change, no deadline in the Executive Order but hoped to be completed by the end of 2021.
- Mr. Albis also mentioned that a draft Table of Contents (TOC) for the combined report has been forwarded to all Working Group Co-chairs, and the full GC3 will discuss it at the March meeting. The TOC lays out which Working Group is responsible for which portion of the deliverables.
- Commissioner Dykes pointed out that there are several Working Groups which James is coordinating, and it's important to let each know what their individual responsibilities will be for the final report and how their work with feed into each other. The Financing Adaptation Working Group's section could ultimately include a summary of financing mechanisms; some near-term, medium-term, and long-term prioritizations; some recommendations if legislative authority is needed; support for municipal efforts; highlight models from other states; and identify areas that are ripe for activity.
- The Commissioner also suggested that the Working Group determine how it should interact with other Working Groups. This Working Group is charged with finding financing for measures, and those measures might be identified by the other Working Groups. For example, there might be financing mechanisms that address carbon sequestration in forestry, so should this Working Group interact with the Natural and Working Lands Working Group so they can share what their needs are?
- The Commissioner also emphasized that the Equity/Environmental Justice lens is an important part of all Working Groups' efforts. The first meeting of the Equity and Environmental Justice Working Group is tonight (February 25, 2020) and as all Working groups progress through their work it's important to be thoughtful of how we connect with and support vulnerable communities. There is also economic development activity and job creation associated with investments in resilience.

- Mr. Albis then discussed the overall timeframe to meet the January 15, 2021 deadline for submitting the final report, all Working Groups need to complete their portions of the report by the end of August 2020 to provide for public comment and feedback in the fall, to allow for revision in November and December to address public comment and be completed for submittal in January 2021.

Review of 2016 Resilience Financing Options White Paper

Facilitated by Rebecca French, DOH and Wayne Cobleigh, GZA

- Dr. French and Wayne Cobleigh presented slides that highlighted the findings of the Resilience Financing Options White Paper. The slides are available on the GC3 WG webpage. Dr. French mentioned that much of the information in the white paper remains relevant today and will be useful in the Working Group's final report. She mentioned that Resilient Rhody referenced this white paper.
- The presentation spurred much discussion about projects that other cities are undertaking. Miami and San Francisco are two of the only cities undertaking resiliency projects without the use of disaster funds; the majority of resilience work is tied to federal disaster dollars. The Mill River project in Stamford is an example of a Tax Increment Financing District project that reduced flooding and improved access to the river. Curt Johnson suggested the Mill River project coordinator as a future presenter to the Working Group.
- Other discussions focused on benefit assessments, bonding, resilience requirements for public wastewater treatment facilities, FEMA flood insurance and financing home purchases without the need for it, vulnerable communities, and municipal tax appraisal methodology and risk considerations.
- Commissioner Dykes stressed that Connecticut's economic competitiveness vis a vis other coastal states is improved through building resilience.

Discussion of CPACE Resilience Proposal

Facilitated by Bryan Garcia, CT Green Bank

- Brian Garcia presented on the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy program. Although primarily a mitigation program, CPACE can act as a model for financing adaptation strategies.
- Commissioner Dykes highlighted the importance of measuring avoided costs.

Discussion on Resilience and Ratings Agencies

Facilitated by Bettina Bronisz, Office of the Treasurer

- Ms. Bronisz indicated that the state's bond offering document will be updated over the next year and needs to incorporate more information on climate change. The ratings agencies are now asking about the climate change issues facing the state, what mechanisms Connecticut has in place for shoreline resiliency, etc.
- Commissioner Dykes joked that she is both alarmed and excited that those questions are being asked, and acknowledged that Connecticut has made significant progress but there is still work to be done, and this stresses that resilience investment will help to improve the state's bond rating.

- Ms. Bronisz quoted a Fitch agency report that highlights the significant percentage of other state's budgets (CA, FL, TX, MA, OR) that are earmarked for climate projects. She will circulate the report to the Working Group (which will be available on the GC3 WG webpage once received).
- Other points discussed focused on Green Bonds being rebranded as Climate Bonds, rating agency metrics such as the percentage of population that returns if they leave the state due to a natural disaster, mitigation against extreme weather risks, bonds for nature-based resiliency, and the need to identify "shovel-ready" projects to better secure funding.

Discussion on Goals and Strategy for the Working Group

Facilitated by Co-Chairs

- Commissioner Dykes encouraged the Working Group to push forward, design a schedule for future meetings, identify other presentations of interest, and keep members informed about upcoming events, workshops, conferences, legislation, and to coordinate through James Albis.
- Commissioner Dykes also suggested that the Working Group reach out to the Council of Small Towns and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

Public Comments

- None were received.

Next Steps and Adjourn

- Commissioner Dykes again thanked everyone for attending.
- The next Working Group meeting date, place, and time will be determined.
- The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.