
**Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)
Equity and Environmental Justice Working Group
MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date: June 1, 2021

Meeting Time: 4:30 - 6:00 pm

Meeting Location: Zoom

RECORDING

https://ctdeep.zoom.us/rec/share/RalGANjAHkOk_LFvsUcVjyl0SH8SigejIAIV6sKb3hVE6bhkYKxP8cl9rj9e7j4q.MpZT1lWlt6vBx56L?startTime=1622579934000

ATTENDANCE

Name	Present
Lee Cruz, chair of EEJ	√
Mark Mitchell, chair, EEJ & Adaptation Subcommittee	√
Alex Rodriguez, chair, EEJ Public Participation Subcommittee	√
Sena Wazer, co-chair, EEJ Mitigation Subcommittee	√
Brenda Watson, co-chair, EEJ Mitigation Subcommittee	√
Edith Pestana	√
Rebecca French	√
Alanis Allen	√
Ehren Meisinger	√
Wayne Cobleigh	√
Thomas Swarr	√
Kevin Grigg	√
Paul Hearn	√
Denise Savageau	√
Kate Donatelli	√
Starley Arias	√
Chris Donnelly	√
Gina Calabro	√
Scott Burns	√
Joanne Balaschak	√
Aicha Woods	√
Harrison Nantz	√
Michele Helou	√
Shannon Laun	√
Michael Malmrose	√
Natalie Braswell	√
Mike Morrissey	√
Lynne Bonnett	√
Nora Massie	√
Andrew Hoskins	√
Doris Johnson	√
Shubhada Kambli	√
Ian Reilly	√
Ann Pratt	√
Carmela Garofalo	√
Eni Katrini	√
Kathleen Schomaker	√

Dan Ryan	√
Aaron Goode	√
Diana Nguyen	√
Emma Kaye	√
Stephanye Clarke	√
Rose Croog	√
Peter Alexander L.A.	√
Desiree Miller	√
Patricia Taylor	√
Anthony Cherolis	√
Leticia Colon	√
Jarred Miles	√
Kristin Barendregt-Ludwig	√
Mary Pelletier	√
Katie Lund	√
Alexander Herpst	√
S Guha	√
Nicole Wong	√
Nefeli Bompoti	√
Phone Number 1	√
Phone Number 2	√
Phone Number 3	√

AGENDA & NOTES

Welcome

Lee Cruz opens the meeting.

1. GC3- Related Legislative Update and Status of Funding for Public Participation at DEEP (GC3 Recommendation #1), Presented by Rebecca French, DEEP

Rebecca gives a brief presentation on GC3 implementation taking place through the legislative process.

Rebecca: We've been looking at the recommendations from the phase 1 report and cross-referencing Legislative proposals that made it out committee that were closely aligned with the recommendations, but this is not an exhaustive list

SB884: this is a very important bill to provide a source of funding for transportation in Connecticut. It aligns with GC3 Recommendation #3 prioritizing mitigation and vulnerable communities and recommendation number 21 funding for transportation electrification and transit infrastructure. We have previous webinars that go into the topic in detail. So I'm just focusing on the status of the bill itself. It moved out of the Environment Committee and I have been informed that the likely path forward for this bill is to be part of the budget, but this is a really critical week for that.

SB 882 is our Climate Mitigation and Home Energy Affordability bill. This would codify the zero-carbon energy supply by 2040 goal. We have not seen any movement outside of it getting moved out of the Energy and Technology Committee. It is waiting for its first vote in the Senate

SB 356, an Energy Efficient Retrofit Grant Program for Affordable Housing, passed out of committee and was passed out of the Senate

SB 856, an act increasing representation on the Energy Conservation Management Board, there hasn't been much movement on this one but voted out of committee

HB6572, the establishment of energy use building standards for voluntary adoption. This has not been acted on

SB 881, An Act Concerning Workforce Development, this bill is awaiting votes

SB931, AAC Emissions Standards for Medium and Heavy Duty Vehicles, awaiting a vote in the Senate

HB 6442, AAC Equitable Access to Broadband, this bill is on the House calendar

HB6409, the Solicitation of Biogas Injection Proposals from Anaerobic Digestion Facilities, aligned with GC3 Recommendation #42 this one has reported out of committee favorably but is awaiting a vote in the house

HB 6441, AAC Climate Change Adaptation, aligns with ten GC3 Recommendations. This bill was reported favorably out of the Environment Committee then amended on the house floor. It does not include a conveyance fee and it is awaiting a vote in the Senate.

HB 6385, AAC enhancements to certain agricultural programs which includes urban and non-traditional farming practices as indicated purposes for Department of Agriculture transition and viability grants, no further action has been taken on this bill

HB6647, AAC Geographic Information Systems, establishes a GIS Officer position, has not received a vote in the house

Sb971, AAC the State Treasurer and Climate Change and Coastal Resiliency Reserve aligns with GC3 Recommendation #56.

HB 6571, The Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program, this bill expands eligibility for the Green Bank's C-PACE Program and passed out of the House with bipartisan support.

2. The Equitable Energy Efficiency (E3) Process, Presented by Rose Croog and Kate Donatelli, DEEP

Rose Croog: DEEP launched E3 back in October 2020 to improve programs and make sure monetary benefits and carbon avoidance benefits harnessed equitably across Connecticut residents and businesses.

Explains E3 development timeline starting with Public Comment Period from Sept 2020 to October 2020 and turned comments into recommendations for Phase 1 Draft Determination released in May 2021.

Included in draft determination was vision statement, 8 recommendations and action items, prompts for public commenters to follow.

E3 Phase 1 process was launched with draft phase 1 determination and followed up by a public technical meeting and a public input session. June 18 is the deadline for public comment which will be used for the final determination to be released in July.

In response to chat question: Our draft determination doesn't hit too much on workforce development or green jobs in particular. That isn't to say that DEEP isn't doing other things to improve workforce development.

Kate Donatelli: E3 vision is some guiding principles we want to keep in mind as we move forward and is also subject to public comment.

Put the core concepts of equity from the phase 1 GC3 report at the start of the draft determination.

Review Alignment between GC3 work and E3 recommendations through an overview of the E3 draft determination recommendations:

1. Utilize outside expertise and recruit a more diverse Board to embed equity in decision-making
2. Create a plan for effectively assessing C & LM programs funds (aligns with GC3 #2,3)
3. Develop metrics and goals to assess equitable distribution of C & LM program funds (#3,#7a)
4. Assess program participation among moderate-income customers and the extent to which energy efficiency programs meet their needs (#3,7c)
5. Streamline the eligibility process for low-income programs (#7a)
6. Develop outreach plans for high-need or high-impact populations (#7g, 8a, 8b)
7. Support efforts to address energy efficiency and health and safety barrier mitigation (#7c)
8. Minimize the impact of HES and HES-IE landlord approval requirement and address barriers to participation among renters (#7c)

If you think these comparisons are off base or see areas with further alignment we would be happy to know.

3. Solar Incentives for Multifamily Units, Presented by Desiree Miller, Connecticut Green Bank

Solar financing opportunities from multifamily properties

Desiree Miller, Connecticut Green Bank: There are three core programs that can be used by multifamily housing: (1) Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is solar owned and maintained by Green Bank on customers property, (2) Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE): Loan for energy efficiency and/or solar, (3) Loans Improving Multifamily Efficiency (LIME) is a loan energy efficiency and/or solar and loans are repaid using cash flow from estimated energy and O&M cost savings of the project.

Will focus on the PPA for this presentation.

There are both federal and Connecticut based incentives.

Solar panel energy generation should be slightly under consumption. PPAs are 20-year contracts and will stay at a flat-rate. Value of this agreement is cost savings

4. Announcement of In-Person Community Workshop in New London, Presented by Rebecca French, DEEP

Briefly talks about a New London public engagement workshop tentatively scheduled for early/mid July that will be held in Fort Trumbull State Park. The planning process is still underway and no date has been set for the workshop.

Also briefly talks about funds for microgrid and resilience grant and loan program in the Governor's budget and what DEEP can do to allow for compensation and support for public meetings.

Edith: Briefly gives update on EJ mapping tool and that funding has been found but contractual negotiations are still ongoing.

Public Comments

Mike Morissey: there's been a lot going on with the last couple of months regarding propane powered school buses and I thought the group should be aware of that. Nationally, in early April, Columbia, South Carolina announced that it was be going to purchase an additional 235 school buses to run on propane. In May, Cypress Fairbanks an independent school district in Houston, Texas announced that it was going to purchase an additional 270 school buses as well. That will expand their fleet of propane powered school buses to 336. Locally, in early May student transportation news magazine announced that it had awarded the board of education of Norwalk with a small private fleet award for replacing all of the 65 diesel powered buses with propane powered ones. In Connecticut we now have over 700 school buses that are operating on propane and in a normal year they're equipped to protect over 50,000 kids a day from diesel harm. Last week Roush tech, who is the OEM outfitter for Bluebird Boston and Ford motors announced that with its most recent delivery and school buses, to the city of Boston. The city is now operating 425 school buses in this city of Boston as we speak. The city also announced that it intends to replace the last 300 buses operating on diesel fuel to operate on propane. So clearly the City of Boston which is local news is going to have the largest fleet of propane powered school buses in the nation, which is going to exceed Omaha, Nebraska which has 435 school buses

operating today. Locally, the city of Hartford which is an underserved and overburdened community has a unique opportunity to better protect students from a diesel emissions. With no investment in infrastructure costs Hocon gas has recently installed and is now operating an 18,000-gallon propane gas dispenser at the travel center. What's unique about this location is that one of the school bus sheds that houses the Thomas built diesel buses operated by the city are and across the way on the other side of I-91 that's where the balance of the buses are stored. I know that Shubhada and Dr. Mitchell you're participating in this call. We've been reaching out and we'd love the opportunity to talk to you about the unique opportunities the city has got with no infrastructure costs to improve the environment around the buses, that the kids ride every day and that concludes my comments, thank you very much.

Mary Pelletier: I asked kind of the same question that that Leticia asked earlier is, how can we make sure that stakeholders would be involved in the planning. Is there any way that the funding would stipulate involvement because a lot of times you know the municipalities their planners seem to decide what to do without really going through you know into conversations with the communities? There's still a lot of top down at the municipal level and a lot of the planners don't even live or have lived in the cities, you know, for very long.

Lee Cruz: There's two parts to the answer to your question, the first is how we get people into the proverbial room whether it's a real room or real park hopefully and collect the information and then how did we incentivize the planners to incorporate that information on the first part. We have had a series of meetings with the help of the Yale law school students and university of Vermont students, we were able to get in for me, we were able to get information in part because of a lot of hard work they did building relationships using relationships of those of us who already have them out in the Community, in my case in new haven, we also provided a gift card for food as well as contribution to organizations and small nonprofits that helped us to gather people up.

Mary Pelletier: And I have to say I think you've done an outstanding job of the outreach like all these workshops and I think this is outstanding. And I appreciate, I appreciate it, but the then the hard one is trying to get the funding for the recommendations and then the next is also funding I know there's it's a heavy lift just to get the funding to the program but is this, it sounds like there's some the 30 million for the perhaps for Community resiliency planning could make a huge difference right but I mean I'm guessing it'll you know and, it seems like a lot of these really progressive funds have just gone to this kind of the same. You know I'm not seeing them on the ground, even though I do see a lot of groundwork let's put it that way, and = is there any plans for trying to get a planning process to not just have the same planners who supposedly respond to the all the questions, but that you actually include people in the planning process.

Rebecca French: Thanks for the question Mary, so I did put in the chat a little bit about what the statute allows us to do so, the statute did allow nonprofits and academics to apply for funds, so I think that was at least one part of your question so previously when it was just the micro grid program it municipalities where the only eligible entities, so that it made a lot of sense, for you to have some issues described to expand that to academic and

nonprofit. It also requires the state to prioritize vulnerable communities in the program it does not go further in saying how that should be done, but it does require that they be prioritized. And so, I would say that, where we are now is learning from all the discussions, we've had in the Governor's Council on climate change, learning from all of our experience to date on climate planning. That can inform what the department now has to do in designing a RFP for those funds. And I just didn't note that for folks because this is a big change from GC3 phase one in 2020 when our President was Trump and now, we're in GC3 phase 2 in 2021 and our President is Biden, and that is a huge difference in climate policy if you haven't noticed. And so you know, an announcement made by President Biden last week was that he was going to be doubling the amount of funds available for the theme of Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program.

Lee Cruz: I would just add that, on a much smaller scale, one need only look to certain government officials I'm sure some of you know who they are around the state. Also, we have Community foundations around the state. I happen to work at one, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven have made a commitment to the issues of equity and government, not so much, but nonprofits should look at who are the funders in their area and find out if the already offering assistance, which of course includes money from a Community foundation to help with the cost of gatherings that deal with the issues, specifically that limit the ability of people of color in general, and anyone with difficulties with transportation language childcare needs to cover those costs. It's a new day in awareness about this. Community foundation's I know this to be true at ours, as well as Hartford and Fairfield county so reach out to your local funders and if it's not a funder who's doing this challenge them ask them why they're not addressing issues of equity and facilitating people having an opportunity to participate to provide to eliminate basically the barriers to participation.

Lee Cruz adjourns the meeting.

Chat Record

00:17:59 Lee Cruz: Greetings to all.

00:22:10 Edith Pestana: Thank you all for joining us today!

00:22:27 Anthony Cherolis: Elsa Nunez, ECSU just had a great op-ed on the cap-and-invest Transportation and Climate Initiative.
<https://www.ctpost.com/opinion/article/Opinion-State-must-lead-way-in-taking-on-carbon-16210333.php>

00:23:28 Harrison Nantz: Hey all - Harry Nantz here from DEEP to help answer legislative process questions

00:23:50 Jarred Miles: When will the recording for this meeting be posted? I'm afraid I have to sign off for another work matter.

00:24:09 Edith Pestana: Yes the recording will be posted

00:24:33 Leticia Colon: Zero carbon emissions is not the same as zero carbon generation which would actually protect our health and ensure that we lower carbon emissions locally.

00:24:34 Mark Mitchell: There will be a press event and rally on Transportation Climate Initiative at the capitol on Friday at 11:30am

00:24:39 Shubhada Kampli: If folks don't know, there's a rally for TCI-P and racial justice at the capitol building lawn after a press conference at 11:30 am on Friday.

00:25:13 Leticia Colon: HB356 is critical in the Equity work. with out this we can not reach the LMI communities.

00:25:17 Anthony Cherolis: Yes. June 4th rally supporting TCI. Invite everyone!
<https://www.facebook.com/events/143104184478244>

00:25:55 Alex Rodriguez: If you're a Medical/Healthcare professional and you support health equity through reduced emissions, please sign on to this letter in support of TCI
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1eCLSCeZ9fGLQEFETmoAMYaXvJMOUBqcAtBkIzwXRzyw/viewform?ts=60a56162&edit_requested=true&fbclid=IwAR3ZomDMQJ6mBkHrA6a_oA_8fNjoaWixkgqtPkmVfpvIQbHBXiXfD_88U-s

00:26:14 Alex Rodriguez: I will send final sign-ons to House and Senate leadership on June 8th

00:29:55 lynne bonnett: is anyone having trouble with the connection?

00:30:31 Doris Johnson: Lynn, no trouble on my end

00:34:09 Leticia Colon: Does HB6441 expand the Green Bank to also include people of color in the planning process? How will state change the conversation to ensure POC's are able to influence how any of these investments will be made in our communities?

00:39:42 Ann Pratt: I am also interested in hearing the answer to Leticia's question in the chat.

00:46:17 Kate Donatelli: E3 webpage:
<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Energy/Conservation-and-Load-Management/Equitable-Energy-Efficiency>

00:47:20 Shubhada Kampli: Curious about whether the E3 Draft Determination proceedings ever considered green jobs / workforce development as a key approach to increasing household income and therefore, sustainably reducing energy burden in conjunction with programs like HES-IE and Solar for All?

00:47:23 Kathleen Schomaker: Regret I have to leave for another meeting. thanks for this update and I will access the recording.

00:52:41 Rebecca French: @leticia Colon and Ann Pratt. I will reach out to Bryan Garcia with your question. My review of the legislation in the Green Bank-related section are that there is no specific mention of the issue you bring up in the statutory language. I know the Green Bank is required by the statute to put forward a plan ahead of establishing the Environmental Infrastructure Fund. I think that planning process is supposed to take one year. This plan could be where procedures for representation can be addressed.

00:53:08 Brenda Watson: I have to jump off as well. Thank you for this update.

00:54:46 Rebecca French: elsewhere in HB6441 under the climate resilience and erosion control board expansion to include resilience, the statute requires the board to report on how they are prioritizing vulnerable communities, including environmental justice communities.

01:01:40 Rebecca French: LIHEAP = low income home energy assistance program - federal funds

01:02:35 Wayne Cobleigh: Biden Administration climate budget is proposing \$1.4 billion for environmental justice initiatives. State's E3 program vision should be consistent with federal program to allow maximum use of federal funds.

01:03:46 Rebecca French: ARP = American Recovery Plan (Covid recovery dollars that Governor has proposed to be used for energy retrofits and addressing indoor health issues that can be barriers to energy efficiency programs)

01:03:59 Ann Pratt: Thank you

01:04:16 Gina Calabro: I have to jump off but great updates- will be sharing with our Committee on the Environment and Energy Efficiency group. Will the link to the recording be sent to attendees?

01:05:11 Rebecca French: @Gina Calabro - yes will send link to recording

01:07:23 Patricia Taylor - EHHI: To Wayne Cobleigh's good point, see in particular pages 9 and 10/58 at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FY2022-Discretionary-Request.pdf>

01:09:56 Kate Donatelli: Wayne and Patricia - thank you for that suggestion.

01:14:09 Denise Savageau: We should develop programs where we can maximize solar on residential and not underestimate electric needs. The economic model should be fixed to work to maximize GHG reductions.

01:16:19 Mark Mitchell: What happens to the solar array after the 20 years?

01:16:55 lynne bonnett: still no program for small 2- unit multifamily houses in New Haven.

01:17:32 lynne bonnett: 2-4 unit multifamily homes in New Haven

01:17:34 Peter Alexander L.A.: Are you familiar with RCRA Resource Conservation Recovery Act ?

01:18:47 Wayne Cobleigh: We should look into NGO's who are getting grants from the Bezos Earth Fund. From press release about the fund's new CEO Andrew Steer: One key focus of the \$10 billion Earth Fund, which Jeff Bezos hopes to "spend down" between now and 2030, will be around climate change's impacts on "poor and marginalized communities," Steer said.

Andrew Steer's appointment as CEO in March 2021 comes as Bezos is slated to step down as CEO of Amazon later this year, turning the helm over to AWS CEO Andy Jassy. Bezos is expected to turn more of his attention to projects like the Earth Fund.

01:19:31 Alex Rodriguez: Wooahoo! An in-person event! :)

01:19:45 Wayne Cobleigh: yes

01:20:00 Lee Cruz: Desiree,

01:20:08 Stephanye Clarke: Is there a date/time yet? How will that information get to community members here in NL?

01:21:55 Desiree Miller: The solar PPA equipment has a 20 year life. At end of 20 year term, Green Bank will remove the system

01:23:32 Mary Pelletier: will the funding for planning be allocated to municipalities or will there be a stipulation that progressive non-profits lead the process?

01:24:08 lynne bonnett: oh great news Edith, thank you.

01:24:30 Patricia Taylor - EHHI: Fantastic news on the EJ Screening Tool Map, Edith!

01:24:36 Lee Cruz: Have you looked into sharing information about the solar panel program via Community Foundations. Community Foundations fund a good number of the 501(c)3 nonprofits in CT and hence have contact info. Contact me at lcruz@cfgnh.org if you would like to discuss this.

01:25:28 Mary Pelletier: congratulations ! for finding funding for E.J. mapping tool

01:26:34 Rebecca French: @stephanye Clarke. No date/time yet. We look forward to working with you to get the agenda, date and time set.

01:26:55 Rebecca French: ...and getting the word out.

01:27:23 Mark Mitchell: Propane is a fossil fuel and will contribute to global warming. We need to move to electric buses.

01:27:28 Stephanye Clarke: ok. I need to sign off for another meeting -- looking forward to the update.

01:28:14 Shubhada Kambl: The federal government has plans to update EJScreen with the Climate and Environmental Justice Tool to inform equitable decisionmaking around its Justice40 Initiative. It sounds like the state's efforts will be complementary to - and hopefully integrated with - that.

01:28:17 Alex Rodriguez: @Mike Morrissey In CT we have also introduced the first electric transit bus in Bridgeport and the first electric school bus in Middletown.

01:28:31 Denise Savageau: Urban soil health program June 18 - hosted by Soil and Water Conservation Society -Southern New England Chapter
<https://swcssnec.org/2021-summer/>

01:29:01 Katie Lund: Can you indicate in the chat what the New London meeting date is? Sorry I missed that date in the public meeting update.

01:29:08 Alex Rodriguez: CT DOT is seeking funding from US DOT for funding to replace 10 diesel buses with 10 electric transit buses.

01:29:34 Alanis Allen: @Katie Lund no meeting date yet, but will keep everyone updated

01:29:45 Rebecca French: @mary pelletier the statute passed in the special session in 2020 expands the applicants for the microgrid and resilience grant and loan pilot program to allow academic and non-profits to apply.

01:31:57 Anthony Cherolis: Has the proposed bill that would require an equity study of the CT CHEAPR EV Rebate Program been discussed? That proposed bill would also define a much more affordable e-bike as a 'battery electric vehicle' that could then be considered for a low-to-moderate income pilot incentive program.

https://cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&bill_num=HB06485&which_year=2021

01:33:42 Edith Pestana: There will be a press release regarding the Mapping Tool hopefully this summer- Stay Tuned! No surprise that the White House is putting resources in the EJ Screen- there are many members of EJ organizations that now work for the Biden Administration.

01:36:52 Anthony Cherolis: Relative to the state's air pollution (important for disproportionate health impacts) reduction and ghg reduction goals, I'd like to understand better why CT DEEP felt that it was important that the overview bullet item relative to 'vehicle miles traveled (VMT)' is worded such that the state is allowing for increasing, polluting low occupancy VMT to increase year after year until 2030. The transportation working group, including myself from an equity and public health perspective recommended a goal for reducing VMT by 5% by 2030. The wording pushed by CT DEEP was "Eliminate growth in Vehicle Miles Traveled by 2030." That is a very different goal than a 5% decrease by 2030, and would encourage CT DOT to continue expanding interstates and funding projects for another 9 years that encourage more driving and sprawl.

01:38:46 Mark Mitchell: Do foundations offer EJ grants?

01:39:23 Alex Rodriguez: Thanks everyone!