

CEEJAC Meeting
9/27/22
5:30pm-7:30pm

Question/Comment: Guidelines are needed for the timing of notifying the public of the CEEJAC presentations and interim meetings and how people can sign up for the CEEJAC list

Introductions

Rebecca French (DEEP, Climate Office):

- Rollout of the DEEP Climate Resilience Fund
 - o [DEEP Climate Resilience Fund \(ct.gov\)](#)
 - o new program at DEEP, backed by State Bond Funds
 - o Provides grants to help communities plan for the impacts of Climate Change and to help with climate resilience development projects
 - o Final deadline Dec 1
 - o Planning track deadline: Nov 10
 - o A link to the slides for a full overview will be posted on Friday (9/30)
 - o Webinar this Friday (9/30/22) with more information on deadlines
 - o Office hours every Friday for getting questions answered on how to apply
 - o Entities to apply partnerships encouraged
 - Eligible parties: municipalities, councils of government, nonprofit organizations, academic, and private sectors
 - o Application deadline for the Project Development component:
 - early decision: Oct 21
 - final deadline: December 1
 - o Sara Watson (DEEP) is the main point of contact for this program
 - sarah.watson@ct.gov
 - o The legislature allocated funding for this project
- Questions:
 - o Will there be supports provided by DEEP staff to assist disadvantaged populations?
 - o How will the grant process utilize equity lens?
 - o Are there metrics to ensure areas without support in the past will receive grants from this program?
 - o How will the governor's executive order on equity apply to these grants?
- Answer: There will be a program launching soon that addresses all these questions
- Comment:
 - o Importance of community engagement, providing support for people who have not had the opportunity to directly engage, allowing access/participation in decision making process
 - o Unintentional bias
- Question: How can we address the perception of the community that there is exclusionary bias in the decision-making process of these grant programs?

Pareesa Charmchi Goodwin (Executive Director at the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health - Connecticut General Assembly)

- Environmental Justice and Environmental Health plan
 - o Commission will be creating a strategic plan, with policy analysis and recommendations
 - Robust stakeholder and community engagement process to inform the visioning and priorities of the plan
 - o Pareesa will send a description of the commission to Annie Decker

Follow Up Discussion: Information Session on Flooding, Flood Zones, and Jurisdiction Sept. 13, 2022

Overview of Topics from Sept 13, 2022:

- List of CT's Major Hurricanes and Tropical Storms in the past decade
- Definitions of Floodplain and 100-Year Storm
- National Flood Insurance Program compliance
- Connecticut is highly developed in the floodplain
- Discussion about Bassick High School building proposal
 - o Discussed how much of the decision-making process is local level or state level
 - o How can CEEJAC enhance public participation?
- Bassick is proposing to raise the elevation of the high school above the floodplain
 - o Comment: Siting schools/flood zones in ways that exacerbate environmental injustices and environmental racism
 - No environmental impact study was required by the state for this project
 - State is enabling a sub-standard provision for building on a floodplain where Black and Brown children go to school
- Questions/Comments in Chat:
 - o [U.S. EPA launches environmental justice office | Reuters](#) (article)
 - o "Does DEEP have a way of prioritizing brownfield grants for polluted properties that are in high-risk flood zones?"
 - o "Environmental Justice Equity - How will we engage the community to ensure the least of us is supported in our communities? Flooding beyond the shoreline— when basements flood, we lose heat as well as grow mold. This is the same as redlining- People get harmed by poverty as they have no power - no voice- and have no way to fix those issues afterwards."
 - "Daycare centers and elderly housing are not being considered in state's ICAST (Weatherization) program"
- Comment in Chat:
 - o "The CT Post reported that there are insufficient funds to complete the Resilient Bridgeport flood hazard prevention measures. This school, sitting on a manmade hill, will be surrounded by flooded land, roads, and houses."
- Question in chat:
 - o "\$100,000,000 of state financial assistance is being spent to build a school (Bassick High School) for Black & Brown children in a flood zone. Why is the state not providing the \$30,000,000 the Department of Housing needs for Resilient Bridgeport to protect that very same neighborhood - an entire neighborhood - from flooding? What are the state's priorities?"

Subcommittees

- Create opportunity to discuss details of specific topics
- Meetings of subcommittees to occur between full CEEJAC meetings

Five subcommittee topics were identified:

- *Land*
 - o Land-use planning, access to open spaces, brownfield remediation
- *Air and Transportation*
 - o Air pollution, clean transportation, clean air programs (rebates for electric, powerplants, waste incinerators, transportation equity issues)
- *Energy & Technology*
 - o Affordable housing, energy retrofits, access to clean energy in EJ communities
- *Water*
 - o Climate resilience, clean water, efforts to address combined sewer overflow
- *Waste*
 - o Closure of MIRA waste facility, the future of our waste system, how to serve EJ communities, address historic environmental racism in EJ communities
- Establish Chairs and Co-Chairs of CEEJAC committee members
 - o The public will be able to join a subcommittee

Comment from Chat (DEEP):

“Here is a recap of some of what Commissioner Dykes touched on in terms of a range of subtopics that the subcommittees could encompass; the slides show some working groups that members expressed initial interest in:

Water: Urban Water Quality; Equitable Access to Urban Waters; Water Quantity and Conservation; Resilience

Land: Brownfields, Urban Forestry, Siting, Permitting, Open Space and Recreation; Heat Islands; Access to Green Spaces

Transportation and Air Quality: EPA rulemaking and guidance; DEEP implementation of CT Clean Air Act (CHEAPR EV program; e-bikes; clean school buses; asthma)

Energy and Technology: Affordable Housing Energy Retrofits, Equitable Participation in Energy Programs, Equitable Deployment of Energy and Broadband Infrastructure, and Siting

Waste: Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging; Recycling”

Question: How can we address GC3 (Governor’s Council on Climate Change) and CEEJAC topic cross-over?

- Whatever is learned from the GC3 meetings should be discussed in the CEEJAC meetings

Comment:

- EPR (Extended Responsibility for Producers) should be included in the Waste Subcommittee

Comment:

- Align *Air* with more than *Transportation*
 - o Talk about air pollution as it relates to more than transportation
 - o Is this confusing/misleading for the public?
 - o Use the CEEJAC process to represent the sources of Air Pollution accurately and concisely, and to emphasize that its source is more than just *Transportation*
- Increased opportunities for the workforce?

DEEP Suggestion:

- CEEJAC can consider hosting a meeting on each of these subcommittee topics over the next six months to work with DEEP on establishing the agenda of each subcommittee

Comment:

- Ordinary people think in terms of issues, not in terms of the departments that DEEP is organized

Comment

- The jargon needs to be understandable for community members
- A subcommittee focus is needed on Outreach and Education

Comment:

- Subcommittee focus on Climate Resilience
 - o Either one subcommittee for Climate Resilience or incorporate Climate Resilience into each subcommittee

Comment/Suggestion (DEEP):

- Organizing community meetings that CEEJAC members and DEEP will participate in
- Developing an agenda for conversation that is relevant to communities

Email Annie Decker, Katie Dykes, or Edith Pestana to join a subcommittee

- annie.decker@ct.gov, katie.dykes@ct.gov, edith.pestana@ct.gov

Comments from Chat:

- "Air and electric generation are very tied together. Air and Asthma, cancer and energy impacts, or Energy and Access- the cost continues to rise. Solar in LMI (low-and-moderate income) communities- as they are selling PPA's in UI and not installing the solar on the roofs. People of Color have not had equal supports for solar or EE, or careers in energy and environment. We sure would like a chance to survive and thrive."
- "Yes, including the impact of parking garages on air quality -- including State funded parking garages. Back in the late 1970's, the Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner recognized parking garages and advocated that they be regulated as point source pollution sources. But that insight wasn't politically supported or implemented."
 - o "Large parking garages that qualify as Major Traffic Generators should be added as 'affecting facilities' under state EJ law."

- “Will CEEJAC members have any place to meaningfully engage in the planning of the state energy C&LM funds (Conservation & Load Management), IRA (Inflation Reduction Act), WAP (Weatherization Assistance Program), EEB (Energy Efficiency Board), CTAC, Workforce, or policy development on cumulative impacts of energy systems, including our 92% fossil fuel grid in our state? How will this voice of CEEJAC meaningfully engage in those larger plans at GC3 mitigation or otherwise?”

CEEJAC Members – Question and Answers

- Announcements on public engagement
 - o Weatherization Assistance Program – bipartisan infrastructure law
 - [Weatherization in Connecticut](#) (website)
 - Public hearing 9/28 10am and 6pm
 - Partner with utility to provide assistance for low-income houses
- Move next CEEJAC meeting from Dec 20 to Dec 13

Public Comments

- A place for Department of Public Health (DPH) staff on each subcommittee
- CEEJAC members will be Chair or Co-Chair
- Joanna Wozniak-Brown – Climate Policy Development Coordinator
 - o Office of Policy and Management
 - o Joanna.wozniak-brown@ct.gov
- Suggestion:
 - o allow subcommittees to meet individually
- <https://efficiencyforall.org/wordpress/empowering-the-community-and-energizing-our-future/>