



## **Connecticut Equity and Environmental Justice Advisory Council (CEEJAC)**

### **Quarterly Meeting Notes**

September 29, 2025

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

**Recording Link:** [ctvideo.ct.gov/deep/CEEJAC\\_Quarterly\\_Meeting\\_Recording-Sept\\_29\\_2025.mp4](https://ctvideo.ct.gov/deep/CEEJAC_Quarterly_Meeting_Recording-Sept_29_2025.mp4)

- I. **Welcome from Sarah Huang**, Director of Equity and Environmental Justice CT DEEP

### II. **Community Dialogues**

#### **Stephanie Phillips, Resident of East Windsor, CT**

East Windsor in the past had classifications of EJ areas – doesn't believe they do currently, but there are some things that are concerning

- o Lives in East Windsor, not fondly thought of as the solar capital of the northeast
- o Residents have signed a petition for gravel pit extension solar field and to stop future siting of solar projects
- o Approximately 1,000 acres of forest and farmlands that are solar fields
- o Lives in new development and within short time after moving in, there was a grid-scale utility next to her neighborhood constructed
- o Have had fires (luckily did not spread to the panels)

East Windsor holds 23% of the state's solar installations out of CT's 169 towns – very disproportional (currently have 7 fields and are slated for more. If salt-box solar is allowed to petition, neighborhood will be completely surrounded by fields. Concerned about the balance and planning of solar development within towns.

#### **Responses:**

- Jayson Velasquez, *CEEJAC Member*, sent link to a CEEJAC Energy & Technology subcommittee meeting about the CT Siting Council ([View Meeting Recording](#)).
- Sarah Huang shared another CEEJAC Energy & Technology subcommittee meeting where folks from New London, Bridgeport, and others met to discuss how cities are navigating solar siting in their towns ([View Meeting Recording](#)).

#### **Mary Pelletier, Resident of Hartford, CT**

Hartford solar panels on roofs and Olmstead Ave can be very beneficial, but the community tends not to be included in discussions. There is a lot of fragmentation during the process. For example, right after finishing management plan, the City [of Hartford] received money from DEEP for bicycle trail/trails network. This area is an example of where all of the factors like water quality, space, flooding etc. converge, and none of it has been coordinated because the planning is too siloed. These trails cannot be built like one lane roads without addressing the whole picture of environmental issues that converge in an 18 sq mile city that received 78 sq miles of drainage. Need to synthesize the planning and DEEP (as the funder) to stop giving money to siloed projects without insisting on understanding how these different parts (flooding, water quality, etc.) are being considered in the planning. Frustrated because she's been saying this for years. Doesn't want to be stuck with parking lots that never get refurbished that are above the flood plains

**Alex Rodriguez, CEEJAC Member**

[Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund](#) (LISCIF) as a potential opportunity for smaller entities (communities, organization) to receive money and assistance in light of the lack of other funding available to support projects

**Response:**

- Mark Mitchell, CEEJAC Co-Chair: LISCIF is requiring full proposals, not just letter of intent as Alex identified but, they do offer assistance with applications

**Kimberly Stoner**

I am part of an organization with people from Northeastern CT – have been very active in opposing the incinerator scheduled to be built in Plainfield, which is an EJ Community. I heard that permits had been acquired with people in Plainfield (including the town itself) fighting it and I'm wondering how this is happening in environmental justice community.

**Response:**

**Edith Pestana, Environmental Justice Program Specialist, CT DEEP**

- Just because a community is an environmental justice community, it doesn't mean that something can't be built there; it just means that there is an extra engagement requirement.

**Jamieson Sinclair, Air Engineering Division Director, CT DEEP**

- Air and waste permits application submitted, but they have not yet been reviewed
- There are some pieces of the permit that need to be approved by EPA before DEEP can approve any other piece of this
- Because this would be an affecting facility in an environmental justice community, there is an ability to seek agreement with facility as an EJ community
- The public can request a public informational hearing (easier) or adjudication hearing (difficult, part of appeals process). Plainfield has already achieved intervener status which puts them in position to request an adjudication hearing more readily.

**Mark Mitchell, CEEJAC Co-Chair**

- If/when DEEP makes its permit determination, there is an appeals process, although it is very difficult to do so

**III. Subcommittee Breakout Sessions**

**IV. Report on Breakout Sessions**

**a. General CEEJAC Room**

- i. Writing CEEJAC in State Law
- ii. Adding Native Americans in EJ Community Definition
- iii. Need for more funding opportunities for EJ Issues
- iv. Need for community notification process on new development plans and changes on those development plans as they are occurring; currently there is no opportunity to provide input

**b. Air & Transportation**

- i. Identify authentic community participation in Community Air Monitoring for workforce development and building capacity in environmental education
- ii. Build upon DOT's Reduced transit-fare legislation that didn't pass in 2025; identify funding sources that can bolster this program
- iii. Work with Air Bureau to expand GMAP's availability in other priority areas of the state
- iv. Identify funding opportunities for community air monitoring

**c. Energy & Technology**

- i. Develop a template that makes providing Public Comments on DEEP or State plans more accessible
- ii. Engage on the Cumulative Impacts Regulations for EJ Law
- iii. Provide recommendations for energy efficiency programs such as HES-IE or programs aimed at multifamily household owners
  1. Develop education materials for renters to discuss energy efficiency programming with their landlords
- iv. Develop model for community engagement that builds upon existing stakeholder networks to communicate programmatic or relevant updates
  1. Example: new eBike laws went into effect for the state; CHEAPR program could use their existing network of eBike voucher recipients to communicate about these changes and potential impacts

**d. Waste**

- i. Visit cities to learn about the history of pollution and concerns from local residents and neighbors
- ii. Develop tools for the public that show how to submit complaints and how local, state, and federal governments respond

iii. Develop a Good Neighbor Policy

**e. Water**

- i. Learn about DEEP's financial focus and synergy for projects requested and what is being implemented
- ii. Work with DEEP on showcasing the uses of multiple funding opportunities that can address community needs, such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund

**f. Land**

- i. Work with DEEP on the updated Green Plan
- ii. Develop public engagement guidelines for Solar Siting in EJ Communities

**V. Upcoming Meetings**

**a. CEEJAC Air & Transportation Meeting: Air Bureau Open House and Community-Based Work**

Thursday, October 9, 2025 | 10:45 AM - 1:30 PM

**Location: 9 Windsor Ave. Windsor, CT**

[Registration Link](#)

[Download Meeting Agenda](#)

**b. CEEJAC Energy & Technology Meeting: Learn about CT Green Bank (Virtual)**

Wednesday, October 29, 2025 | 2:30 - 4:00 PM

\*new date and time\*

[Register for Zoom Meeting Link](#)

[Download Meeting Agenda](#)