

Power Generation Advisory Panel Meeting #3

November 5, 2020

Meeting Notes

Attendees

John Rhodes*
Corinne DiDomenico
Annel Hernandez
Betta Broad
Bill Acker
Cecilio Aponte III
Darren Suarez
Emilie Nelson
Jenn Schneider
John Reese
Kit Kennedy
Laurie Wheelock
Lisa Dix
Rory Christian
Shyam Mehta
Stephan Roundtree

Not in Attendance

All panel members were in attendance.

Meeting Notes

- Topic Overview: Methane Leakage and the Natural Gas System
- Emissions Reduction: Near- and Long-term
 - Rory Christian: Asked about the bottom up vs. top down approach. Are some parts of the system leakier than other parts? (Answer: The largest leaks are in the older parts of the system, and utilities don't have a monetary incentive to fix because the customer pays.)
 - Bill Acker: On the methane inventory project, where are emissions coming from? Also, are we looking at the reactivity of Methane? (Answer: Will need to follow up on that question.)
 - Betta Broad: Clarification that 50-70% of new heating systems being on electricity. (John Reese: This also assumes we are at 70% renewable energy at 2030.)
 - John Reese: Yes, Pathways shows that this is correct. When to make a decision on repair a leak or not?
Rory Christian: Are there regulatory requirements that utilities need to fix them? (Answer: There is a study coming out on that soon. Also, utilities have a regulatory obligation for safety to prioritize and repair leaky pipes.)
 - Kit Kennedy: We need to address in a way that doesn't extend the life of the system and I'm concerned about the language of needing gas for the system. (John Rhodes: That is an important point and we should take it on.)
 - Cecilio Aponte: As Kit mentioned, there are 2 different problems and we need to understand how the problem breaks down. The 2nd question is about the changing inventory standards.
 - Group Decision: We will take on methane leakage as a panel.
- Consideration of Disadvantaged Communities
 - Stephen Roundtree: How do we define benefits? (John Williams: That is still under development.)
- Other Panel Meetings and Power Gen collaboration

- Land Use & Local Government – Emilie Nelson: One of the challenges is that there may be multiple directions our aid could go. For example, on Resilience, NYISO has a lot of information and active work in this area. But, if that’s not the area the group is focused on, then we are not needed. (John Reese: It will depend on what they plan to discuss. If it is on NYC infrastructure, I would like to be involved.)
- John Rhodes: We currently do not have that information. We have 7 potential SMEs to offer them, but will probably only propose 3. Will take discussion offline. John Rhodes to email over the weekend to get 1 more name (+ Emilie Nelson and John Reese) from list. Send final names to LU&LG group.
- Just Transition Working Group – We do not have a cap and can suggest all of them (Bill Acker, Cecilio Aponte, Betta Broad, Jenn Schneider, Darren Suarez. Jenn Schneider: Remove me because Ted Skerpon from IBEW is already on it.
- External Engagement:
 - Consumer groups, EJ groups, Labor groups, maybe Utilities – are there specific groups we would like to engage with, is there a specific way?
 - Bill Acker: Would like to have experts on decarbonization. Is that possible? (John Rhodes: E3 is a state resource on these topics.)
 - By 12:00 on Thursday, November 12, provide names and groups that we should reach out to. If no responses received, will ask the Staff Team to propose options for consideration.
 - 2-Pagers and subgroup meeting coordination times will be going out soon
- Key Issues Discussion
 - Renewables
 - Emilie Nelson: Also important to point out that NYISO studies, connecting renewables pockets to the transmission, in addition to transfers across the state. Even when we consider OSW, delivering that into NYC is even going to be a challenge. Need to increase transmission even for downstate renewables, and how to buildout the connections in downstate.
 - John Reese: Presume “transmission” on the slide encompasses transmission AND distribution. (John Rhodes: Yes.)
 - Kit Kennedy: Additional barriers/issues – NYISO’s Buyer Side Mitigation (BSM) rules increasing costs of renewables, siting and community concerns/opposition are still an issue, and education and community engagement with siting. Access for all, particularly for distributed renewables, is an important issue that ties into equity. Don’t want to get locked into the traditional thinking that lack of space for renewables downstate. There are a lot of innovative projects (ex. Renewable Rikers) and there could be a lot of space downstate that could be available.
 - Darren Suarez: Echoing Kit’s points that there are new and innovative solutions available for siting downstate and potential for large scale renewables (LSR).
 - Lisa Dix: Echoing Kit’s points on BSM and also bring up that accessing storage has been a challenge for NYISO. What are the barriers storage is facing, especially pairing it with renewables. Also puts a question mark on the lack of space issue. The Siting Reform Bill also puts in a lot of good identification of “build-ready” sites. What are they downstate and can we use peaker plant space for renewable energy? Need to dig into barriers related to siting and see if there is enough movement in the new Office of Renewable Energy Siting for project pipelines.
 - Bill Acker: When we get to high levels of renewables, transmission is not a solution. We will have more energy than we need at times. We need to frame the issue as energy deliverability and energy pockets, and include energy storage. Transmission is only one of the issues. There is a lot of misunderstanding out there about space limitations, so it is important that we look at this area at large and not just transmission.
 - Cecilio Aponte: Flagging missing barrier that we don’t see buyer side mitigation. We also don’t talk enough about siting and community engagement.

- Shyam Mehta: CUNY study on amount of rooftop siting potential in NYC – several GW available. Report that will be published soon by Long Island Solar Roadmap Consortium that looks at low impact siting (5-10 GW range). Several Long Island ground projects for solar that are in the pipeline, but are stuck in the interconnection cue due to limited interconnections/distribution. Projects need to pay 100% upfront, and it often kills the new transmission project. Submitting proposal from stakeholders. Some work in the regulatory process, but there is much to do in terms of timelines and moving interconnection projects forward. Property Tax and payments are currently done on a one-off basis and introduce a lot of uncertainty. Need standardization of property tax process.
 - Emilie Nelson: the NYISO did implement storage rules in August that allows storage to participate in the market. Could be useful to discuss the going-forward process.
 - John Rhodes: Will be sending out meeting invite shortly that will allow for advancement of work.
 - Fossil Fuels:
 - John Reese: We need clarity on “peaker resources” because there are many definitions. Most of the gas-fired units are also oil burning units. In the winter, the gas system is inadequate for the electric generation services re: heating, and they often burn oil instead.
 - Rory Christian: A prime question should be “how much longer we will need natural gas”. What do we mean by peaking resources and what kind of fuel will they use?
 - Bill Acker: We are discussing redesigning a system, not redesigning specific pieces of a system. Our system will look entirely different. As we talk about peaker plants, we need to discuss what their role will be and if we will need them as we build up storage and other resources? Can’t just think about how we replace peaker plants with peaker plants but need to consider the whole system.
 - Lisa Dix: Concerned about the constant assumption that we will be relying on gas/gas replacement. But it is my understanding that we are getting to zero carbon by 2040 and it is concerning that we keep relying on fossil gas. A few barriers: the regulatory mess as it relates to gas. It doesn’t appear that the agencies or authorities are having consistency, even about how the CLCPA is being applied. What kind of regulatory consistency is needed so that all authorities and agencies are moving forward in the same direction, including considering the CLCPA in everything. Cost – old/outdated peakers and they are receiving rate payer subsidies in order to keep those running for the capacity markets.
 - Betta Broad: DEC recent study on value of carbon – used the 100yr global warming potential (GWP). What is the timeline for agencies switching to the 20yr GWP? Another study that may already exist – the winter peak question. Do we have a report on what that winter peak will need for electricity?
 - Emilie Nelson: Transition away from fossil fuels – a lot of the challenge is not just a peaking issue but an overall energy production issue. Sustained periods of weather patterns that are not conducive to renewables (low wind, low sun), it is a daily and seasonal cycle issue. With respect to technology that are needed, we need to be mindful that one of the things that we need to do is incentivize innovation, development, new technology, and market solutions. What are the things that we can do to create those incentives? Market signals and incentives incredibly important.
- Equity
 - Laurie Wheelock: Amendment “affordable clean energy solution” can we look through current programs and see if we can modify them, in addition to looking for new solutions. Can we look across all agencies for consistency and communication? Need to look across all levels of the issue and solutions.

- John Reese: Would like to reframe Barriers to Challenges. The costs and their allocation across the board is a critical issue. PSC needs to be involved to getting the rates right and making sure it is not regressive. Peaking generation bullet: Unsure if it's correct after the DEC peaking rule goes into place in 2023 and 2025.
 - Annel Hernandez: Consumer awareness of opportunities should provide more specifics – not just encouraging solar programs, but more community ownership of the process and benefits. Peaking units – despite what John said, it's still a disproportionate burden to these communities.
 - Shyam Mehta: Regarding siting – There is rooftop siting potential in these communities. Backend billing is an administrative issue among utilities, but this is not a technology problem. We should discuss in more detail before concluding it is a challenge.
 - Darren Suarez: Peak generation units – maybe instead of saying “are necessary” say “are currently relied upon” since we may not need them in the future.
 - Lisa Dix: Missing how are we intentionally digging into the evaluation and requirements from the CLCPA. Who is keeping track of this at the state level? Can we get transparency into how these benefits and money is being spent in this area. It would give us a better idea of what is happening now and how much we need to do to get to the 40% requirement under the CLCPA.
 - Kit Kennedy: Second all comments. Peaking units – want to flag the recently announced agreement by NYPA to study the peaking units owned by them that's open to all to look at alternatives. Should we get involved in it or use as a basis. Are peaking units in the city needed? (Annel Hernandez reply: That process would definitely help this conversation.)
 - Betta Broad: Access to clean energy jobs and opportunities. How does this tie into community education and outreach? Statewide public education about the CLCPA and the exciting opportunities for jobs that it has. Especially in schools and schools in disadvantaged communities so that young people can get access to those jobs. Need to invest in people, especially young people.
- Presentation: Impacts of Electrification (E3)
 - We ran out of time and will need to find another time to cover.