

CJWG Meeting Notes

WebEx - 12.09.21

Meeting Commence 2:00pm

Disclaimer: This is a summary, not a word for word translation

Agenda

1. Review DAC Scenario Decisions from Dec.2 Meeting
2. Review low-income household definition
3. Map Review
4. Preparing for DAC Criteria Vote
 - Vote Elements (Break down vote? Multiple scenarios?)
 - What would you like to see/review before a vote?

A) Introductions:

- Welcome Jill Henck! Introduction by Alanah and welcome from CJWG members!
 - Alanah Keddell-Tuckey, EJ Director, Office of Environmental Justice, DEC
 - Jill Henck, Clean Energy Program Director, (ANCA) Adirondack North Country Association
 - Sonal Jessel, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, WEACTION for Environmental Justice
 - Eddie Bautista, Executive Director, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
 - Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director, UPROSE
 - Rahwa Ghirmatzion, Executive Director, PUSH Buffalo
 - Lisa Covert, General Counsel, DEC
 - Elizabeth Cooper, Executive Director of (ANCA) Adirondack North Country Association
 - Chris Coll, Director of Energy Affordability and Equity Program, NYSERDA
 - Neil Muscatiello, Director of the Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology, Center for Environmental Health, DOH
 - Joe McNearney, Director of Stakeholder Engagement, DOL
 - Alex Dunn – Illume Advising, Consultant
 - Amanda Dwelley – Illume Advising, Consultant
 - Abigail McHugh-Grifa, Executive Director for Climate Solutions Accelerator
 - Sameer Ranade, NYSERDA Climate Justice Advisor with Climate Action Council
 - Donathan Brown, Assistant Provost and AVP for Faculty Diversity and Recruitment at the Rochester Institute of Technology
 - Amy Klein, Chief Executive Officer, Capital Roots
 - Jared Snyder, Deputy Commissioner of Climate, Air and Energy, DEC
 - Mary Beth McEwan, Executive Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Oneida County

1) Review DAC Scenario Decisions from Dec. 2

Overview by Alex of proposed scenarios

- Geographic DAC Definition
 - 44 indicators in approach

- scoring approach considers rank statewide
- designate 35% of census tracts as geographic
- Individual criteria
 - individual low income
 - define low income
- Annual evaluation & review
 - reassess criteria
 - evaluate investments geographically

Question from Illume: What does the working group want to see?

❖ **Overview of Slides- Amanda**

- Slide> Income-based individual criteria...
- Slide> How many households might be included...
- Slide> Where are the additional households...
- Slide> Where are high-poverty households...
- Slide> Regional Distribution

Alex: Let's look at maps and be sure we are all in agreement with 35%.

Sonal: Worried that's a lot of area to cover for only 35-40% of funding.

Elizabeth: How will NY city low-income residents be affected? Anything across the board would not be the same in NY city where the cost of living is higher than the rest of NY state.

2) Review Low-income household definition

❖ **Slide: What About Affordable housing?-Chris**

-Discussed multi-family buildings and provided a breakdown of households by income. Percentages of households in multifamily:

- 73% are low-income (<60% SMI)
- 27% are moderate-income (60% SMI-80% AMI)

Many multi-households miss out on benefits such as HEAP. To include them would be beneficial to be sure no one is left behind.

Abigail: Chris are you proposing this instead of the individual criteria?

Chris: I'm proposing this as an addition to the individual criteria.

Abigail: What percent of residents live in NY city

Illume: About 40%

Jill: Chris can you elaborate on the naturally occurring affordable housing option? How did you determine that?

Chris: Clean energy programs now require a certain percent of tenants have incomes below the low-income threshold. ie) If a building owner was not in subsidized category, we NYSEDA, look at other forms of documentation to determine eligibility.

Jill: Wondering if there's a catch-all for multi-family homes not in that rental category.

Chris: That's the challenge we are trying to balance.

Rahwa: Will there be modelling showing us how this will impact residents across the state?

Chris: Maybe we can discuss this further Monday, prior to the vote. I defer to the group.

Question from Illume: How is the group feeling about 50% of the state households, 40% funding component?

Discussion:

Eddie: I appreciate this added element of affordable housing to the mix. Do we have the racial and geographic breakdown? Do we have a demographic breakdown now? How much of the state budget falls under the 35-40%?

Chris: Funding targeted are those dollars are clean energy or energy efficient focused. They would not cover traditional affordable housing expenditures NY state covers.

Rahwa: On the investment side should we make more investments go to these communities if we actually want to show just transition?

Alex: That is a question outside of Mondays vote.

❖ **Slide: Race and Ethnicity by Income Threshold- Amanda**

Overview of 'statewide' vs 'NYC only' for:

- Breakdown of moderate income, low income, and very low income
- Under statewide we see people with incomes between 60% state median income level and 80% state median income level.
- About 41% are bipoc

Illume: Under NYC only, we see people in moderate income. About 2/3 are bipoc growing to 73% at the low-income level. We see 77% at the very low-income level. This information provides context to attempt to answer:

If we expand to include low-income households how many of those would likely be people of color?

Abigail: Chris, are investments in affordable housing happening regardless of whether we include them in our definition?

Chris: There would be a clean energy budget for affordable housing no matter what.

Illume: Temperature check. How is everyone feeling about the individual criteria? For individual criteria let's focus on the low-income household's part.

Discussion

Abigail: I feel comfortable with the current definition. I think our biggest challenge is ensuring money is going to these communities and individuals we are designating. If it's not enough money then it all doesn't matter at the end of the day.

Alex: This is where that review would be helpful. Is everyone ok with some form of individual criteria being layered on? Where do we go next?

Rahwa: I think the middle place is a good place to start.

Working group members who voiced their agreement: Abigail, Jill, Amy, Donathan, Mary Beth and Sonal.

3) Map Review

❖ Review of Maps and Discussion

Elizabeth: I shared early on that black communities in some places are still susceptible and need to be included. Would be great to know where those places are. It's important.

Alex: Yes. Long Island shows a lot of those.

Alanah: Can we quickly look at Brookhaven? There's a landfill. Can we look at the two tracts below it?

Amanda: Yes. Apparently, they're lower on the burden score, but much higher on the vulnerability's percentile. 26% of people are below the poverty line.

Alanah: Greenport?

Amanda: Pretty high in the vulnerability percentile at 70%.

Alex: Elizabeth, we tried but could not get all of Sunset Park in based on your feedback. When it was at 40%, we included a few tracts but they fell out when we dropped to 35%.

Elizabeth: That removed area has a large low-income Chinese community mostly Fuegian. It mostly has sweat shops and other industrial uses sprinkled through there. Also 2 family households of working-class people. That's an important area to include.

Amanda: The data is definitely showing 53% Asian so the data is there on the vulnerability side. It's registering just not ranking high enough on environmental and climate change burdens.

Elizabeth: If you look at the health profile of that community you see the susceptibility. ie) You're talking high levels of cancer upper respiratory disease. It's important.

Alex: I agree, it's important. The definition is only as good as the data logged. You mentioned sweat shops and things like that which we don't have windows into. We need to look at and think about what's missing for future iterations.

Amanda: We see multiple respiratory visits and cardiovascular hospitalizations. The health data is in there too.

Elizabeth: How does the number of undocumented families show up in this?

Amanda: We don't have granular data on that at the census tract level.

Elizabeth: Among families that will be disproportionately impacted they're the ones working in the sweat shops in unhealthy conditions. They are likely to become climate refugees. If we are looking at NY city we want to tell the full story. Different narrative but it's the same. From UPROSE's perspective the Asian community should be included.

Alex: They are now.

Eddie: Glad to see the industrial waterfront has been re-added. Is Red Hook entirely considered a DAC?

Amanda: Alex can you hover back over that? Statistically it's acknowledging what you are saying Eddie. Burden percentile is extremely high here.

Eddie: Can we look at Central Brooklyn?

Alex: 90th percentile for the vulnerability.

❖ **Slide: What materials/documentation would you like before voting?- Illume**
Core thing we can provide is the updated Power Point which has the indicator list, the approach, and the low-income definition. We are working on providing a link to the tableau maps.

Eddie: Is there a slide that lays out the benefits and drawbacks of using the 60% median income vs 80% median income? I am struggling with which is the better income level to land on.

Alex: Comes to the amount of state or households that are covered.

Chris: The bulk of income eligible programs in the state are based on 60% of state median income.

Illume to working group: Is anything else on your minds? – No additional questions

4) Preparing for DAC Criteria Vote

How to break down the vote?

Does the working group want to vote for this overall thing or vote for components?

- Indicator list
- Geographic scoring approach
- Geographic designation threshold (35%)
- Individual criteria for investment purposes
- Definition of low-income households
- Then vote for overall?

Eddie: It may be best to pose this question on Monday.

Alex: We will prep for Monday that way.

Amanda: Are there components you don't see here?

Elizabeth: One of my concerns had to do with capturing data based on race and ethnicity. If we use the individual criteria what percentage of black households would benefit for example? How will groups impacted benefit from these recommendations?

Alex: I think in the indicator list and geographic scoring approach we can discuss including race and ethnicity into those. So, discuss what data we are using and how we are adding it into those.

❖ **Slide: Voting Rules, Discussion of the mechanics of voting- Alanah**

Per Open Meeting Law:

- ✓ Need a quorum (7 of 13 CJWG members)
- ✓ All members (including Agency) have equal vote
- ✓ 7 members must be present and vote yes to pass the vote.
- ✓ We'd like everyone to be present for the vote on Dec.13
- ✓ We cannot have a rolling vote; we need members to be present

Next Steps-Illume

- To working group: Please be ready with additional information or data you'd like for Monday. See you then.

-Meeting End 4:30pm