

# CJWG Meeting Notes

## WebEx - 9.17.21

**Meeting Commence 2:00pm**

**Agenda:**

- A. Introductions
- B. Pre-read Materials for Today's CJWG Meeting
- C. DAC Criteria Discussion
- D. Presentation of Maps
- E. Reminders & Next Steps

**Introductions:**

- DEC Team
- Sonal Jessel, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, WEACTION for Environmental Justice
- Eddie Bautista, Executive Director, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance (absent)
- Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director, UPROSE (absent)
- Rahwa Ghirmatzion, Executive Director, PUSH Buffalo
- Jerrod Bley, Clean Energy Program Director, Adirondack North Country Association (absent)
- 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
- Joseph 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, Climate Justice Advisor with Climate Action Council (absent)
- Donathan Brown
- Tyler Picard, NYSERDA (absent)
- Mary Beth McEwan, Executive Director, Cornell University (absent)

**Pre-Read Materials for Sept 17 CJWG meeting** -Chris Coll

- Upcoming meetings and decisions
- Legislative review
- Summary of scenario changes (& why)
- Two updated scenarios
- Deep dive on LMI areas
- Question for Sept 17 (today's) discussion

Following 2 months most of CJWG's time will be spent on 'draft timeline before DAC vote.' This entails DAC work, proposed dates, and upcoming CAC meetings.

**Question to working group:** Would you like one-on-one small group Q & A before the November vote?

**Sonal:** In terms of the public comment sessions is there planning we need to account for?

**Chris:** Once we have the dates for CJWG through November we can make a schedule. We should calendar dates for the educational sessions as soon as possible. DEC team is working on their part to prepare for scheduling as we finalize materials that will go out for public comment. We will be following up with the working group members who are absent today.

\*\*Please fill out doodle poll Alanah sent. Deadline is Tuesday so we can schedule the remainder of the meetings.

\*\*Reminder to group to think about geographic balance when it comes to DACs. What percentage of the state will meet criteria for a DAC? Let's make sure we are reaching more lower income populations.

### **Progress so far, Presentation by Illume:**

Reminder to group we are literally creating something that has never been created before. Next year we can compare any tweaks or changes we've made to the one this year.

### **Pre-Read packet distributed to working group by Illume:**

- Legislative Review explains role of the CJWG.
- Legislative Criteria: Pillars of DACs
- 40% benefits goal: sets minimum threshold of 35 % spending to DACs with a goal of 40 % spending. 40% should be a minimum. Communities that are not designated a DAC are eligible for the remaining 60% of funds.
- CLCPA provides opportunity for annual review and iteration. We still have a public comment process which could change things later.
- Questions/Thoughts ?

### **Summary of changes and why** -Illume

- Concerns:
  - What we learned or changed
- Emphasizing Income: making sure scores emphasize income
  - Scores heavily driven by income are race, asthma, and renter status
- Taking race and ethnicity into account: make sure scores emphasize BIPOC
  - Double weights on Pct Black and Latino/a
  - Created separate factor for race
- Indicator/factor contribution: assess if scores reflect burdens/vulnerabilities
  - Factor weights were modified

- Opportunity to streamline list: assessing if any indicators should be removed
  - Removed 2 highly-correlated indicators to prevent duplicate influential effects

### **Discussion:**

**Abigail:** When Illume says LMI areas do they mean very low-income areas that are being excluded? Or do you mean areas that fall in the middle? When you say LMI areas do you mean very high-income areas? Or do you mean areas that fall in the middle?

**Amanda:** There is a way to differentiate this and when we get to the maps we can better demonstrate this to the group. We can also show how this has been quantified also.

**Chris:** Here's another way to look at this. There are programs geared toward low-income households regardless of where people live in a certain census tract. It may be worthwhile to look at a case study dedicated to low-income households. We can focus on where the program is doing most of its activity. At NYSERDA we may have some data we can share on the Empower Program which involves geo coding. Just a suggestion as one lens we can look through.

**Amanda:** To address your question Abby we found that 90% of census tracts are included as DACs.

**Abigail:** Thank you (Amanda and Alex) for the preparation materials you put together. I am very interested in exploring the aspect of individual households.

**Chris:** As we assess criteria we need to consider the implications in the field. There are multi-year projects and investments happening. Changing the criteria can also lead to some complications for this process. Let's keep that in mind.

**Amanda:** Yes, this affects how big we set the designation threshold. Is there truly any value in starting small? Do we need to follow our current approach?

**Alex:** This is an instance where there is no right or wrong answer. Nor is there a clear definitive approach. Going forward what is the most vital thing CJWG members are seeing in their area? What can Illume do to capture those things? What we need from the group are policy thinking and implications so Illume can weigh those as pros and cons.

### **Review of changes:** Amanda

- We removed things that appeared to be duplicates
- We added percent Asian to the race and ethnicity component
- We've automatically included 19 tribal and indigenous census tracts documented to be tribal and indigenous areas.

Scenario 1: balanced representation of burdens and climate change risks and population and health

Scenario 2: population and health only

Both scenarios designate about 37-38% of tracts as DACs.

**Review of what has not changed** – Alex

Environmental burdens and climate change risks included indicators have remained the same since our last meeting Aug 26.2021.

Questions:

**Sonal:** Question for the working group members based in rural NY. Can anyone explain why so many rural areas might be left out? Why is the conclusion only 13%?

**Alex:** I can help answer that. There are a number of reasons which can be shown on the maps. A lot of them do not have as many environmental threats.

**Amanda:** Given the number of variables there are so many other indicators that tend to be higher in urban areas. We have multiple correlates of them.

**Presentation of slides- Illume**  
**Discussion with Working Group**

- Areas that should be considered a DAC.
- Discussion of areas experiencing a large amount of gentrification
- How do we deal with census tracts that are different sizes?-Illume

**Reminders**

- Everyone please fill out the doodle poll by Sept 21 for the next 3 CJWG meetings. An email reminder will be sent out.
- Next CAC meeting tentatively Oct 1.

**Next Steps**

- Next CJWG meeting will be scheduled the week of Sept 27. Invite to come.
- Calendaring the next 3 CAC meetings.

**End: 4:00pm**