

Gas Transition Subgroup Meeting Notes

Meeting Details:

- 9/12/22, 11:00-1:00

Council Member Participants:

- Rory Christian
- Mario Cilento
- Donna DeCarolis
- Gavin Donohue
- Dennis Elsenbeck
- Bob Howarth
- Roberta Reardon
- Raya Salter
- Paul Shepson

Meeting Agenda/Topics Covered:

- Review of public comments on Gas System Transition chapter of Draft Scoping Plan
- Review of Climate Justice Working Group feedback on Gas System Transition chapter of Draft Scoping Plan
- Continued discussion of Gas Transition Framework document

Key Takeaways:

- Review of public comments on Gas System Transition chapter of Draft Scoping Plan
 - In response to public comments expressing concerns about the costs of CLCPA implementation, one subgroup member emphasized the need for transparency around CLCPA-related expenditures, particularly regarding the cost of infrastructure development.
 - One subgroup member commented that the State should tout opportunities to leverage private capital to fund the clean energy transition, such as the NY Green Bank.
 - The subgroup discussed the need for proactive communication and public education strategies to accompany the release of the Scoping Plan. One member cautioned that the benefits associated with the CLCPA may be perceived differently by different parties, so communications should place more emphasis on the ultimate goals of the CLCPA than on particular benefits. Another member stressed the need for a robust stakeholder engagement process with resources to support it.
 - The subgroup acknowledged comments expressing concern that Scoping Plan recommendations would limit consumer choice about heating, transportation, and other energy end-uses. One member presented the view that, to the contrary, the recommendations set forth by the Scoping Plan would vastly expand the range of options available to both consumers and utilities including, for example, energy storage and district thermal projects.

- One member raised the idea that the Scoping Plan should provide an occasion to continue the work of utility business model reform undertaken by New York’s Reforming the Energy Vision initiative.
- The subgroup discussed public comments regarding potential cost burdens of CLCPA implementation on low-income New Yorkers. One member commented that the “status quo” also disproportionately burdens low-income New Yorkers and recommended highlighting that increased reliance on renewable energy may provide relief from fossil fuel price volatility.
- The subgroup discussed aligning language in the Gas System Transition chapter of the Scoping Plan with recommendations in the Buildings chapter about prioritizing energy efficiency and building electrification investments for low- and moderate-income customers. One member stated that areas prioritized for building electrification must also be prioritized for electric infrastructure development.
- The subgroup also reviewed the Climate Justice Working Group’s comments and how the framework is currently addressing them.