

# **CJWG Meeting Notes**

## **WebEx - 6.17.24**

### **Meeting Commence 2:00pm**

*Disclaimer: \*Please note this is not a word for word translation.*

### **Agenda:**

1. Roll Call, no quorum
2. Approval of minutes
3. New Staff update
4. Recap of Criteria and Annual Review Process (Alex Dunn)
5. Initial Consideration for Annual Review:
  - a. Moving to 2020 census tracts
  - b. Updating the data to 2020 tracts
  - c. Refining the DAC criteria (Oliver Riley)
  - d. Potential indicators
6. Next steps

### **C.JWG Members:**

- (Chair) Alanah Keddell-Tuckey, EJ Director, Office of Environmental Justice, DEC
- Jill Henck, Clean Energy Program Director, (ANCA) Adirondack North Country Association
- Amy Klein, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Capital Roots
- Rahwa Ghirmatzion, EJ Advocate
- Elizabeth Furth, Empire Fellow, DOL
- Sonal Jessel, EJ Advocate
- Elizabeth Yeampierre, Executive Director, (UPROSE)
- Eddie Bautista, Executive Director, NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
- Abigail McHugh-Grifa, Executive Director, Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region
- Neil Muscatiello, Director of the Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology, Center for Environmental Health, DOH
- Michael DiRamio, Assistant Director, Energy and Climate Equity, NYSERDA

### **NY Attendees Board Rooms :**

Albany, NYC, Avon Region 8, Buffalo Region 9

### **Speakers:**

- Alex Dunn, Director, Illume Advising
- Oliver Riley, Climate Policy Analyst, DEC

### **Approval of Minutes from previous meeting/s:**

- No quorum reached. No voting on minutes or deliberating at today's meeting.

### **New Staff Update:**

- Oliver Riley joins DEC's Office of Environmental Justice as Climate Policy Analyst, DAC Program Coordinator. He will be the new DAC technical lead.
- Ahmed Al Balushi joins the Office of Environmental Justice as an intern working closely with Alanah and Oliver.

### **Recap of Criteria and Annual Review Process, Alex:**

- We have 45 indicators.
- 20 Within environmental burdens and climate change risk
  - contains 3 different factors
- 25 Within population characteristics and health vulnerabilities
  - Contains 4 different factors
- Scoring approach: combining data
  - We took everyone's scores across NY state then we created a statewide rank. We also created a rank including the rest of the state vs NY city
- Designation: include 35% of tracts
  - 1,736 of New York's 4,918 census tracts were identified as geographic DACs
- Data updates -census tract transition
- Overview of new baseline for comparison of DACs
- **Findings:** data from 2010 DACs are aligning with data from 2020 DACs.
- **Data from 10 indicators we are waiting on expected in August:**
  - asthma, heart attack, COPD, diabetes, inland flooding, coastal flooding, truck traffic, driving time to hospitals
  - \*note diabetes data has been updated
  - to be determined are: low birthweight and premature deaths

**Abigail:** Are there updated maps?

**Alex:** There will be.

**Sonal:** Is there a population increase?

**Alex:** Yes, but still same proportion as New York State.

**Sonal:** Is that because we've selected a percentile to be included? Is that how it remained at 35%?

**Alex:** We, Illume fixed it at 35% because that's what everyone voted on. Because the population in New York State increased there are more people covered under DACs than before.

**Jill:** Once the maps come out I am curious to see if it will be the same people as before. How will that transition?

**Abigail:** Perhaps this is a question for Alanah. When we have the new maps with all the data what does an implementation timeline look like?

**Alanah:** What exactly are you looking for Abby?

**Abigail:** I am wondering how this will affect people's eligibility. Do we need to bake in a window between when the changes are announced and when the changes are implemented?

**Alanah:** That's an interesting point. We make to ensure we vote before the first quarter to give folks time. Let's take that back and have a conversation. Thanks Abby.

**Jill:** I am concerned with how this will be implemented. I do feel that more conversation would be helpful.

**Alex:** We needed to shift to 2020 census tracts. We can now think of how often do we refresh the data, etc. That's something worth discussing.

### **Refining the DAC Criteria, Oliver:**

- Asked to review the entire process of the CJWG developing the finalized DAC criteria.
- Asked to identify any anomalies in the methodology and go through all indicators ever considered.
- Asked to identify which indicators the working group wants to see more of in the future.
- Found 2 inconsistencies: 1) how we map landfills and 2) how proximity to environmental hazards is measured.

### **Response to DAC criteria, Oliver:**

- Two notable actionable changes were: 1) noise pollution and 2) proximity to non-residential census tracts, eg) tracking proximity to airports
- presentation of tracking proximity to airports findings:
  - originally considered by CJWG, not pursued due to lack of data
  - NYC EJ report recommends including noise pollution.
  - data now exists via USDOT
  - data is based on decibel modeling
  - data is broken out by category road, rail, aviation
  - data has been spatially joined to 2020 census map
- presentation on food deserts
  - originally considered by CJWG, not pursued due to lack of data
  - data based on 2010 census tracts (needs updating)
  - includes different facilities that are inconsistent with what is expected to be defined as a food store

**Andrea:** Wondering about recommendations the city made in their EJ report?

**Oliver:** For some of them we do not have good data. I wanted to present things that are operational now.

**Abigail:** Can you speak to what's included in noise pollution and how is that determined? Can it be skewed toward urban areas?

**Oliver:** The methodology used is fairly complex. My understanding is that it's a model, not an actual data capture of transportation corridors and the expected noise pollution occurring there. They have a threshold of 40 decibels which is equivalent to the noise level in a library. There are limitations to the way this data is useful to us. Not sure it would skew toward urban areas.

**Alex:** Abby I will add that it includes road traffic, railway and airports as the 3 inputs on that.

**Jill:** What size airports are we considering here?

**Oliver:** This data is limited to the largest airports in NY state.

**Alex Dunn:**

- Is there something in this past year the CJWG members want to add, subtract or change?
- Reminder, every time we add something we are also diluting information.

**Abigail:** Alex can you remind me what we already included relating to industrial agriculture?

**Alex:** Yes. (Went over environmental indicators)

**Abigail:** Is there a way to distinguish between agricultural land intended in an environmentally friendly way versus land that is not?

**Alex:** Unfortunately we are not able to distinguish that.

**Jill:** I've encountered different interpretations of how we weigh the low income criteria in our programs and policies. I realize we are creating the criteria. I feel other state agencies have a barrier there. Just putting this out there again.

**Alex:** What do you mean?

**Jill:** A good example is NYSERDA's workforce development and how they subsidize parts of it.

**Rahwa:** Will you do another schematic showing if we add more and subtract some criteria points. What does that look like. Ground truthing? State agency folks: These exercises take up a lot of our time. I love the conversations but I am frustrated because we have climate legislation but no other legislation seems to be moving. What are state agencies doing about that?

**Alanah:** We cannot comment on pending state legislation. We can take your concerns back and have a discussion.

**Rahwa:** Is DEC confident that the work we are doing is counting?

**Alanah:** I can comment on that. I feel very confident we can implement the work of the CJWG. Reminder, if we are in a constant state of updating the criteria we won't see results. Since we are dealing with something so new there will be hiccups and bumps along the way.

**Rahwa:** How can things change to include low-income folks?

**Alex:** You asked about maps and ground truthing which we will definitely do. We've been tinkering with maps. We do not want to show them until they have been more updated with 2020 census data.

### *Next Steps for Illume:*

- Set up maps to review environmental agricultural potential things
- Set up toggle to show what diabetes adds/change

### *Public Input:*

- Giving opportunity for members of the public to submit suggestions on improvements
- We will accept submissions until deadline August 20,2024
- Submit to [DACComments@dec.ny.gov](mailto:DACComments@dec.ny.gov)
- Please use DAC Annual Review in the subject line

### *Next Steps for CJWG:*

- Update data we're waiting on
- Compile all data into a complete report
- Bring CJWG back to deliberate on report
- Goal of next meeting in September 2024
- Replacing resigned rural representatives Dr. Donathan Brown and Mary Beth McEwan

**End: 3:17pm**