



New Jersey Energy Code Collaborative Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2025, 12:45 PM – 2:00 PM

Attendees

- Abby Brown, NEEP
- Abigail Andrews, Rutgers
- Andy Topinka, Technical Group Services, Inc.
- Anne-Marie Peracchio, NJ Natural Gas
- Barb Blumenthal, NJ Conservation Foundation
- Ben Adams, Miller Magrann Associates
- Ben Cohen, ReVireo
- Betsy Longendorfer
- Catherine Chappell, TRC
- Cornelia Wu, NEEP
- Dale Bryk, Regional Plan Association; Harvard Law School Environmental and Energy Law Program
- David Hattis, Rutgers
- Dean Potter, K. Hovnanian Enterprises
- Deane Evans, NJIT Center for Building Knowledge
- Dragana Thibault, NEEP
- Emily DeHart, NJ Natural Gas
- Erica Yeager, NJIT Center for Building Knowledge
- Erin Sherman, RMI
- Gahl S. Spanier
- Glenn Haydu, Minno & Wasko
- Hanna Peg, DEP
- Helaine Barr, DEP
- Jason Kliwinski, AIA NJ, USGBC - NJ
- Jeff Kolakowski, NJ Builders Association
- Jennifer Senick, Rutgers
- Jennifer Souder, Rutgers
- Jerry Ryan, NJ Natural Gas Company
- Karl Hartkopf, DEP
- Kevin Nedza, BPU
- Kiran Ghosh, Rutgers
- Laura Wagner, RMI
- Liz Stanton, NJ Division of Rate Counsel - consultant
- Lyle Rawlings, Advanced Solar
- Mamie Purnell, NJ Division of Rate Counsel
- Marie Daniels, DCA
- Matthew Kaplan, ReVireo
- Maura Caroselli, NJ Division of Rate Counsel
- Melissa Miles, NJ Environmental Justice Alliance
- Michael Winka, Comcast
- Mia Sinha, TRC
- Mike Ambrosio, TRC - Applied Energy Group
- Myrrh Caplan, Skanska USA Building Inc.
- Nancy Quirk, The College of New Jersey / Sustainable Jersey
- Nicole Miller, MnM Consulting
- Nicole Provost, DEP
- Pam DeLosSantos, NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
- Pat Miller, Comcast
- Randy Solomon, The College of New Jersey / Sustainable Jersey
- Ray Cantor, NJ Business & Industry Association
- Rebecca Lynskey, TRC
- Rob Austin, DCA
- Stacy Richardson, BPU
- Steve Myers, DEP
- Terra Meierdierck, Center for Building Knowledge at the New Jersey Institute of Technology
- Todd Gordon, SJIU (SJG & ETG Utilities)
- William Amann, M&E Engineers / USGBC NJ
- Yousaf Shahid, Rutgers

1. Welcome and Introductions

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Welcomed participants and facilitated introductions. Asked attendees to introduce themselves via chat. Noted that meeting minutes will attribute comments to individuals unless objections are raised. No objection was raised.

Stacy Ho Richardson (NJBPU): Provided an overview of NJBPU's clean energy goals, emphasizing energy efficiency and the role of codes and standards in reducing energy



consumption and emissions. Highlighted the importance of stakeholder engagement in shaping effective strategies.

Jennifer Senick (Rutgers): Reinforced the importance of collaboration and gathering diverse input in shaping the Energy Code Collaborative.

2. Meeting Agenda Overview

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Provided antitrust statement and shared the agenda:

- History and development of the NJ Zero Energy Buildings Roadmap
- Overview of the NJ ZEB Roadmap Draft
- Updates on the 2024 IECC adoption process.
- Discussion on subcommittee formation.
- Open Q&A session.

3. History, Development, and Overview of the NJ Zero Energy Buildings Roadmap Draft

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Provided historical context on NJ energy policies that led to the development of the NJ ZEB Roadmap draft and provided an overview. For more information, please see the presentation slides.

Visit the New Jersey Energy Code Collaborative website: <https://njenergycodecollaborative.org/>

NJ ZEB Roadmap: <https://njenergycodecollaborative.org/roadmap/>

4. 2024 IECC Adoption Process – Update from DCA

Robert Austin (DCA):

- The 2024 IECC is currently under review by the Attorney General's office.
- Adoption is targeted for September 2025, pending approvals by the Attorney General's Office and the Governor's Office.
- 60-day public comment period will be provided.
- Appendices will be included as optional for incentive programs but not mandated.
- Emphasized the need for training across the industry, particularly for designers and contractors, and code officials, and the potential for contractor licensing in New Jersey.

5. Federally Funded Resilient & Efficient Codes Implementation (RECI) Projects

Jen Souder (Rutgers): Provided updates on:

- ECO-TEC (Energy Code Official Training and Education Collaborative), led by ASHRAE and ICC, to support code official training.
- The Energy Code Implementation Fellow program, which is currently on hold.
- Best practice research and development of a Building Performance Standards toolkit.

6. Formation of Subcommittees and Next Steps

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Proposed subcommittee topics:



- Code adoption and amendments.
- Stretch codes and building performance standards.
- Code compliance and enforcement.
- Workforce development and training.
- A poll was launched to determine participant interest. Results from poll:

1. Subcommittees Focus Areas

1:33 | 1 question | 41 of 55 (74%) participated

1. What key areas would you like the subcommittees to focus on?
(Multiple choice)

41/41 (100%) answered



- Subcommittees will meet monthly, with quarterly reporting to the full collaborative.
- Subcommittee sign-ups will be sent to the NJ ECC members.
- Meeting minutes and additional resources will be shared.

7. Open Discussion

Jason Kliwinski (GBC): Asked if DCA adopts the appendices of IECC as an 'option' for incentivizing does that mean any local municipality can require those higher performance goals for any and all projects or are they still restricted to the floor code only and only able to use such optional higher performance requirements in special cases like redevelopment zones?

Robert Austin (DCA): Stated that the appendices would be optional to permit applicants if the Township offers an incentive. Municipalities cannot mandate their use.

Jason Kliwinski (GBC): Noted that this limits municipalities from requiring stricter codes that can get them to their local goals.

Robert Austin (DCA): Reiterated that the appendices are intended for incentivization purposes.

Randall Solomon: (Sustainable Jersey) (comment made in the chat) To Jason: Municipalities have broad authority under the Municipal Land Use Law's "Areas in need of Rehabilitation"



authority. If there was a stretch code it would be easier for us to make the case that they should put the stretch code into their redevelopment/rehabilitation plans and make it mandatory. I think the majority of NJ meets the definition for 'an area in need of rehabilitation' and many municipalities have declared their entire municipalities as "areas in need of rehabilitation"

Robert Austin (DCA): Addressed a question from Helaine Barr, NJ DEP asked in the chat on whether DCA is adopting the 2024 IECC without weakening amendments. New Jersey intends to adopt the 2024 IECC as is and will only exclude the section on existing buildings as that is regulated in the NJ Rehab Subcode.

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Addressed a question from Nicole Provost, NJ DEP regarding the difference between zero energy codes and all-electric codes. Explained that a zero-energy code accounts for a building's total energy use and production, while an all-electric code prohibits fossil fuel use. Referenced Massachusetts' specialized stretch code, which includes mixed-fuel pathways but incentivizes all-electric buildings.

Mike Ambrosio (TRC): Shared that BPU's new construction programs could better support this effort. Asked the group to consider and share if there are other gaps in incentives that should be addressed to align with future code updates.

Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA): Stated that stretch codes and above-code programs are not the same and should not be treated as interchangeable. Noted that above-code programs remain voluntary with incentives, while stretch codes become mandatory when adopted. Stressed that the distinction is important because if an above-code program is required, it is no longer above-code but rather the new baseline.

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Acknowledged the concern and agreed to ensure clear language when referring to above base code incentive programs.

Erin Sherman (RMI): (*comment made in the chat*) In other states (mostly MA and NY), "incentivized stretch code" sometimes refers to a stretch code that a locality may adopt as mandatory, and for which a locality receives funding/resources from the state

Randall Solomon (Sustainable Jersey): Stated that while municipalities cannot require stretch codes directly, they can use redevelopment and rehabilitation designations to require stricter standards. Noted that many municipalities have declared their entire jurisdiction as an area in need of rehabilitation, which gives them the authority to require specific building standards. Probably 70-80% of people in New Jersey live in an area that would meet that definition should the municipalities want to use that authority.



Erin Sherman (RMI): Asked whether the Code Advisory Board had the opportunity to consider strengthening amendments and whether Rutgers had a role in assessing them during that process.

Robert Austin (DCA): Responded that the Code Advisory Board has already deliberated on this issue. Stated that additional amendments at this stage would delay the adoption process but could be considered in future code cycles.

William Amann (M&E Engineers): Raised concerns about the latest version of Appendix G, noting that some engineers have found it difficult for buildings to comply unless they use heat pumps. Suggested further review and possible engagement with energy modeling experts.

Jennifer Senick (Rutgers): Stated that Rutgers could look into the issue and bring in additional energy modeling expertise.

Jennifer Senick (Rutgers): Asked about the timing of proposing amendments to the rehab subcode and whether there was a specific process for doing so.

Robert Austin (DCA): Stated that the Code Advisory Board had already deliberated on this issue and that the proposal is currently moving forward, following closely behind the new code adoption process. Explained that the priority is to adopt the new code first, and then the rehab subcode will follow within a six-month grace period.

Jennifer Senick (Rutgers): Asked for confirmation that amendments to the rehab code cannot be proposed at any time, since it is not a model code.

Robert Austin (DCA): Confirmed that the rehab code undergoes an annual review, but changes can only align with rehab code standards. Stated that amendments cannot exceed the baseline requirements of the IECC.

Jason Kliwinski (GBC): Expressed concern that optional stretch codes are not enough to meet state sustainability goals. Suggested that municipalities should be given flexibility to adopt stricter standards than the state floor, as is the case in New York.

Helaine Barr (NJ DEP): Stated that climate action is urgent, and new construction presents a major opportunity for emissions reduction. Expressed concern that waiting for future code cycles may not be sufficient.

Jason Kliwinski (GBC): Asked what legislative changes would be required for municipalities to have greater flexibility.



Robert Austin (DCA): Confirmed that state law mandates adoption of a national model code (IECC and ASHRAE). Stated that allowing municipalities to require stricter standards would require legislative action.

Michael Winka (Comcast): Emphasized that the group should focus on increasing outreach, education, and incentivization to help municipalities adopt stretch codes voluntarily. Need a two-pronged approach: state action on legislative change and education for municipalities. Having local examples helps move things state-wide.

William Amann (M&E Engineers): Suggested to look into the International Green Construction Code (IgCC), which is a national code, that could be adopted.

Erin Sherman (RMI): *(comment made in the chat)* The energy provisions of the IgCC are prone to lagging behind the latest editions of the IECC historically. Unsure if that will be true in the future, but something to keep in mind.

Randall Solomon (Sustainable Jersey): Agreed that state action is needed to give the municipalities to require more stringent codes as mandatory. Suggested that demonstrating local success in certain municipalities that are in areas in need of rehabilitation, and they can adopt stringent codes as part of their redevelopment code could help make the case for legislative changes.

Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA): Expressed concern about the direction of the discussion, noting that he has participated in this group for four years and was under the impression that the purpose of the collaborative was to explore multiple paths to net-zero buildings, not just stretch codes. Stated that the assumption that stretch codes are the only solution is limiting and that a broader conversation is needed. Raised concerns that stretch codes could create compliance and enforcement challenges, reduce uniformity across jurisdictions, and increase construction costs, particularly for affordable housing. Emphasized the importance of having a collaborative discussion that considers multiple approaches rather than presupposing a singular path.

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Stated that subcommittees will be formed to focus on key areas such as code adoption, stretch codes, workforce training, and compliance. Stated that poll results will help determine priorities and that sign-ups will be shared. Noted that the group will meet quarterly, with subcommittees meeting monthly to review strategies in the draft roadmap.

Matthew Kaplan (ReVireo): Stated that inconsistent enforcement of current codes is a major issue and that prevailing wage laws present a challenge for incentivizing above-code measures in commercial and multi-family buildings.

Nicole Miller (MnM Consulting): Stated that many focus on stretch codes because the base code is not pushing far enough. Asked how to balance base code improvements with incentives



for stretch codes. Code enforcement is another important issue. New building isn't happening at same rate in urban core as it is in suburban area. Many urban areas have older building stock. Educating municipal leaders is important – should that be in a training/education subcommittee? How are the committees going to come together?

Cornelia Wu (NEEP): Confirmed that subcommittees will be established based on interest from the poll and these topics will continue being discussed and reported to the full collaborative.



ZOOM Chat Discussion Notes

Introductions made in the chat

Randy Solomon - Sustainable Jersey/The College of NJ

Erin Sherman, RMI

Pam DeLosSantos, NJHMFA

Maura Caroselli with NJ Division of Rate Counsel

Anne-Marie Peracchio, New Jersey Natural Gas

Nicole Provost, NJ Department of Environmental Protection

Liz Stanton, AEC for Rate Counsel

Mike Winka

Deane Evans, Executive Director, NJIT Center for Building Knowledge

Cathy Chappell, TRC supporting BPU

Terra Meierdierck, Center for Building Knowledge at NJIT

Karl Hartkopf, Bureau of Climate and Clean Energy, DEP

Mamie Purnell, NJ Division of Rate Counsel

Jerry Ryan, New Jersey Natural Gas

Pat Miller, NJ 50x30 Building Electrification

Ben Adams, MaGrann Associates

NJ DCA, Division of Codes & Standards

Rob Austin

Marie Daniels

Ian Rayfield

Todd Gordon, SJIU (SJG &ETG Utilities)

Myrrh Caplan, national head of sustainability for Skanska

Jeff Kolakowski, NJ Builders Association

Andrew Topinka - Technical Group Services, Inc. Sustainable, Energy Efficiency Products

Kevin Nedza, BPU



Mia Sinha with TRC's NJ Residential Construction

Ben Cohen- ReVireo: Energy Efficiency and Green Building Consultants

Bill Amann - M&E Engineers and US Green Building Council

Rebecca Lynskey, TRC NJCEP

Kiran Ghosh, Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research

Gahl Sorkin Spanier, Association for Energy Affordability.

Jason Kliwinski, CEO of the Green Building Center, Board member of USGBC-NJ and AIA

Barb Blumenthal, NJ Conservation

Lyle Rawlings, Mid-Atlantic Solar & Storage Industries Association

Jason Kliwinski - GBC: If DCA adopts the appendices of IECC as an 'option' for incentivizing does that mean any local Township can require those higher performance goals for any and all projects or are they still restricted to the floor code only and only able to use such optional higher performance requirements in special cases like redevelopment zones?

Robert Austin: Optional to the Permit applicant. *(further elaborated during the meeting)*

Helaine Barr, NJ DEP: Is DCA adopting the 2024 IECC without weakening amendments?
(addressed by Robert Austin during the meeting)

Nicole Provost, NJ DEP: Can you explain the difference between zero energy code and an all-electric code? *(addressed by Cornelia Wu during the meeting)*

Nicole Provost, NJ DEP: thanks!

Erin Sherman (she/they) | RMI: Do the teams at DCA and Rutgers anticipate that it will be possible to consider strengthening amendments with statutorily required cost projections/CE tests prior to the adoption of the 2024 IECC?

Erin Sherman (she/they) | RMI: And if not, might the 2027 IECC adoption include this? / Does it appear that time and resources will be available for that?

Robert Austin: 2027 is not even published, so no comment there. And the UCC Act requires base code and provides the option to look at 10 year cost projection/7 year payback. So we are looking at the 2024 codes only. *(additional comments made by Robert Austin during the meeting)*

Andrew Topinka: Power feeds everything therefore do you look at energy efficiency for power outside and inside the buildings?



Randall Solomon: To Jason: Municipalities have broad authority under the Municipal Land Use Law's "Areas in need of Rehabilitation" authority. If there was a stretch code it would be easier for us to make the case that they should put the stretch code into their redevelopment/rehabilitation plans and make it mandatory. I think the majority of NJ meets the definition for "an area in need of rehabilitation" and many municipalities have declared their entire municipalities as "areas in need of rehabilitation" *(comment added to the corresponding conversation in the meeting minutes)*

Michael Winka: Can you explain the difference between passive homes (which is the base in BPU New Construction) and zero energy Homes or code. *(addressed in the chat during the meeting)*

Ben Adams (MaGrann): Mike, Energy Star is the base in the NJCEP residential program. The new NCP program will have incentive tiers for ZERH and Passive House.

Matthew Kaplan | ReVireo: Level 1 - Code (IECC), Level 2 - ENERGY STAR, Level 3 - ZERH, Level 4 - PHIUS... each level builds on each other

Michael Winka: Yes the BPU new construction program is based on passive homes /ZERH but looking for the difference similarity between New Construction and zero energy homes

Erin Sherman (she/they) | RMI: In other states (mostly MA and NY), "incentivized stretch code" sometimes refers to a stretch code that a locality may adopt as mandatory, and for which a locality receives funding/resources from the state. *(comment added to the corresponding conversation in the meeting minutes)*

Helaine Barr, NJ DEP: At this point in time though, my understanding is that NJ can't have a mandatory stretch code until the UCC is updated. Can someone speak to accuracy of this? *(addressed by Robert Austin during the meeting)*

William Amann: Has anyone tried using Appendix G in the new code? We have not but are hearing that it is very problematic, and that good designs are calculating out worse than poor designs. *(addressed by Jennifer Senick during the meeting)*

Michael Winka: This is for BPU but there would not be a bar to BPU still incentivizing certain aspects of a stretch code so I think that is open for discuss - BPU incetivize the rehab code in the statute currently *(addressed in the chat during the meeting)*

Ben Adams (MaGrann): Good idea (incentivizing a voluntary stretch code through the NJCEP NCP)

Matthew Kaplan | ReVireo: stretch code would likely overlap with things like ENERGY STAR that are already incentivized



Matthew Kaplan | ReVireo: Enforcement is a major issue ... the current energy code is not enforced ... prevailing wage requirements for NJCEP also a huge issue *(addressed in the chat during the meeting)*

Ben Adams (MaGrann): Agree, esp. second point.

Erin Sherman (she/they) | RMI: I gather the federal parallel tax incentive program, 179D, is also poorly utilized due to similar restrictions.

Matthew Kaplan | ReVireo: @Erin Sherman (she/they) | RMI — yes, when it comes to MF and Commercial buildings, 45L and 179D are less utilized than 45L is for SF because full amounts are only available if meet prevailing wage requirements...

Erin Sherman (she/they) | RMI: The energy provisions of the IgCC are prone to lagging behind the latest editions of the IECC historically. Unsure if that will be true in the future, but something to keep in mind. *(comment added to the corresponding conversation in the meeting minutes)*



Acronyms and Abbreviations

- AIA NJ** – American Institute of Architects New Jersey
- AEC** – Applied Energy Consulting
- ASHRAE** – American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers
- BPU (NJBPU)** – New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
- DCA** – New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
- DEP (NJDEP)** – New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- ECO-TEC** – Energy Code Official Training and Education Collaborative
- GBC** – Green Building Center
- ICC** – International Code Council
- IECC** – International Energy Conservation Code
- IgCC** – International Green Construction Code
- NCP** – New Construction Program
- NEEP** – Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships
- NJ 50x30** – New Jersey’s 50% Building Electrification by 2030 Initiative
- NJBA** – New Jersey Builders Association
- NJCEP** – New Jersey Clean Energy Program
- NJ ECC** – New Jersey Energy Code Collaborative
- NJHMFA** – New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
- NJIT** – New Jersey Institute of Technology
- PHIUS** – Passive House Institute U.S.
- RECI** – Resilient & Efficient Codes Implementation
- RMI** – Rocky Mountain Institute
- SJIU** – South Jersey Industries Utilities
- SJG & ETG** – South Jersey Gas & Elizabethtown Gas
- TRC** – TRC Companies (Consulting & Engineering Firm)
- UCC** – Uniform Construction Code



USGBC NJ – U.S. Green Building Council New Jersey

ZERH – Zero Energy Ready Homes

ZEB – Zero Energy Buildings

179D – Federal Energy Efficient Commercial Building Deduction

45L – Federal Energy Efficient Home Credit