



**New Jersey Energy Code Collaborative**  
**Energy Code for New Construction Subcommittee**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**May 07, 2025, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

**Attendees**

- Andy Garcia, NJEDA
- Anne-Marie Peracchio, NJNG
- Arah Schuur, CUPR,
- Ben Cohen, ReVireo
- Brian W. Penschow, AIA
- Bruce Turner, AIA NJ
- Charlotte Weigel, NEEP
- Christine Liaukus, NJIT
- Cornelia Wu, NEEP
- Dean Potter, K Hovnanian
- David Hattis, Rutgers
- Dragana Thibault, NEEP
- Emily
- Eric DeGesero, EDGE Consulting
- Giulianna Rivera, Rutgers
- Helaine Barr, NJDEP
- Jason Kliwinski, Senior Energy Code Researcher for Rutgers
- Jeff Kolakowski, NJBA
- Jennifer Souder, Rutgers
- Jerry Flach, Rutgers
- Karl Hartkopf, NJDEP
- Kiran Ghosh, Rutgers
- Kyle Cruz, NJHMFA
- Mamie Purnell, NJ Div. of Rate Counsel
- Marie Daniels, NJ DCA
- Matthew Kaplan, ReVireo
- Max Frank, NJEDA
- Mike Brusky, Pro Stone Stucco & Brick Applicators
- Pam DeLosSantos, NJHMFA
- Rebecca Lynskey, TRC
- Stacy Richardson, NJBPU
- William Amann, M&E Engineers, Inc.
- Yousaf Shahid, Rutgers

**1. Introduction**

**Cornelia Wu (NEEP)** opened the meeting by stating a brief antitrust disclaimer. Cornelia introduced the project team: Dragana Thibault (NEEP), Stacey Richardson (NJ Board of Public Utilities), Jennifer Senick and Jennifer Souder (Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research), and Jason Kliwinski (Industry professional retained as Senior Energy Code Researcher for Rutgers). Then provided background on the mission and roles of the facilitator organizations, including the NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships (NEEP), and Rutgers. Cornelia reviewed the goals of the New Jersey Energy Code Collaborative and its focus on developing a Zero Energy Building Roadmap. [Guiding Principles](#) were presented with an



emphasis on principles of collaboration, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making. The meeting summary will be circulated to participants for review before being posted online.

## 2. Overview of Code Adoption Cycle: Base Code and Appendices

**Marie Daniels, (NJDCA)** provided an overview of New Jersey’s Uniform Construction Code (UCC) adoption cycle. Marie oversees the administration and maintenance of regulatory programs and administrative codes under the division’s purview, with a focus on the UCC. Currently, New Jersey is in the process of adopting the latest national model codes and aims to remain at the forefront nationally. The Division has completed its review of the 2024 editions of the national model codes, and the proposed adoption package is currently moving through the internal state review process prior to publication. Marie emphasized that under the UCC Act, New Jersey can adopt a new edition of the model code no more frequently than every three years. The state may either adopt the latest edition or refer back to a previous edition—but cannot create custom language.

Marie explained that New Jersey has proposed adoption of the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) with no amendments. Appendices in the model codes are proposed as optional and can be used at the discretion of the developer. The proposal is under review by several entities including the Director’s Office, Commissioner’s Office, Attorney General’s Office, and Governor’s Office before it can proceed to the Office of Administrative Law for public comment. Once published, the Division will respond quickly to public comments and expedite adoption where possible to maintain momentum.

Marie concluded by noting that the cycle will restart with the 2027 codes once those editions become available.

## 3. Stretch Codes and Case Studies

**Cornelia Wu (NEEP)** presented an overview of stretch codes, which emerged as a key topic of interest following the broader collaborative’s recent discussion. While New Jersey is advancing its base energy code—expected to adopt the 2024 IECC without amendments—the state currently does not have a formal stretch code in place. Cornelia’s presentation explored how other states are approaching stretch codes and what New Jersey might consider as it looks to the future.

Cornelia began by clarifying terminology using definitions from the U.S. DOE Building Energy Codes Program.

Stretch codes can take different forms, including:

- Basic energy stretch codes – Require higher efficiency than the base code.



- Green stretch codes – Include provisions for indoor air quality, material lifecycle, and water use.
- Electric/electric-ready codes – Require or prepare buildings to operate without fossil fuels.
- Zero energy codes – Support buildings that generate as much renewable energy as they use, often mandating full electrification and no greenhouse gas emissions.

Cornelia outlined three primary approaches that states use to enable stretch code adoption:

1. Authority-only: Jurisdictions are empowered to adopt stretch codes but must develop their own language (e.g., *Delaware*).
2. State-authored code: Jurisdictions must adopt the state's prescribed language (e.g., *Massachusetts* and *Maine*).
3. Model with flexibility: Jurisdictions are given a model code but may modify it (e.g., *New York*).

Cornelia highlighted how stretch codes are being used throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, with considerable variation:

- *Massachusetts* offers both a base stretch code and a Specialized Stretch Energy Code. Adopting either qualifies municipalities for Green Communities grants and builders for Mass Save incentives.
- *Maine* has updated its stretch code to require buildings to exceed the base code by 15% after adopting the 2021 IECC as its new baseline.
- *New York* uses overlays and offers grant opportunities through the Clean Energy Communities program.
- *Vermont* applies a point-based approach to both residential and commercial buildings.
- *Rhode Island* mandates Zero Energy Ready Homes for residential and uses the International Green Construction Code (IGCC) for commercial buildings.
- *Maryland* has implemented IGCC-based stretch code provisions, though only for commercial buildings.

Some states only apply stretch codes to residential or commercial sectors, while others support both. Cornelia noted that the base-stretch relationship can also serve as a testing ground for future code updates—for example, Massachusetts has used the 2024 IECC as the foundation for its stretch overlay while still enforcing a 2021 base.

Incentives often support stretch code adoption:

- *Massachusetts* communities adopting a stretch or specialized code can receive up to \$125,000 in base grants, with Mass Save offering builder incentives.
- *New York* includes stretch code participation as part of the Clean Energy Communities program, which provides grant fundings.
- *New Jersey* already provides incentives for high-performance buildings through the Clean Energy Program and NJEDA. Cornelia emphasized that aligning these incentives



with future stretch code adoption would position the state to build on its existing leadership and accelerate energy savings statewide.

Cornelia concluded the presentation with case studies from Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland, offering examples of how states and municipalities are utilizing stretch codes to go beyond base energy code requirements.

#### 4. Discussion

**Cornelia Wu (NEEP)** wrapped up the background overview and opened the floor for discussion.

**Stacy (Ho) Richardson (NJBP)** thanked NEEP and Rutgers for the info and emphasized New Jersey's leadership in adopting base codes and appendices.

**Jennifer Senick (Rutgers)** noted the diversity of stretch code approaches across states and that not all states have unified codes like NJ. Jennifer pointed out that stretch codes are often seen only as mandates, but many jurisdictions use incentives as well. She invited input on how stretch codes could help market transformation and code improvements in NJ.

**Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA)** questioned the need for stretch codes in NJ, noting that NJ already has voluntary and mandatory above-code programs (e.g., Energy Star, federal tax credits, BPU incentives, tax credit requirements through HMFA, EDA, redevelopment agreements). Jeff stressed the importance of uniform construction codes and predictability statewide and expressed concern about any push towards municipal-level code variations.

**Matthew Kaplan (ReVireo)** clarified that stretch codes would give municipalities the option (not mandate) to require higher standards than the state baseline, allowing more progressive jurisdictions to require above-code construction locally. He emphasized that the goal is to add options, not fragment uniformity.

**Jennifer Senick (Rutgers)** emphasized that there is no single model for stretch codes and the collaborative is seeking ideas suited for NJ. She highlighted that stretch codes could be mandatory or incentivized and invited discussion on how NJ might adopt them, including training and enforcement considerations.

**Marie Daniels (NJCA)** responded to enforcement readiness, stating NJ's UCC is regularly updated, and code officials are knowledgeable and capable of enforcing changes. She noted many existing incentive programs function like stretch codes but are not unified. She suggested compiling a list of above-code incentives and programs to better understand current efforts.

**Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA)** emphasized that NJ currently has one of the most aggressive building code adoption processes in the nation, preparing to adopt the 2024 code as soon as statutorily allowed. He noted that codes progress in three-year cycles with rigorous testing for safety and



reliability. NJ is on a fast track with a modern baseline code, and the next update will be in 2027.

**Jennifer Senick (Rutgers)** facilitated questions from the chat asking about the differences between the ICC's IECC and the IgCC codes and their relative efficiency.

**Jason Kliwinski (Senior Energy Code Researcher for Rutgers)** provided a detailed comparison between the IECC and IgCC. The IECC is the base energy code with appendices that include higher-performance measures, which are often not adopted by states like NJ. The IgCC (International Green Construction Code) is a newer ICC family code that covers broader topics beyond energy, including water, materials, and indoor air quality. IGCC offers elevated performance standards but is less commonly adopted as a base code. Jason stressed the need for NJ to adopt higher-performance, consistent statewide standards beyond the base code to align with state goals like the NJ Energy Master Plan's goals.

**Dean Potter (K Hovnanian)** brought up affordability as a critical factor in code development. He noted that energy savings measures must be cost-effective to avoid exacerbating housing affordability issues. Dean praised the 2024 code update for achieving 7-8% better efficiency than the 2021 code at a lower cost, citing the new Section 408 which allows builders flexibility in meeting energy targets creatively.

**Rebecca Lynskey (TRC)** described NJ's New Construction Program, currently aligned with IECC 2021 or ASHRAE 90.1-2019, requiring projects to exceed those codes by a minimum percentage. Rebecca noted upcoming guideline updates to reference 2024 codes but could not specify a timeline.

**Stacy (Ho) Richardson (NJBPJ)** added that incentives are aimed at performance above existing code requirements and acknowledged potential opportunities for better alignment and inventory of incentives across NJ programs.

**Jennifer Senick (Rutgers)** referenced stretch codes in other states, like Maine, where buildings must achieve a percentage above base code, NJ's program expects roughly 15% better performance under a "high performance pathway."

**Stacy (Ho) Richardson (NJBPJ)** also described the highest performance tier in NJ programs, which recognizes buildings meeting national certifications such as Zero Energy Ready, Passive House, or LEED.

**Cornelia Wu (NEEP)** explained that buildings complying with certain high-performance standards, like Passive House, are generally considered to meet or exceed the state stretch code by default. This simplifies the compliance process for builders and design professionals already using those advanced methods.



**Jennifer Senick (Rutgers)** noted that this approach provides flexibility, allowing builders to choose the path that works best for them.

**Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA)** emphasized the need to align and simplify the codes to make them more predictable and easier to understand, while still preserving flexibility for different building types and locations. He pointed out that although standards like LEED are often considered the default, there are other legitimate frameworks such as the National Green Building Standard and Green Globes, which also deserve recognition. Jeff raised the question of whether the goal for new construction is truly to reach net-zero energy. He argued that current homes are already being built to near net-zero ready standards and that many code provisions, such as solar-ready infrastructure and EV charging conduits, are already mandated. He expressed concern about the added electrical demand from electric vehicles, noting that homes are now being asked to serve as both residences and charging stations. He explained that while the homes may be built efficiently, grid capacity issues and the inability to scale solar systems to meet evolving energy needs may make full net-zero difficult to achieve in practice.

He concluded that most of the major changes for new construction have already been incorporated and questioned whether the focus should now shift to retrofitting the existing building stock. He stated that even a 2010-code-compliant home is significantly more efficient than a home built in 1940, and that replacing older housing stock could be the most effective strategy for improving overall energy performance.

**Jason Kliwinski (Senior Energy Code Researcher for Rutgers)** responded by acknowledging the limits of the grid but stated that net-zero buildings are both possible and affordable today. He cited his experience designing solar-powered, off-grid homes that meet conventional construction budgets. He emphasized that the base code continues to improve but has not yet reached true net-zero standards and argued that the idea of a “stretch code” should be explored further.

**Jennifer Senick (Rutgers)** referenced the New Jersey Zero Energy Building Roadmap, which provides multiple pathways toward improved performance in both new and existing buildings. She noted that some provisions—such as being solar-ready or electrification-ready—are already included in model code appendices and could be adopted more widely, whether through incentives or stretch code requirements. She also emphasized that the cost of integrating these features is much lower when done during new construction, rather than through later retrofits.

**Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA)** clarified that some provisions—like solar-ready construction and EV charging infrastructure—already exist, but the question remains whether there should be a mandate requiring actual solar installation. He pointed out that current net metering policies and grid limitations make it challenging to fully offset energy use, especially as EV charging doubles household energy demand. While new homes are close to being net-zero ready, full



net-zero is not yet achievable given these constraints. The key issue may not be what's still needed in new construction, but rather how New Jersey will handle the retrofit challenge across its 3 million existing housing units.

**William Amann (M&E Engineers, Inc.)** emphasized that many provisions now in the IECC appendices were originally approved to be in the base code but were moved last-minute due to lobbying, despite strong public support. He noted these provisions are key to achieving net-zero goals and could be adopted without new legislation. He also urged the group to differentiate between residential and commercial code issues, as they require separate discussions.

## 5. Next Steps

**Cornelia Wu (NEEP)** confirmed that meeting minutes will be circulated for review, and a poll will be sent to gather input on whether to hold additional subcommittee meetings between full collaborative sessions. Stacy Richardson supported this approach to ensure broader participation.

## ZOOM Chat Discussion Notes

### Introductions made in the chat

- Pam DeLosSantos, Director of Technical Services, NJHMFA
- Karl Hartkopf, NJ DEP, Bureau of Climate Change and Clean Energy
- Dean Potter VP quality and home production
- Andy Garcia - Product Manager, Clean Energy, New Jersey Economic Development Authority
- Arah Schuur, Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research
- Christine Liaukus, Architect, Center for Building Knowledge at NJIT
- Marie Daniels, Program Specialist; Regulatory Programs, Division of Codes and Standards, NJ Department of Community Affairs
- Kyle Cruz, Green Technical Advisor, NJHMFA
- Eric DeGesero - propane and heating oil distributors/HVAC contractors
- Rebecca Lynskey, TRC, Program manager for NJBPU NJ Clean Energy New Construction Program
- Anne-Marie Peracchio, Managing Director Marketing and Energy Efficiency for New Jersey Natural Gas
- Giulianna Rivera, Rutgers CUPR
- Helaine Barr, Assistant Director, Climate, Clean Energy and Sustainability, NJDEP
- Jerry Flach, Rutgers CUPR, Project Manager DOE RECI; here to listen and learn and empathize with the roll backs at the EPA!



- Mike Brusky Independent Sales Rep of 13 different building products. Building Envelope Expert. Newest and most exciting product is Insultex R6 House Wrap less than 1/8" Thick
- Bill Amann, M&E Engineers, US Green Building Council

## Chat Content

**Dragana Thibault (NEEP):** Guiding principles: <https://njenergycodecollaborative.org/about/>

**Helaine Barr (NJDEP):** Background question - Can someone speak to the differences to the IECC and IgCC? Would adopting the IgCC be a "step up" in terms of efficiency compared to IECC 2024 as basecode?

**William Amann (M&M Engineers):** I think people need to understand what happened to the 2024 IECC during the adoption and approval process, and how/why many measures were move to the appendices.

We also need to respond to Helaine's question about the IgCC and discuss that.

**Jennifer Senick (Rutgers):** Jason is talking about IECC now not yet IgCC

**William Amann(M&M Engineers):** IgCC is at least 10 years old.

**Helaine Barr (NJDEP):** Could the IECC 2024 appendices be utilized as a stretch code?

**Cornelia Wu (NEEP):** Helaine, yes there is precedent for IECC appendices being utilized as a stretch code

**Matthew Kaplan (ReVireo):** They also require prevailing wage for apartment buildings 4+ stories or non-residential projects

The new BPU NC program does a good job consolidating programs and standards

**Rebecca Lynskey (TRC):** I can speak to the NJ BPU New Construction program - the guidelines measure energy performance by either IECC 2021 or ASHRAE 90.1-2019 and will be updated to 2024 in the near future

**Helaine Barr (NJDEP):** Another example is that new state buildings are required to be LEED silver.

**Jerry Flach (Rutgers):** FYI FHLB NY incentivizes Passive House and Net Zero Ready with funding through the AHP program. [https://www.fhlbny.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/AHP\\_100-AHP-Implementation-Plan-2025-Updated-041825.pdf](https://www.fhlbny.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/AHP_100-AHP-Implementation-Plan-2025-Updated-041825.pdf)



**Marie Daniels (NJCA):** One instance where an Appendix was made mandatory per separate enacted State legislation - warehouses 100,000 square feet or more must comply with Appendix CB of the IECC per P.L.2021, c.290

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

**AIA NJ** – American Institute of Architects New Jersey

**ASHRAE** – American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers

**BPU (NJBPU)** – New Jersey Board of Public Utilities

**CUPR** – Center for Urban Policy Research

**DCA** – New Jersey Department of Community Affairs

**DEP (NJDEP)** – New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

**DOE** – U.S. Department of Energy

**EDA** – New Jersey Economic Development Authority

**EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

**EV** – Electric Vehicle

**FHLBNY** – Federal Home Loan Bank of New York

**GBC** – Green Building Center

**ICC** – International Code Council

**IECC** – International Energy Conservation Code

**IgCC** – International Green Construction Code

**LEED** – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

**NEEP** – Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships

**NJBA** – New Jersey Builders Association

**NJCEP** – New Jersey Clean Energy Program

**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



**Rutgers CUPR** – Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research

**TRC** – TRC Companies

**UCC** – Uniform Construction Code

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

**ZEB** – Zero Energy Buildings

**ZERH** – Zero Energy Ready Homes

## Feedback & Action Item Recommendations

### By Subcommittee Members

**Dean Potter, K. Hovnanian Companies, LCC:** We need to have a more complete discussion on the impact of electrification on the grid as well as local community by community impacts. I would say in general it is being glossed over.

**William Amann, P.E., DCEP, LEED Fellow, President, M&E Engineers, Inc:** In the comments from Jeff Kolakowski from the NJBA "... current homes are already being built to near net-zero ready standards and that many code provisions, such as solar-ready infrastructure and EV charging conduits, are already mandated."

I disagree that with the assertion that current homes are already being built to net-zero ready standards. The majority are being built to the code minimum.

Solar-ready infrastructure is not broadly mandated. My understanding is that solar mandates are only required for a narrow market sector, warehouses over 100,000sf and even that is only 'solar readiness' not requiring actual solar installation, as per Assembly Bill A3352.

In regard to EV charging, my understanding is that it is only required for new multifamily projects or non-residential new developments with parking lots/garages. For multifamily it is new projects with 5 or more units or new non-residential developments with parking lots/garages must install EV "ready" spaces. This was passed as part of land use approval/zoning at the State level and mandated State-wide in 2021.