New Jersey Energy Code Collaborative Meeting Minutes

November 25, 2025, 1:00 PM

Attendees

- Abby Brown, NEEP
- Abigail Andrews, Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research
- Ben Adams, MaGrann Associates
- Bill Healy, TRC
- Brian W. Penschow, NJ AIA
- Cathy Yuhas, NJEDA
- Christine Liaukus, NJIT
- Cornelia Wu, NEEP
- David Hattis, Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers
- Dean Potter, K. Hovnanian Companies
- Dragana Thibault, NEEP
- Emily DeHart, NJ Natural Gas
- Eric DeGesero, Fuel Merchants Association
- Erin Sherman, RMI
- Ian Rayfield, NJ DCA
- Jason Kliwinski, Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers
- Jeff Kolakowski, NJ Builders Association
- Jen Souder, Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers
- Jennifer Senick, Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers
- Karl Hartkopf, NJDEP
- Kevin, KHov
- Kiran Ghosh, Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research
- Kyle Cruz, NJHMFA
- Liu Liu, KEA Engineers
- Marie Daniels, NJ DCA
- Maura Caroselli, NJ Division of Rate Counsel
- Nicholas Kikis, NJ Apartment Association
- Ryan Richardson, NJDOL
- Stacy Richardson, NJBPU
- Stephanie Staub, NJ Community Colleges
- William Amann, M&E Engineers/USGBC NJ
- Yousaf Shahid, Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research

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1. Welcome and Introductions

Cornelia Wu (NEEP opened the meeting and reminded participants that all discussions must comply with competition law requirements and avoid any conversation that could violate applicable competition law.

2. Status of New Jersey Energy Code Rulemaking

Cornelia Wu (NEEP) provided an update on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for New Jersey's energy code:

- The NPRM was filed September 19 and published October 20 in the New Jersey Register.
- The proposal would update the Uniform Construction Code (UCC) to reference:
  - 2024 IECC for residential buildings and
  - ASHRAE 90.1-2022 for commercial buildings.
- Written comments are accepted through December 19.
- A template public-comment letter addressed to Dominic Giova (DCA) was shared previously, participants are welcome to use or adapt it.

3. Overview of 2024 IECC & ASHRAE 90.1-2022 Savings

Cornelia Wu (NEEP) briefly reviewed a DOE/PNNL slide illustrating long-term improvements in residential and commercial energy codes (1975 through IECC 2024/ASHRAE 90.1-2022), noting that the graph defines net energy use for ASHRAE 90.1-2022 as including renewable generation.

Cornelia summarized estimated energy and cost savings from the new codes relative to the current codes:

- IECC 2024 vs. IECC 2021 (residential)
  - 7.8% reduction in net energy use (infographic)
  - DOE's affirmative determination found:
    - 7.8% site energy savings,
    - 6.8% source energy savings, and
    - 6.6% energy cost savings (excluding renewable generation contributions).
- ASHRAE 90.1-2022 vs. 90.1-2019 (commercial)
  - 14.4% reduction in net energy use (including renewable generation - see infographic in slides)
  - DOE analysis indicates:
    - 9.8% site energy savings (renewable generation is not included),
    - 9.4% source energy savings, and
    - 8.9% energy cost savings.

4. Key 2024 IECC Residential Changes Relevant to New Jersey

Cornelia Wu (NEEP) highlighted major residential code changes for Climate Zones 4 and 5:

- Envelope / Fenestration
  - Tighter window U-factors:
    - Climate Zone 5: U < 0.28 (previously 0.30).
  - Skylights:
    - Climate Zone 4: U < 0.53
    - Climate Zone 5: U < 0.50.
  - Updated wall options allowing combined cavity + continuous insulation (e.g., 20 cavity + R-5 CI; 13 cavity + R-10 CI; or R-20 CI only) in Climate Zones 4–5.
- Ceilings / Attic Insulation
  - Attic/ceiling insulation requirement dropped from R-60 (IECC 2021) to R-49 for Climate Zones 4–8.
  - Cornelia noted that the 2022 New Jersey Energy Code Compliance Study found many sampled homes were already failing to meet R-49 when that level was required under the 2018 code.
- Slab & Air Leakage
  - Slab-edge insulation depth reduced from 4 ft to 3 ft.

- Air leakage target remains 3.0 ACH50 in Climate Zones 4 and 5, but the 2022 compliance study also found that blower-door targets of 3 ACH50 were frequently not met.

- Other
  - Hot-water pipe insulation increased to 1 inch.
  - Interior lighting must include automatic shutoff controls.
  - Additional efficiency credits: homes must achieve 10–15 points from ~50 available efficiency options.
  - ERI path caps lowered:
    - Climate Zone 4: ERI 53 (no renewables) or 40 (with renewables);
    - Climate Zone 5: ERI 54 (no renewables) or 43 (with renewables).

Cornelia emphasized that envelope insulation and air-leakage issues identified in the 2022 NJ compliance study suggest opportunities for improving enforcement and training.

Cornelia reminded participants that NEEP had emailed a letter template and a resource document outlining potential ways to strengthen the 2024 IECC, particularly via readiness appendices and other provisions.

She reiterated that there is no single, collective public comment being submitted on behalf of the NJ Energy Code Collaborative. Members are encouraged to submit comments individually or on behalf of their organizations.

5. Discussion

Jennifer Senick (Rutgers / CUPR) thanked Cornelia for the overview and noted that CUPR has prepared New Jersey-specific cost and benefit analyses for several voluntary IECC appendices, including readiness, electrification, and EV infrastructure. CUPR intends to submit these data and analyses into the public record as part of the rulemaking docket without advocating for adoption of specific appendices as base code.

Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA) stated that he plans to submit comments supporting adoption of the proposed code update.

Marie Daniels (NJ DCA) clarified that she and Ian Rayfield were attending to listen, not to advocate or respond to specific comments, and that DCA will formally respond to comments during the official adoption process. She stressed that their presence should not discourage participants from speaking freely.

Jeff Kolakowski (NJBA) raised two significant recent state policy documents with strong overlap with ECC discussions: the Governor's updated Energy Master Plan (EMP) and a newly released Building Decarbonization/Clean Buildings Roadmap. He suggested these be scheduled as explicit discussion topics in upcoming meetings, noting that they address many of the questions the Collaborative has been considering.

David Hattis (Rutgers / CUPR) highlighted that, while Cornelia's slides focused on new construction, IECC 2024 also contains a dedicated chapter on existing buildings, including changes from the 2021 edition. He noted that New Jersey historically locates these requirements in the Rehabilitation Subcode rather than in the energy code itself, and that the state has previously adopted most of the 2021 existing-building provisions in that subcode. David flagged that new 2024 existing-building requirements will need to be considered for inclusion or exclusion in future Rehab Subcode updates.

In response, **Marie Daniels (NJDCA)** explained that DCA has published a separate proposal in the same New Jersey Register issue as the 2024 codes covering review and implementation of 2024 provisions into the Rehabilitation Subcode, and responsibilities of various code officials for plan review and inspection. This proposal is also open for public comments.

Jennifer Senick (Rutgers / CUPR) suggested that Rutgers and partners could review and summarize the rehabilitation-subcode proposal for this group, similar to the analysis previously provided for new construction.

Ben Adams (MaGrann Associates) noted in the chat that a rehab code update summary would be helpful, reinforcing interest in this follow-up.

Liu Liu (KEA Engineers) requested a link to the public-review listing for the new energy code, including any DCA addenda to the IECC. **Dragana Thibault (NEEP)** shared the DCA rule proposals and adoptions webpage link in the chat so participants can access.

6. Next Steps and Closing

- NEEP will:
  - Share slides, including links to the 2022 NJ Energy Code Compliance Study and other referenced resources.
  - Send the public-comment template letter and resource document on potential 2024 IECC strengthening provisions to anyone that didn't receive it.
- Rutgers / CUPR will:
  - Submit their cost-analysis data into the public comment record.
  - Work with NEEP to summarize the Rehabilitation Subcode proposal and report back to the Collaborative.
- Future NJ ECC meeting topics will include:
  - The updated Energy Master Plan and Building Decarbonization Roadmap

ZOOM Chat Discussion Notes

Karl Hartkopf, NJDEP:
https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251106a.shtml

From Stacy (Ho) Richardson, NJBPU:
https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562025/approved/20251124a.shtml

Karl Hartkopf, NJDEP: https://www.nj.gov/emp/

Nicholas Kikis, NJ Apartment Association: https://nj.gov/emp/pdf/2024NJEMP.pdf

Dragana Thibault, NEEP:
https://www.nj.gov/dca/codes/codreg/rule_proposals_adoptions.shtml

Ben Adams, MaGrann Associates: A rehab code update summary would be helpful thank you!

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACH - Air Changes per Hour
ACH50 - Air Changes per Hour at 50 Pascals
ASHRAE - American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers
CI - Continuous Insulation
CUPR - Center for Urban Policy Research (Rutgers University)
DCA / NJ DCA - New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
DEP / NJDEP - New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
DOE - U.S. Department of Energy
EMP - Energy Master Plan (New Jersey)
ERI - Energy Rating Index
EV - Electric Vehicle
IECC - International Energy Conservation Code
KHov - K. Hovnanian Companies
M&E - Mechanical & Electrical (Engineering)
NJDOL - New Jersey Department of Labor
NJECC - New Jersey Energy Code Collaborative
NJBA - New Jersey Builders Association
NJHMFA - New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
NJIT - New Jersey Institute of Technology
NPRM - Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
PNNL - Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
RMI - Rocky Mountain Institute
TRC - TRC Companies, Inc.

UCC - Uniform Construction Code (New Jersey)
USGBC NJ - U.S. Green Building Council - New Jersey Chapter