

**Green Jobs Green New York (GJGNY)
Special Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

February 13, 2013
2:00pm – 4:00pm
NYSERDA Board Room
Albany NY

Albany

Anne Reynolds, DEC; Kate Fish, ANCA; Kevin Rooney, OHILI; Dick Kornbluth, BPCA; Adam Flint, PPEF-Southern Tier; Michael Courtney, RUPCO; Gary Kempe, RUPCO; Meridith Nierenberg, RUPCO; Kathleen Langton, AHP; Bill McKinght, Energy Conservation Specialists, LLC; Carlene Pacholczak, DPS; Ken Burgess, ECS; Cara Tromas, CSG; Tina Carton, CSG; Mike Edmonds, CSG; Jamie Rogers, ANCA; Dan Buyer, HCR; Paul Shatsoff, WDI; Rebecca Sterling, NYSERDA; Carley Murray, NYSERDA; Laura Khoury, NYSERDA Linda Miller, NYSERDA ;Michelle Salisbury, NYSERDA; Kathryn Fantauzzi, NYSERDA; Kevin Carey, NYSERDA; Jeff Pitkin, NYSERDA; Hal Brodie, NYSERDA; John Ahearn, NYSERDA; Pete Savio, NYSERDA; Pete Savio, NYSERDA; Susan Moyer, NYSERDA; Ann Mantha, NYSERDA.

Buffalo

Ken Robinson, NBI; Brian Paterson, New Buffalo Impact; Tamar Roltrais PUSH Buffalo; Kate Howard, PUSH Buffalo; Jennifer Mecozzi, PUSH Buffalo; Cyd Fox, Ecologic Home; Robert Gin, Path Stone Corporation; Ken Kazmierczak, Buffalo Energy; Mikal Jackson, Buffalo Energy/PUSH Eric Walker, Lee Butler NYSERDA; Kelly Tyler, NYSERDA

NYC

Tayyab Buksh, NHSJ; David Segal, LIPC; Esteban Durau, El Puwte; Wahid Muhammad, NWBCCC; Clifford Butler, CASH; Jessica Bartolini, Chhaya C.D.C; Elana Bulman, Pratt Center; Kate Shackford, BOEDC; Rick Cherry, CEC; Stephan Edel, CWF; Lisa Tyson, LIPC; Cynthia Ngombe, SSBX; Peter Weisner, NYPA; Mark Hogan, NHS of Staten Island; Anthony NG, CWF; Jackson Morris, PACE; Ed Kaborde, LIPC; Emmaia Gelman, GEDI; Michael Colgrove, NYSERDA; Mark Wyman, NYSERDA

(The following meeting notes capture comments, questions and discussions held at the meeting in response to the presentations given by NYSERDA staff. A copy of the presentation and any handouts provided can be found [on NYSERDA's webpage](#).

I. Welcome and Introductions (Frank Murray)

Frank Murray announced the commencement of the Special Advisory Council Meeting by welcoming members and thanking everyone for their attendance. The meeting focused on the status of the CBO initiative and budget. Other initiatives will be addressed at the upcoming quarterly meetings of the Advisory Council in March and June.

II. Review of Overall Budget, Commitments and Expenditures to date and Budget Adjustments (Karen Hamilton)

[See PowerPoint presentation for additional detail.](#)

NYSERDA is shifting funds to meet the demand for the Free/Reduced Cost Audits in the Residential and Multifamily Sectors as shown below.

Program Element	Budget Shift	Revised Budget
Residential (1-4 Family) Audit	\$3,000,000	\$15,596,000
Small Commercial/Not for Profit Financing	(\$3,000,000)	\$10,274,917
Multifamily (5+Units) Audit	\$ 500,000	\$5,418,920
Multifamily (5+ Units) Financing	\$ (500,000)	\$10,573,630

Question: If in fact the 34% conversion rate is maintained how does that effect the funding, will NYSERDA have enough for financing?

Response: NYSERDA expects to have fully committed the original Residential Audit funds during the first or second quarter of 2013, which is why a funding shift is proposed. It is anticipated that an additional \$3M is needed to offer audits through December 2013. The nature of the revolving loan fund is that it will be replenished once the package of loans is put out to the market. There is currently a large balance of uncommitted funds for the Small Business/NFP sector. Since, at this point in time, the demand for these loans has been low NYSERDA is proposing the funds be shifted from this area. Additionally, NYSERDA is able to borrow from the other sectors financing pools in the interim. NYSERDA does not anticipate having any cash flow problems in terms of being able to provide loans in the residential sector. Once the pool is replenished NYSERDA will be drawing from the residential pool once again.

Question: Does anyone from the Commercial Industrial team wish to comment on the demand for the loans?

Response: As of right now on the audit side and implementation side, NYSERDA is very pleased. On the financing front the solicitation has been quite limited on the Small Business/ NFP side. It may require some adjustments to the legislation in order to expand the eligibility in order to capture customers that have an appetite for financing. In most of the small commercial, as defined in the terms of the legislation, there is a lot of risk; it is difficult to plan and to take on the commitment of multi-year repayment of financing in this sector. In the NFP sector there is a strong sub-set that has preclusions, as far as their charter, in terms of borrowing. NYSERDA proposes pursuing slightly larger Small Businesses and NFPs to be able to get at some customers who have more of an appetite for financing and to work with that customer base. NYSERDA is also stepping up our outreach.

Question: What will be the balance on the Small Business/NFP when we shift the money?

Response: The balance will be \$9,800,000 in the Small Business/NFP Audit budget.

In the MF sector we have goals for the number of Audit applications, audits complete, and a budget for Audit Expenditures. So far we have achieved 38% of the goal for applications received, 31% of goal for audits completed and 36% of the goal for expenditures.

Question: To what do you attribute the differential of 38% to 31%?

Response: There is a lag time. There was an expectation early on that there would be a fall out of audits that do not get completed. For one reason or another they might drop out. That is not really the case, at this point in time the audits are moving forward. The bottom line is that we expected more attrition but we are not seeing it so we are going to need another \$500,000 to meet our MF audit goals.

III. Status of CBO Outreach Initiatives (Susan Andrews)

[See PowerPoint presentation for additional detail.](#)

One of the things that CBOs have done very well is helping with financing: Helping customer gather necessary information for EFS and pre screening for the financing components.

- Average loan amounts for CBO-initiated loans are lower than those program-wide

For On-Bill recovery CBO loans for Tier 1 are about \$1,800 less; for Tier 2 it is about \$4,000 less. For a Smart Energy Loan Tier 2 it is almost \$2,500 less than the program average. This indicates that there is a large percentage of customers accessing the loan products that are Assisted Home Performance with ENERGY STAR customers. These are customers that are already accessing the subsidy for Assisted Home Performance (50% of work scope) and that is why the loans are lower than the program average.

Question: Could you define the conversion rate.

Response: Conversion rate is the percentage of audits that result in a completed project. You cannot just look at the number of projects and audits completed to date (which reflects about 20%.) Instead you must allow about 110 days for the project to be completed, which then provides a more realistic conversion rate.

Question: To see how effective the CBOs have been NYSERDA needs to look at the number of applicants of Home Performance before and after the outreach groups; how many homes were done before and how many are now in the pipeline; or completed projects before and after. This would help CBOs to set up goals. Does NYSERDA have these numbers?

Response: Outreach is bringing in many more. NYSERDA will provide additional detail in future presentations, however, keep in mind there is not a very long history of those numbers. Prior to GJGNY being implemented NYSERDA had no idea of how many audits were being done in the field. NYSERDA only heard about the projects as they came to the program. There was a short period of time since the launch of GJGNY that NYSERDA collected audit information and then the CBOs were launched after that. Other outside influences need to be factored in as well. For example low gas prices leading to long pay back periods have dampened demand. Historic numbers on the program may not in all cases be relevant for comparisons sake.

Question: To what do you attribute the audit to conversion ratio being so much higher with LIPC and so much lower with PPEF Southern Tier and RUPCO?

Response: It has a lot to do with the regions in general. To get conversion there are several strategies - there is a lot of hand holding involved. The CBOs also have a host of tools, pre screening tools, prequalifying tools. In reality there a lot of points where customers fall off. They do not follow through. CBOs that are getting the conversion are there to help customers through the process, for instance

gathering utility bills, etc. Additionally, in some regions (LIPC as an example) although NYSERDA historically did not do work on Long Island, LIPA did. LIPA has had a Home Performance program, there are contractors that were participating who were BPI accredited so there was an infrastructure to deliver the program and to close on the contracts. Long Island is a different scenario than some of the NYC neighbors where perhaps English is not the first language and there was no contractor infrastructure and there was very few projects historically done in those regions. Those CBOs have different challenges and the conversion rate is certainly impacted by those kinds of issues.

Question: Are the oil to natural gas conversions that are happening in Long Island now as a result of LIPC's other work part of the driving factor due to the huge savings to investment ratio? That is a unique situation given the rest of NYS that should be factored in.

Response: LIPC does not believe the conversions are why they have such a high closing rate. It is really attributable to the pilot program on aggregation. LIPC has a different relationship with the contractor that they can speak to on a day to day basis which helps customers with the relationship. There have been many instances where the customers, if LIPC were not around, would have walked away because they did not understand. The contractor was not speaking in a manner that they understood and that they could trust. LIPC has been able to build trust, by doing handholding from the very beginning of the program to the end. Customers know that it is not just contractors trying to make money. Other contractors on Long Island do not have these types of conversion rates. It is not just the nature of long Island, it is the nature of aggregation and why that program is so important.

Public Comment: PPEF Southern Tier – In terms of the lag time in conversions we have to take into account the amount of time the financing takes in addition to the project timeline that was discussed. In particular with the CBOs, there are likely many more people who are using the financing and many fewer who are cash customers and that has a major impact on how long it takes CBOs clients to go through the program.

Public Comment : Private Contractor - Additionally, in some regions there are additional utility rebates to help make a conversion as well as some contractors that have greater history and experience with these types of programs and are able to work with the sub contractors in advance. RUPCO covers the whole Hudson Valley so they have to work with several different sub-contractors and it makes it more complicated especially if they do not have an established relationship with them.

Public Comment: ANCA covers the 10 northern rural counties of NYS. One of the things that is challenging in the area of doing CBO outreach is that many times CBOs do not get credit for the contract. For example ANCA has done house parties, newspaper ads, and four TV shows, however often the point of contact will check TV or newspaper and CBOs will not get credit for the lead. ANCA would like to see all the ads, TV, radio leads get dumped to the CBO box. This is a significant problem.

Question: Is it possible to see the leads broken down by the area of the State and show contractor generated leads in NYC vs CBOs as compared to the rest of the State?

Response: NYSERDA will follow up on that.

Question: Reconciliation has been a bit of a problem over the course of the year, is there any thought to disaggregating media generated sources into some distinction between contact/agency/CBO generated through the Social Media, the websites, or when people actually complete their audit applications of distinguish between what media outlets they might have been engaged through.

Response: NYSEERDA will talk to marketing staff and see to what extent information could be further disaggregated. This data is self reported from the application. Once you start adding to many check boxes on an application, you are going to confuse people. If the CBO compares their list of people to what is in the database that is perfect. However that will not happen in all cases, such as a TV/radio interview, CBOs are losing credit for jobs because contractors say that this person came from X.

Comment: NYSEERDA is planning several evaluations of the Green Jobs effort, one being specifically the CBO outreach effort. The CBOs are targeting the same thing, the same objectives/goals, but how they are getting to the goals/objectives may be different. NYSEERDA will be doing some case studies and working with each one of the CBOs and likely have some recommendations based on the findings. NYSEERDA is currently developing the work plan for that evaluation with program staff and expect results in late summer. At this stage it is not open for review and comment but NYSEERDA could provide it for informational purposes.

Question: Has NYSEERDA thought about mapping where CBO activity has happened and comparing that with historic activity outside of the CBO outreach? Is there a way to compare where geographically the outreach is happening within the territories and compare that with the history of the program in the same spaces to see if there are deeper impacts or new turf that has not been charted? It would be interesting to see represented in some sort of map form.

Response: NYSEERDA was hoping to have that for today's presentation. We have that capability and hope to have that at the next Advisory Council meeting.

Question: With the two RFPs that were done, does NYSEERDA feel good about the coverage in the state and also the length of the contracts entered into?

Response: The contracts were two years and NYSEERDA is satisfied with the coverage, there are no large gaps. Some fully cover the whole territory but some of them do not. NYSEERDA is allowing those who want to expand their territories to do so. NYSEERDA has asked CBOs to provide details so that NYSEERDA knows the exact coverage and can run the metrics.

Comment: NYSEERDA encourages CBOs to engage with staff on a regular basis. The Advisory Council is an important part of the process but it is not the only part and the interaction on a regular basis that CBOs have with NYSEERDA staff is important not only to the CBOs but so that NYSEERDA gets the type of feedback needed to understand how well the CBO operation is working or not working.

Comment: Regarding reaching multi-lingual markets. Later this spring we are going to be initiating a program in conjunction with the HVAC WFD center at Suffolk Community College to train existing service technicians in basic Spanish and particularly technical language so that they can communicate better with Spanish speaking communities like Brentwood and Central Islip and others.

Question: In terms of the presentation there are a couple of other aspects of the CBOs value added that I wonder if could be shown in other ways. Intangibles, the work that Clark Docker on the PUSH staff as well as several other contractors did in working with Rebecca Sterling in introducing modifications to PON 2033 and the like. That does not show up on the stat board I think it is important to note that there is really deep commitment from the staffs of the CBOs in aligning program resources in a way that is intentionally beneficial to all parties involved contractors agency, engaged workforce, and homeowners. Are there other ways that you think the CBOs impact the program in a less metric, but powerful way? Would you be able to write those up in a brief to the Advisory Council?

Response: Yes, you are correct. There are a lot of other things that CBOs do. For the presentation NYSERDA narrowed the information to those items that go across all CBOs. Within each of the CBOs there are nuances that are different and special and NYSERDA could try to summarize that. NYSERDA could feature that type of work in one of the Case Studies that are being compiling and put some impacts like that in the Annual Report.

Question: The legislation calls on the program to promote energy efficiency to underserved communities. These are households that require a lot more time invested to bring projects to completion. The metrics illustrate that the projects are smaller in dollar value. Most of the leads are coming from home performance contractors. As a business owner your priority has to be on larger work scopes and bringing projects to completion as fast as possible. That leaves a gap. Some of the stories and numbers illustrate that services are being brought to these individuals and the conversion rates are actually higher than are seen across the entire state which may indicate trends in a positive direction to fill the intent of delivering services to households that are harder to reach and harder to bring to the pipeline. This is an interesting distinction between the market at large and the market being engaged by the CBO network, and in some cases in aggregation pilots. This should be included in any review of the CBO performances or the CBO program.

Comment: When you look at the metrics of the CBOs, Home Performance jobs approved, not necessarily completed yet, speaks to the work that the CBOs have been doing to get homeowners through the process. This metrics should be used going forward in assessing the work of the CBOs.

IV. Letter from CBOs (Frank Murray)

NYSERDA addressed the recent receipt of a letter from the CBO community detailing a number of recommendations for NYSERDA's implementation of GJGNY. NYSERDA has not had adequate time to review the recommendations and have thoughtful discussions. Additionally, NYSERDA believes it is important for the full Advisory Council to have an opportunity to review the recommendations, reflect on the conversations and provide additional input. Therefore NYSERDA is not providing a formal response to all recommendations at this time. NYSERDA does not view this as a one day dialogue and plans to continue discussions at future Advisory Council Meetings and with CBOs until all recommendations have been addressed. NYSERDA further commented on the large number of CBOs in attendance at the meeting and encouraged them to attend future Advisory Council Meetings.

NYSERDA reviewed the recommendations received:

Category 1: Increase subsidies and financing while streamlining the process to make energy retrofits more accessible for homeowners, especially low-to-moderate income households.

Recommendation #1: Increase the maximum income eligibility of the Assisted Home Performance Program from 80% of the area median income to at least 120%.

Response: NYSERDA has talked about increasing the income level of eligibility for the Assisted Home Performance Program due to the economy. Since the incentives for this program are funded through the Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (EEPS) NYSERDA would need to have approval from the Department of Public Service in order to make this change.

Comment: Advisory Council members believe a change in the income level may help to better align with programs such as the Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC), the Federal Housing Program; Housing Trust Fund, perhaps some HUD programs.

Question: Is there a way to leverage funding in the way Empower works with the Weatherization Program. This could result in far greater service overall. Through years of experience a lot of work is not done because weatherization can't afford the full work scope. If the red-tape could be eliminated people could be served better.

Response: NYSERDA always looks to complement funding and programs. With the significant increase in funding for EmPower last year and the lack of robust referrals needed to fill out the full program production, NYSERDA has begun to coordinate the Assisted Home Performance benefit with the EmPower New York benefit. NYSERDA will be communicating this to contractors.

Question: Does NYSERDA have a sense of what the impact in terms of expenditures would be of changing this formula from 80% to 120%.

Response: No, NYSERDA does not know the income levels of our current customer base above the 80%. This information is not collected. This will require some research. If NYSERDA were to propose a change like this NYSERDA would have to figure out what that impact would be on the goals and targets for the Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard. It would be premature to project the impact or if funds are available.

Question: Right now for Assisted Home Performance, homeowners sign a disclaimer opting out if they qualified for EmPower or weatherization. Is NYSERDA saying that they will be able to take advantage of funding from both programs?

Response: Yes, the EmPower program which offers a 100% grant for work would work with the Assisted Home Performance program to develop a blended work scope. EmPower would take the work scope that it traditionally provides 100% funding then the work scope over and above that would be looked at for Assisted Home Performance and NYSERDA would provide a 50% match on that additional work scope. There have been a few examples of that already and NYSERDA is looking to do more. This is only available for people that meet the income qualifications for EmPower. The waiver in the past was used if they were doing Home Performance exclusively, but there is a path forward to coordinate the benefits. The contractor needs to work closely with both Honeywell and with CSG to coordinate the work scope. There is a process that NYSERDA will share that outlines the details. The logistics are still being worked through as we've piloted a few projects along this path.

Recommendation #2: Identify and align other state resources that could be used to provide grants to homeowners.

Response: NYSERDA will pursue this.

Recommendation #3: Better emphasize the utility bill repayment history to qualified borrowers for On-Bill Recovery.

Response: This suggestion notes high denial rates. NYSERDA has revised the qualification criteria over time and the approval and denial rates and have been doing better. At some point in time NYSERDA will

assess the loans that have dropped out for non-payment and compare this to the market place. Obviously NYSERDA needs to responsibly qualify people for financing.

NYSERDA is in discussions with some CDFI lenders to see if there might be any interest in having other lenders potentially help address those consumers who are not meeting our current standards. NYSERDA established Tier II standards and revised them several times to be more flexible. There are approximately 35% of applicants who do not meet those standards. NYSERDA is exploring whether that is the establishment of Tier III or Tier II ½ or whether other capital providers can be engaged to meet that next level down in the months ahead. One of the issues is that NYSERDA is trying to sell these loans to the market place and so far the financial community has not indicated that they think on-bill financing is a more secure loan in terms of their ability to capitalize those loans. That is something NYSERDA needs to build a track record on over time.

Comment: If the financial capital investors across the country and across the globe can securitize absolutely nothing they can securitize the reliable repayment of utility bills from qualified homeowners under the program. This should legitimately establish credit worthiness.

Response: The challenge is that there are well established processes for rating instruments that are sold into the capital markets. Rating agencies look for historical experience, the initial feedback NYSERDA received last fall is that the agencies don't know how to do a segmentation analysis to truly understand what the experience is. Even though there are 8 million NY utility customers whose shut-offs, terminations and write-offs are known, OBR is still a bit of an unknown. Once NYSERDA has the experience of an issuance or two, it may demonstrate the credibility in the marketplace that could establish the program as a sustainably means of accessing the capital markets. It may require that for the early issuances NYSERDA find additional credit enhancements.

Question: Is this lack of proforma in terms of their concerns and the lack of history something NYSERDA built into its projections in terms of capitalizing these loans?

Comment: NYSERDA thought that the inclusion of termination of service provisions was going to be seen by the rating agencies as a greater strength than in fact they are looking at it at the moment.

Question: Why do the rating agencies not view decades of utility repayment history as relevant evidence to draw upon? Is the concern with the mechanism itself or is it a question of scale? Once a bigger pool of loans is available will it be more attractive?

Response: It is not a question of scale. It does not matter if there are \$5M worth of loans or \$50M in loans. On-bill is just still too new. NYSERDA shares your frustration that one would think that decades of history of 8 million New York consumers' ability to pay their utility bill should be sufficient. The fact that the partial payments on utility bills are first going to satisfy utility service charges and secondly to the on-bill charges raises questions for the rating agencies about whether the utilities will perform in carrying out their collection processes. NYSERDA explained there is legislation and orders from the PSC that require them to do that. The rating agencies are being very conservative now. This is the view point expressed from one agency. It is not to say different agencies will view this the same way. NYSERDA is pretty far down the path with the rating agency that they are currently working with so it doesn't make sense to start all over again. In future bond issues NYSERDA might look at getting input and reviews from other agencies.

Comment: Understanding a tremendous amount of work is being done on this front, from a realistic perspective, it seems important to note on-bill as a separate tool from the unsecured loan. The law dictates that it has an SIR of one, but does not require credit restrictions. The funds should be leveraged, however if in order to sell the loans NYSERDA is placing requirements that is making a large population ineligible and difficult for CBOs to market the loans, should we reexamine this? Perhaps a subset of loans of people solely with good utility payment history that are never securitized. Perhaps RGGI or SBC dollars could be used to support these loans.

Recommendation #4: Continue supporting efforts to make it easier for homeowners to obtain usage data.

Response: NYSERDA has its own challenges with getting energy usage data. This is something NYSERDA continues to work on.

Category 2: Align and continue resources to support program innovation and effective outreach techniques to underserved communities by the CBOs.

Recommendation #1: Technical Assistance to CBOs that require it.

Response: There is already a lot of technical assistance being provided. CBOs should discuss this at the next meeting with Sue Andrews in order to clarify what is needed that is not being provided.

Recommendation #2: Highlight the CBOs in the GJGNY marketing efforts that it develops with Brand Cool.

Response: NYSERDA has two kinds of marketing and outreach. One is the statewide general awareness marketing. That is what the 'Irreconcilable Temperatures' marketing is and the other is the CBO initiative. Brand Cool has developed a number of materials for the CBOs to use. NYSERDA has provided an opportunity to actually buy advertising on behalf of CBOs in their regions. This is also something that requires discussion at the next CBO meeting to really understand what CBO needs are not being met.

Recommendation #3: NYSERDA should work with interested CBOs to develop more aggregation models.

Response: NYSERDA agrees with that. Any CBOs that are interested in aggregation are encouraged to talk to CBOs that are doing it to understand what is involved. CBOs should discuss this with Sue.

Recommendation #4 & #5 : Extend the CBO contracts until Dec. 31, 2016 and revise the performance-based payment structure.

The CBOs were initially awarded with two year contracts. By the end of this year, those two year terms will start coming to an end. The CBO budget is currently fully committed. Performance payments are built into the contracts. 75% of the contract budget was level of effort funding and the other 25% was a performance payment based on achieving retrofits compared to the goals that each CBO established for themselves. NYSERDA is aware of the issue of the concerns on the performance payment and the upcoming expiration of the contracts. NYSERDA has started discussions in house about these issues but would like to hear from the Advisory Council on their thoughts on these two issues.

Comment: The CBO effort is working and getting better. It would be a shame to say it has to promptly end in a year without allowing it to produce the fruits of the labor that is being put into it. A number of Advisory Council Members urged NYSERDA to identify additional funds quickly so that the CBO efforts can continue and not lose momentum. It was commented that NYSERDA should conduct an overall assessment of additional resources that could be shifted within the current budget to support the CBOs as well as identifying additional resources and what steps would need to be taken to obtain those resources.

Comment: A lengthy discussion was held regarding the Performance Payments Requirements the CBOs are currently operating under. The current performance-based payment requirement may result in contracts ending within a few months. Some CBO staff concerned about their job security have already begun to look for alternate employment, unless the CBOs can communicate to staff that they will have a job next year, the program will stand to lose the human resources that have been trained and brought up to speed. The CBOs recognize that the program takes much more involvement than they were aware of at the time they proposed their goals. CBOs had to test out various outreach strategies to determine what works in their region. It is this level of hand-holding that is instrumental in serving the underserved populations. A number of Home Performance Contractor commented that the CBOs interaction with helping people through the process allows them to focus on doing more work and if this were to end particular in the summer months when customers are not focused on their heating bills, it would be detrimental to their company.

Comment : A Home Performance Contractor commented on the fact that the CBOS are voicing the same complaints, issues and concerns that the private contractor community has voiced. For contractors that have been in the program for years, the level of hand-holding that is being described was totally predictable. Private contractors have the Affordable Comfort conference as a venue to network and share best-practices. NYSERDA should hold a conference for all the CBOs in the state to network and share what is working as there seems to be a disparity in the performance among the CBOs.

Comment: It was suggested that NYSERDA expand PON 2033 to contractors seeking NYSERDA's engagement to access scholarships and training.

Recommendation #6: NYSERDA should more fully invest in the CBOs and use more intention to partner with the CBOs to diagnose field-level program-related issues.

Response: Absolutely, NYSERDA wants the CBOs feedback and encourages the CBOs to raise these suggestions with Sue Andrews. If the current communication process is not allowing opportunities for this level of feedback let NYSERDA know so that we can address it more fully.

Comment: It was recommended that although the CBO monthly webinars are important, the CBOs are interested in bringing together various players as we did at the start of GJGNY through the Working Group process. Bringing contractors and CBOs to the table to work through issues and share all of the lessons learned at this point would be valuable. An example of outreach CBOs have done that has been effective is to present to employers as an HR benefit. Contractors would not be able to do this as the employers would not be willing to invite a single for-profit company.

Recommendation #7: Designate NYSERDA resources to preparing and certifying new home performance contractors in neighborhoods and regions not currently represented on NYSERDA's approved contractors list.

Response: Advisory Council Members/CBOs may not be aware that NYSERDA ran out of energy efficiency workforce funds for a brief period of time. The PSC recently awarded NYSERDA new energy efficiency workforce development funds. Rebecca Sterling will be reaching out to CBOs to provide information about what will be available going forward that may address many of these issues. Additionally the Home Performance Program Team will be reviewing incentives available to contractors and will be putting together some additional information.

Recommendation #8: Provide formal opportunities for interested GJGNY CBOs to advise on RGGI policy and implementation.

Response: There is a RGGI Advisory Council that meets regularly and discusses the RGGI operation plan. NYSERDA will provide a link to that information. Those meeting are also open to the public.

VII. Closing Remarks and Next Steps (Frank Murray)

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee is March 19, 2013. The agenda will include items that were not addressed today and some additional items for discussion. CBOs are encouraged to work with NYSERDA staff in the interim to continue to address issues articulated in the letter.