

Statewide Low- to Moderate-Income Portfolio Stakeholder
Webinar
June 22, 2022
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Summary Report

Filed: December 6, 2022
Case 18-M-0084
Case 14-M-0094

Pursuant to New York Public Service Commission Order Adopting
Accelerated Energy Efficiency Targets
and
Order Authorizing Utility Energy Efficiency and Building
Electrification Portfolios Through 2025

1. Introduction

To provide an update on the development and implementation of the Statewide Low- to Moderate-Income (“LMI”) Portfolio (“Portfolio”),¹ NYSERDA and the Utilities² (collectively, “Program Administrators”) hosted a webinar for stakeholders on July 22, 2022.³ The objectives were to provide stakeholders with an update on the continued development of the Statewide LMI Portfolio, including progress since the July 2020 Implementation Plan filing, and to solicit stakeholder feedback. A PowerPoint presentation, filed in conjunction with this report, was given at the stakeholder webinar, and stakeholders were provided with several opportunities to ask questions and provide comments. At the end of the webinar, stakeholders were encouraged to submit any further comments, questions, or suggestions via the email address LMIforum@nyscrda.ny.gov. Following the stakeholder meeting, on July 7, 2022 an email was sent to attendees thanking them for attending the webinar. The email included hyperlinks to resources noted during the webinar.

Questions and comments received during this stakeholder engagement webinar have been and will continue to be reviewed and considered by the LMI Joint Management Committee (“JMC”).⁴ The Statewide LMI Portfolio will be aligned periodically based on a review of initiative performance and evaluations. Questions and comments raised by stakeholders will be used to inform the calibration of the Portfolio.

2. Presentation Details

Title: Statewide Low- to Moderate-Income Portfolio

Date: June 22, 2022

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Location: Webinar

¹ Case 18-M-0084, In the Matter of a Comprehensive Energy Efficiency Initiative (“NE: NY Proceeding”), Order Authorizing Utility Energy Efficiency and Building Electrification Portfolios Through 2025 (issued January 16, 2020) (“2020 NE: NY Order”). Pursuant to the 2020 NE: NY Order, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (“NYSERDA”) and the New York Utilities (“Utilities”) (collectively, “Program Administrators”) on July 24, 2020, filed a statewide Low- and Moderate-Income (“LMI”) Implementation Plan (“Implementation Plan”). The Program Administrators have filed subsequent versions of the Implementation Plan, including the latest, Version 2, on August 15, 2022.

² The Utilities referred to herein are: Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation; Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.; KeySpan Gas East Corporation d/b/a National Grid, The Brooklyn Union Gas Company d/b/a National Grid NY, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation d/b/a National Grid (collectively “National Grid”); National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation; Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc.; and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation, (collectively, “Utilities”).

³ The Commission required the Utilities and NYSERDA to host at least two stakeholder engagement sessions annually. NE: NY Proceeding, 2020 NE: NY Order, p. 101.

⁴ *Id.*

Moderator and Presenters:

Moderator:

Ben Davis, Concentric Energy Advisors

Presenters:

Emily Dean - NYSERDA

Brittney Pietro – National Grid

Dave Friello – NYSERDA

Carolyn King – National Grid

Annalyssa Sikorski – National Grid

Brian Cabezas - NYSERDA

James Mannarino - NYSERDA

Jessica Ortiz - NYSERDA

Andrew Neufeld - NYSERDA

Agenda

- Welcome and Meeting Procedures
- Context
 - NYS Policy Landscape
 - LMI Portfolio Objectives
- Overview of Programs and Services: Progress and Near-Term Priorities
 - 1-4 Family and KEDLI HEATSM Moderate Income Pilot
- PAUSE FOR Q&A*
 - Affordable Multifamily Energy Efficiency Programs and Partnerships
- PAUSE FOR Q&A*
 - Regional Clean Energy Hubs
 - NY Energy Advisor
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Questions and Comments

3. Stakeholder Information

Invitations, which included stakeholder registration information for the webinar, were sent electronically to stakeholders who are listed on the Low-Income Forum on Energy email list. In addition, a meeting notice was posted on the Department of Public Service (“DPS”) Document and Matter Management website (“DMM”) on June 6, 2022. Due to continued COVID-19 concerns with respect to in-person gatherings, this session was held electronically via webinar.

Stakeholders attending the webinar included DPS Staff, human service and community-based organizations, advocates, local governments, contractors, installers, energy service companies (“ESCOs”), developers, consultants, and vendors.

There were 175 registrants. Of those registered, 31% were from downstate (NYC boroughs, Westchester, and Long Island), 53% were from upstate New York and the remaining 14% were from out of state. Over 100 individuals attended the webinar.

4. Review of Stakeholder Input

The Portfolio development and execution is expected to continue through 2025, and the Program Administrators expect the Portfolio to evolve. As programs are developed and calibrated, it is paramount to continue engaging with stakeholders, including requesting feedback and suggestions during the initial design and redesign of initiatives and services.

The topics, discussion, and comments received from this stakeholder meeting and subsequent stakeholder meetings have been and will continue to be referred to the appropriate workstream or the JMC for review.

Attendees were encouraged to submit suggestions, via LMIforum@nyserda.ny.gov

Questions and Answers

There were two breaks during the webinar – and a longer period following the presentation - when attendees were offered the opportunity to ask questions or provide comments. (Attendees were also invited to provide written questions at any time, which were addressed during the Q&A breaks.) The Program Administrators similarly provided numerous opportunities for attendees to offer questions and comments during the most recent prior webinar, in November 2021, and attendees seemed to respond well to the opportunity to ask questions directly after learning about a specific topic.

Numerous questions and comments were raised and addressed during the webinar. In some cases, stakeholders provided follow-up written questions and/or comments after an initial question was addressed by the JMC. For efficiency and clarity, the below summary reflects, as applicable, the verbal response provided during the Webex and/or additional responsive information being provided now for the first time.

Q1. How will 2 million climate-friendly homes be funded? There was little funding allocated for the 2 million homes in the recent budget.

A1. The achievement of the 2 million climate-friendly homes is not fully funded at this time. The Governor has asked for an Action Plan that will include a funding proposal from the agencies tasked with the achievement of this goal. There is a recognition that more resources are needed, and we need to consider all possible funding sources including federal, local and the role that

private and low-cost capital may play. That will be a critical component of the Action Plan. Of note, the New York State Homes and Community Renewal (“HCR”) \$25 billion-dollar five-year affordable housing plan includes \$250 million dollars over five years for electrification in affordable housing. It is expected that the bar will be raised over time for high-performance new construction and retrofits for LMI customers.

Q2. With regards to the National Grid Health and Safety Equity Plan, are the energy savings associated with the shareholder funding counted towards any of the utility’s earnings adjustment mechanisms (“EAMs”) targets?

A2. The shareholder funding was provided specifically for health and safety mitigation. For the majority of the measures or mitigations we are seeing, there aren’t specific savings with health and safety, so no, they are not counted toward EAMs. However, the contribution of those funds to remove those health and savings barriers are helping to serve projects that wouldn’t have been able to have been served otherwise.

Q3. Stakeholders provided a series of questions and comments related to the topic of electrification in the LMI Portfolio. These questions included:

- Whether the electrification-related updates made during the presentation also apply to 1-4 Family programs;
- Whether there are any updates related to the Clean Heat incentives.

These comments included that:

- If electrification efforts do not address 1-4 Family programs, this would omit a significant number of LMI and POC (person of color) homeowners in NYC, who should not be last in accessing such programs;
- Affordable multifamily housing units are typically not owned by the LMI households that live there, while 1-4 Family Homes units typically are;
- It would be a large missed opportunity if electrification efforts targeting 800,000 homes were all focused on large buildings.

A3. *The following, reflecting responses provided during the webinar, addresses the questions and comments pertaining to electrification noted in Q3.*

While NYS Clean Heat is funded and administered outside the scope of this joint Statewide LMI Portfolio, effective integration of electrification incentives into LMI programs (1-4 Family and Multifamily) is a priority for this Joint Management Committee. This JMC is working with our colleagues administering NYS Clean Heat, today and going forward, to better integrate those incentives and incorporate appropriate protections concerning energy costs.

While the webinar presentation addressed the integration of electrification into the multifamily programs, additional information was provided regarding 1-4 Family programs. The 1-4 Family Home programs in the Statewide LMI Portfolio (and additional NYSERDA programs for 1-4 Family Homes) remain focused on efficiency, including preparing existing homes for electrification, through sufficient envelope efficiency upgrades (e.g., insulation and air-sealing measures) that

also reduce customers' energy costs. For those customers whose home is sufficiently insulated and weatherized, and for whom switching to electrification (space heating and/or hot water) can improve energy affordability (for example, customers with aging / end of life oil or propane equipment), the Portfolio's 1-4 Family Homes programs (and additional NYSERDA programs) are phasing in funding for electrification for heating and/or hot water, leveraging federal funds from American Rescue Plan Act ("ARPA") of 2021.

NYSERDA is wrapping up an LMI heat pump demonstration study and evaluation seeking to identify and overcome challenges and highlight successes of electrifying LMI households; NYSERDA is planning to publish findings later this year. Through this study, NYSERDA has released \$10 million, half for 1-4 Family homes and half for multifamily homes, to learn about the real costs and challenges of electrification, and to surface solutions about how to size incentives and protect against cost shifts and improve affordability. The heat pump study was open statewide, including both upstate and downstate/ NYC. It considered the full range of building types and geographies, to provide a robust sample of costs and solutions regarding electrifying NYS existing housing stock, both 1-4 Family (including to NYC 2-4 family homes) and multifamily homes. The study is assessing the needs of NYS housing stock, and the needs and barriers of New York residents, particularly, low-income communities, and in outlining a set of recommended actions that can increase homes and apartments being weatherized and electrified, while preserving energy affordability.

In summary, the JMC organizations, in coordination with other entities, are focused on addressing any potential "missed opportunity" related to electrification for either 1-4 Family or multifamily customers.

Q4. For rent stabilized housing units that shift from electric costs being included in rent, to conversions whereby the resident pays for the individual metered electricity and is billed for the unit's electricity, is the resulting outcome higher or lower cost for the occupant?

A4. There are several types of affordable housing units in New York State including units regulated by HCR and NYC Housing Preservation and Development ("HPD"), as well as dwelling units subject to rent stabilization laws ("rent stabilized" units) in New York City and certain localities in Nassau, Westchester, and Rockland counties.

Generally, it is the case that, if a building is regulated by HCR or HPD, the total cost of housing (including the sum of rent and utility cost) for tenants is based on the household income and cannot increase as a result of an energy retrofit or other capital improvement work. An owner of a regulated building would need to comply with applicable regulations to adjust tenant costs. Such regulations intend to provide fair, equitable and transparent reallocation of heating costs when a partial and full heating electrification upgrade occurs in a regulated affordable property.

Q5. In NYC, what's the difference between the regional hubs and the NYC Accelerator?

A5. The NYC Accelerator provides resources, training, and one-on-one expert guidance to help building owners and industry professionals improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions from buildings in NYC. The NYC Accelerator provides personalized technical assistance from energy efficiency experts.

The Regional Clean Energy Hubs will be a group of organizations forming a Hub that will not only provide awareness of and access to clean energy opportunities and solutions, but will also provide consumer uptake in clean energy programs including wrap around services that are non-energy related. Partnerships are also a large component of the Hubs; this includes creating partnerships with clean energy partners, affordable housing providers, non-energy partners, third-party funding providers, philanthropic organizations, etc. that result in scalable activities and projects.

Workforce Development is also a large component of the Regional Clean Energy Hubs. The Hubs will support career pathways for individuals currently residing in disadvantaged communities or from priority populations, through partnerships with training, education, and clean energy businesses for employment opportunities in the clean energy workforce.

Q6. How will NY Energy Advisor connect to the Clean Energy Hubs? How do you envision the Hub websites will work with the Energy Advisor website? Will utilities be driving their customers to the Energy Advisor site or the local Hubs?

A6. The connection of Clean Energy Hubs to NY Energy Advisor is an ongoing effort. The NY Energy Advisor has a resources page which is often accessed by site visitors and could contain information about the Hubs in the future. The Hubs will use the Energy Advisor site as a resource.

Q7. What languages are available on the NY Energy Advisor?

A7. The four primary languages are English, Mandarin, Spanish, and Russian.

Q8. Will federally funded energy programs, such as the Weatherization Assistance Program (“WAP”), be integrated into the Energy Advisor site?

A8. The Energy Advisor seeks to connect LMI New Yorkers to all programs for which they would be eligible. Federally Funded LIHEAP is included on the NY Energy Advisor. Other programs will be added as the NY Energy Advisor website further develops.