

IQ North Advisory Committee Meeting (IQ North)

Thursday, December 5th, 2019

10:00am – 2:00pm

Attendee List and Meeting Notes

Blacks In Green (BIG)

Meeting Location: The Green Living Room
6431-33 S. Cottage Grove, Chicago IL 60637

Attendees (In-Person)

Theo Okiro, Facilitator
Alberto Rincon, Facilitation Team
Celia Johnson, Facilitation Team
Annette Beitel, Facilitation Team
Naomi Davis, Blacks in Green
Aimee Gendusa-English, Citizens Utility Board
Foluke Akanni,
Laura Goldberg, NRDC
Cheryl Johnson, People for Community Recovery
Karin Konrath, ComEd
Jordan Berman-Cutler, ComEd
Jean Ascoli, ComEd
Melvin Nicks, ComEd
Dantawn Nicholson, ComEd
David Hernandez, ComEd
Mike King, Nicor Gas
Chris Vaughn, Nicor Gas
John Heffron, Franklin Energy
Mary Ellen-Guest, Chicago Bungalow Association
Karen Lusson, National Consumer Law Center
Omy Garcia, Peoples Gas – North Shore Gas
Chandra Rowan, Nicor Gas
Brandon May, Navigant
Bridget Williams, Navigant
Randy Gunn, Navigant
Katherine Elmore, CIC
Dan Moring, Slipstream
Angela Hurlock, Claretian Associates

Attendees (By-Phone)

Erika Byrge, Slipstream
Demi Charalab, Franklin Energy
Yesenia Diaz, Franklin Energy
Malika Jayaraman, Navigant
Lalita Kalita, ComEd
Stephanie Lee, Navigant
Jennifer Morris, ICC Staff
Christina Pagnusat, Peoples Gas – North Shore Gas
Gina Strafford-Ahmed, Dupage County
Mark Szczygiel, Nicor Gas
Liz Zimmerly, ComEd
Ellen Sargent, CHA

- **Follow-up items are highlighted in yellow.**

Key Follow-up Items

1. **Next Meeting Date:** The next meeting date will be held Q1 2020. A meeting invite will be sent soon.
 - a. Peoples Gas- North Shore Gas will present their response to the 2019 Memo recommendations at this meeting.
2. **Healthy and Safety:** The facilitation team will follow-up with ComEd on their research results into Health and Safety deferral rates.
 - a. The first Program Feedback Working Group in Q1 of 2020 will discuss health and safety and In-home repairs. A meeting date will be announced soon.
3. **Navigant's IQ Program Participation Rates:**
 - a. The facilitation team will follow-up with Navigant on their process to determine the proper installation of kits.

Spotlight on Blacks in Green - Naomi Davis, Blacks in Green (BIG)

- BIG incorporates EE into all programs. The goal is to advance the conservation lifestyle.
- Woodlawn: BIG operates in the Woodlawn Neighborhood of Chicago. The Woodlawn neighborhood is targeted by racially biased real estate taxes and historically disinvested in. However, there is cultural richness in the neighborhood.
- Call for Ideas for Emerging Technologies Winner: BIG is a [Call for Ideas winner](#). Blacks in Green (BIG) has developed a novel outreach pilot project that will increase awareness of the ComEd energy efficiency offerings in Chicago's West Woodlawn neighborhood. SOS and the Green Living Room (a community destination, including free wi-fi and similar amenities) is a communications

conduit through which climate, energy, emergency, community news, career connections, and conservation lifestyle tips can move.

- BIG uses trusted avenues to reach populations that face barriers to participating in the ComEd Energy Efficiency Program. BIG has delivered sustainability education and outreach nationally since 2007 and since 2010 in West Woodlawn.
- BIG collaborates with ComEd to conduct outreach and educate the community about EE.
- Green Living Room: BIG also operates a community space called “The Green Living Room.” The Green Living Room welcomes community members for coffee and access to internet. The computer homepages are set to the ComEd EE homepage. The goal is to ensure the community is aware of clean energy opportunities and effort to ensure they have a stake in the EE economy. BIG also plants trees in the neighborhood. BIG has planted nearly 300 trees.
- The Green Living Room operates under the following creed: Coffee, Culture, Climate Commerce.
 - BIG hires Woodlawn community members to work in the Green Living Room. The goal is to eventually have economic and financial stability via EE.
- Obama Presidential Library District: BIG has done a study of ownership of property West Woodlawn. Results of the study showed that investors in Saudi Arabia or China have bought up large swaths of property in anticipation of a property increase.
 - The neighborhood is concerned about future gentrification. BIG is seeking to mitigate this through the following:
 - BIG is seeking to capitalize on the future tourism industry that the Presidential Library will bring. Big has developed a “Michelle Obama” museum. The hope is for heritage tourism to transform the Woodlawn Neighborhood.
- Other Programs: BIG has been working with a Green Architect to reimagine how solar and other clean energy programs can revitalize the Woodlawn Community.

IQ North Utility Responses to 2019 Committee Memos

ComEd Response (Income Eligible Team: Jean Ascoli (Manager); Dantawn Nicholson; David Hernandez; Melvin Nicks and Jordan Berman-Cutler)

- The ComEd Income Eligible Team is very committed to implementing the Committee’s various recommendations in 2020. The team’s background and passion illustrate how deeply ComEd cares about ensuring IQ Communities are effectively reached.

- ComEd wants to continue a very honest dialogue with boots on the ground partnership. ComEd wants to formally introduce the Income Eligible team to the Committee:
 - **Jean Ascoli:** I grew up in Champaign, Urbana. I am daughter of professor. I grew up comfortable. I am also daughter of a refugee immigrant and social worker. My mother worked as a social worker and ED of social services agency in Champaign County. It is humbling to take responsibility to distribute equitably. Our team is really committed to making this real. We will try things that don't work. We will try to scale things. We have to make prudent use of ratepayer dollars.
 - **David Hernandez:** I grew up in telecom industry. I grew up in Humboldt Park community of Chicago. I am a product of the CAAs mostly through Westtown clinic. My parents and I benefitted tremendously through the precinct captain. Everything was done through the village. It did make a difference being part of the village. Promoting access to opportunity is my passion.
 - **Dantawn Nicolson:** I am from an Income Eligible background. I was born and raised in Englewood and Bronzeville. I got robbed for food stamps across the street from Blacks in Green when walking to school. In High School, I participated in a few organizations. One of the organizations was a paleontology Organization. I went on dig sites to Montana. I eventually attended Villanova University and became the first black man in the United States to get a Masters in Sustainable Engineering.
 - **Jordan Berman Cutler:** My biggest influence in my life is my father. I'm a carbon copy of him. My family owns a Hot Dog restaurant on the North Side of Chicago. My Dad rode his bike to work every day. Every night at the dinner table, my family always discussed how we could be more engaged in the community. I worked for DCEO before joining ComEd.
 - **Melvin Nicks:** I'm been with ComEd for 2.5 years. When I first started at ComEd, I worked in the Customer Service Department. I originally started at PG/NSG. My father also works for PG/NSG. I wanted to do something more customer focused which is what led me to the Income Eligible team.
- **Jean Ascoli:** Regarding the 2019 Recommendations, we grouped them into 3 distinct areas. We will address the recommendations under the following areas:
 1. Creating Trusted Partners
 2. Creating EE Knowledge
 3. Creating Empowerment
- **ComEd's Strategy for Marketing and Engagement in 2020:** We want to strive for authentic connections with customers.
 - We conducted a High energy users survey in 2019: The survey results helped to inform us on how we can cater to serve customers. Next steps: phone interviews to continue conversation and dive deeper.

- **2020 Strategic Goals:**
 - In 2020 we plan to shift more dollars to serving Multi-Family (MF) customers. Our analysis has shown that we have more customers in MF.
 - **Jordan Berman–Cutler:** ComEd is also doing research into Health and safety – there are some pilots that will begin in 2020. ComEd has worked with some contractors to do research on deferral rates – to determine the application and assessment process.
 - The facilitation team will follow-up with ComEd for additional information on this research.
- **Additional Goals:**
 - Reaching Most underserved populations – we are exploring opportunities to answer how we can better serve the IQ populations that are particularly underserved.
 - Potential options:
 - One option is to explore long-term customer solutions to high bills, health and safety.
 - Connect all marketing messages into language that is accessible for IQ Communities.
 - Increase partnerships with CAAs and CBOs to promote programs.
- **Question from Cheryl Johnson, People for Community Recovery–** How can you leverage external funding to supplement what ComEd is doing? There are incentives out there that give tax incentives.
 - **ComEd:** We are exploring how to better leverage resources.

Nicor Gas Response – Chris Vaughn, ComEd

- Nicor Gas’ overall goal is to be explicit in what was recommended by CBOs and CAAs in this memo.
- **Memo Core Recommendation and Future Endeavor:** We are going to use *trusted individuals and entities* that are grassroots in their approach. We will use very defined and have a niche purpose in their community. We already implement these efforts, but we are always open to continuous improvement.
 - Existing Implementation of *Using Trusted Voices and Events*: We are trying to use trusted voices and trusted events. As a Lawyer, I believe in the power of looking at precedents. We are trying to do this through the IQ programs. It is not a fluid process. We are interested in working with other organizations. We currently send marketing and outreach materials to marketing staff who go to sponsored events. We recognize that there is a large customer segment that is underserved. Our goal is to reach them through those spaces.
- **Recommendation Considered and Deferred:** A recommendation that may be difficult to implement is “*Marketing strategies for tenants vs. homeowners.*”

Receiving approval for this is very difficult. However, we have made a tailored approach for property owners and owners.

- **Memo Core Recommendation and Future Endeavor:** Another big component for IQ outreach strategy is using relatable language. About four or five years ago Nicor gas changed its approach to marketing. We definitely recognize the need to have language that is identifiable to IQ customers.
- **Recommendation Considered and Deferred:** “*Proactively sharing utility-related information*” - utility-related customer information deals with customer data. This recommendation has been deferred for now.
- **Memo Core Recommendation and Future Endeavor:** We do consider co-branding with CAAs and CBOs. However, there needs to be a request from these organizations.
- **Question from Karen Lusson, NCLC:** Do you use CAAs? IQ communities are at CAAs daily seeking energy assistance. It is a perfect opportunity to engage with communities.
 - **Chris Vaughn** – We plan to always leverage CAAs where possible.
- **Question from Aimee Gendusa, CUB:** Who is Nicor Gas reaching through alternative pathways? I’m curious to know what the results are.
 - **Chris Vaughn** – We don’t have enough data.
 - **Mike King** – We work with Will County seniors and around 25 – 30 CBOs.
- **Comment from Aimee Gendusa, CUB:** These all sound like good organizations. I am happy to hear you are reaching underserved populations or serving same populations who are already being served though CAAs.
- **Comment from ComEd:** We have been working on a stronger approach to find opportunities to work with underserved populations that are not currently being served. We have a strong relationship with the community relations team.
- **Comment from Mike King** – We are working on a similar approach. Nicor Gas does not have a restrictive approach. We aim to try new strategies.
- **Nicor Gas Workforce Development Partnerships:**
 - **CONSTRUCT:**
 - The program was launched in 2013.
 - CONSTRUCT is a job readiness program that provides students the training, information and guidance needed to compete for good-paying, entry-level jobs in the energy construction field.
 - Primary Target: Chicago
 - Nicor Gas hires since 2013: 16
 - The program introduces people into utility programs. The program is not necessarily focused on EE. But it is establishing pipelines and practices.
 - It is a Nine-week program.
 - Future Goal: We need to establish pipelines within communities.
 - **Nicor Gas Career Academy:**

- This was in partnership with Quad County Urban league.
- It is a six-week job readiness program.
- It prepares candidates for entry level work.
- Nicor Gas is seeking to remove awareness barriers by exposing them to other career opportunities.

NOTE: Peoples Gas-North Shore Gas will present their responses to the Memo recommendations in Q1 2020.

Geographic Distribution of ComEd Income Eligible Customers' Participation – Bridget Williams, Navigant

- The research looked at demographic and geographic information of ComEd's IQ customers.
- The goal was to identify opportunities to increase program participation at high level. The maps were created using zip code information. Some maps utilize census tract.
- **Committee Suggestion:** Single Family IHWAP vs. CAA mapping slide: Re-do slide; map out CAAs and satellite offices; color code percentage of IQ qualifying not percentage total.
- **Comment from Karen Lusson, NCLC:** Regarding the "Single Family IHWAP and CAA" participation results, here is opportunity where getting program integration is good.
- **Comment from Yami Newell, Elevate Energy:** Regarding "Kit Distribution" slide. Studies have shown kits aren't installed by customer. Is there follow-up to ensure installation? What is the installation rate for kits?
 - **Randy Gunn, Navigant:** We do indeed follow-up to determine installation rates. Navigant can follow-up with more details.
 - **The facilitation team will follow-up with Navigant on their process to determine the proper installation of kits.**