Chairman William Amann called the meeting to order at approximately 6:10 PM, and the members pledged allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

The roll was taken and the following members were Present:
- William Amann, Chairman
- Jeanne Perantoni, Vice Chair
- Wayne DeFeo, Secretary
- Jeffrey Grant
- Susan Dorward
- Axel Breidenbruch

Absent:
- Paul Drake
- Walter Lane
- Jeffrey Foose
- William Knox
- Honorable Sara Sooy, Freeholder Liaison the Energy Council

Also Present:
- Laurette Kratina, Somerset County Planning Division, Staff Liaison to the Energy Council

Chairman’s Comments:
Before discussing the group’s review comments concerning the Draft Energy Master Plan, Chairman Amann requested that Committee Reports be given.

Committee Chair Reports:

Education and Awareness: The first item discussed was the final version of the Energy Efficiency Video, a copy of which was provided to the Committee by the County Videographer earlier in the day. Everyone agreed that it is great, and no further changes are needed. Ms. Perantoni, Committee Chair, indicated the video will be officially launched at the September 24th Freeholder Meeting at which the Freeholders will also be acting on an Energy Efficiency Day Proclamation. It will also be shown at the September 25th Planning Partners Forum. Thereafter, it will be posted on the Energy Council website and members of the Council’s e-mail service list will be invited to view it. A press release and other social media venues will also be used to promote the video in coordination with the County’s Public Information Officer.

Ms. Perantoni provided an update on the draft Home Energy Self-assessment Tool. Revisions requested at the June 18th Council meeting and May 16th Committee meeting have been made. It is now available for final editing before being submitted to the County Graphics Department for design and layout enhancements. Two versions of the document will be prepared – one will comprise the entire document in vertical write-able pdf format and another will comprise multiple sections as separate write-able pdf documents in landscape orientation. The goal is to enable residents to access it using their cell phones, notepads or laptops and enter their own notes after each topic.

Members were asked to submit their recommended edits to Ms. Kratina within one week since some lead-time must be provided to the Graphic Dept. The goal is for this document also to be
released to the Public in September at the aforementioned events. Ms. Perantoni noted that future versions of this tool could be designed to target other audiences/potential users such as small businesses or building managers.

An update of the proposed September 13th “Creating Vibrant Neighborhoods” Workshop concept was also discussed. Ms. Perantoni noted the program seeks to highlight sustainable, resilient, healthy residential design case studies and the resources that are available to create these kinds of projects through NJBPU’s new Clean Energy Program and other government incentives. At the end, the County Planning Division would highlight some of the things it is doing to promote sustainable development. The members agreed to ask Matt Kaplan who is providing residential LEED case studies to serve as the keynote speaker. He has tentatively scheduled this event. The County Planning Board Chairman, who is also the Somerville Planning Board Chairman, will provide opening remarks about the importance of sustainable, resilient well-designed and located residential projects. Ms. Kratina indicated she is trying to find out if continuing education credits from APA could be provided for attending this event. Mr. DeFeo is going to see if LEED CEUs can also be obtained. He also suggested that the USGBC-NJ potentially be added as a co-sponsor, which was agreeable to the group.

**Approval of the June 18, 2019 Meeting Minutes**
A motion to approve the June 18, 2019 meeting minutes without changes was submitted by Wayne DeFeo and seconded by Jeanne Perantoni. All approved and the motion carried.

**New Business**

**Review Comments on Draft State Energy Master Plan:** It was agreed that the group would strive to complete their discussion of the draft Energy Master Plan this evening due to time constraints, recognizing the deadline for public comment is September 16th and time must be allocated for review by the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Chairman Amann organized the discussion following the order of the seven strategies in the Plan, the outcome of which is presented on the attached draft comment document.

Mr. Breidenbruch took the lead on reviewing Strategy 1 concerning transportation system electrification. He pointed out that a few things do not come across in the DSEMP with regard to EVs. He described some recent global forums involving some of the major car manufacturers and major European and other governments concerning the very significant human rights abuses going on in the cobalt and lithium extraction industry. These elements are needed for battery production. BMW, Volkswagen, and Volvo have been asked to source from mining operations that do not engage in human rights abuses. All of these mining operations are currently located in third-world countries. Child labor issues abound, and an average of 75 people per day die in these mines. China is buying the mines and becoming a major controller of supply sources. Tesla is looking for alternatives. Tied into all of this is a report on how much of these minerals are actually available. When the estimated amount of material available globally is correlated to projected EV production and deployment, there is only enough supply to last 17 years. Disposal of spent batteries is another issue. Depending on the type of vehicle, battery life ranges from 3 and 10 years. Batteries in BMWs and Teslas need to be replaced every 3 to 5 years. The frequency of battery replacement is much greater as compared to conventional vehicles. These considerations, as well as the associated environmental impacts of extraction, manufacture, re-use and disposal is not addressed in the DSEMP. The high cost of the batteries to consumers is another big concern, and costs could rise if resources become scarce. EVs are also heavier than conventional vehicles. There will be a significant increase in
wear and tear on roadway infrastructure for this reason. Before the State commits to a goal of achieving a certain number of EVs in a certain timeframe, the State needs to understand these consequences and associated costs. The SCEC should recommend these factors be considered and planned for. He also recommended that a holistic approach that takes into consideration all cascading impacts be applied. Mr. Breidenbruch noted that several European car manufacturers have already said they will not be producing conventional vehicles after 2020 such as Volkswagen & Volvo. More research as to how these impacts are being addressed in Europe would be beneficial. Roadway design standards need to be updated here, and this may already be underway in Europe. Higher construction standards will increase infrastructure costs for the State. It may make sense for the DSEM to promote hydrogen fueled vehicles. Mr. Breidenbruch noted that the DSEM does not adequately define “zero emissions vehicles”. The plan needs to recognize that electric is not the only solution. Another issue the State needs to look at when it comes to EVs is that, in principle, there is no current ability for the main power grid to manage or handle a significant influx in charging stations. Problems will occur in what electric companies refer to as “the last mile”. Unless you are in a Sandy area where hopefully the electric distribution system has been rebuilt and modernized, problems will arise. The State may be assuming that most EVs will be charged during off-peak times (between 5 and 9 pm). What will really happen is there will be a shift in what we consider peak and off-peak. The last mile local distribution system is currently not able to handle this. Before the State sets EV deployment goals, a close look at necessary electric system upgrades, how much they will cost and how long will they take to install is needed. Mr. Breidenbruch asked whether NJ can create an environment that is sustainable and that can support EVs when all factors are taken into consideration. Ms. Dorward noted that PSE&G said they are able to handle the load created by EVs, and it is unclear if they will be able to handle the influx of distributed renewable generation. Mr. Grant noted that they have not been clear regarding how much grid improvements will cost. Mr. Breidenbruch noted that he learned from a California Govt. website that it will not have enough power by 2024 if that state’s EV goals are met.

Mr. Breidenbruch opined further that the general direction the DSEM is heading is good, but there are many additional things that have to be considered. The plan talks about incentivizing private sector businesses to install charging stations, but EV charging requirements could make it harder for businesses to succeed in NJ and drive them out of the state. Installing them for the purpose of helping the State meet a quota is not going to be acceptable, but if they are doing it to meet employee needs and attract employees, that’s a better reason. The more EV’s are deployed, the greater the loss in tax revenues from the gas tax. The plan does not talk about how the State will compensate for this. Mr. Breidenbruch noted that this is opportunity to learn from Germany where there is an incentive program in place aimed at minimizing the amount of gasoline that residents use. People pay a sliding-scale tax (and they get a sticker on their car) that determines how often and on what days they are allowed to drive. The higher the fee, the more often they can drive. This is an example of some of the other things that can be done to get people to be more environmentally conscious in terms of emissions, while also giving jurisdictions the ability to generate revenue.

Ms. Dorward asked for clarification regarding the type and scope of recommendations the Council should be developing and what the Freeholders are looking for. Chairman Amann noted that these are all good points, and that the group will need to flush them out further to decide how best to move forward. Mr. DeFeo noted that of all the issues raised so far, one of the biggest concerns from the Freeholder’s perspective may be the impacts on roadway infrastructure and associated increasing costs coupled with lower revenues for funding road improvements due to the reduction in gas tax collection, recognizing the County has significant roadway maintenance responsibilities and its economy is dependent on major highway corridors. He agreed that a new way to pay for transportation costs and road maintenance will
be needed. Chairman Amann suggested that, after all the bullet points have been synthesized, the Council can determine which ones affect Somerset County. Mr. Breidenbruch summed up by saying he would not want NJ to be a leading example in the transition toward EVs if the human impacts are not taken into consideration, and the impact on infrastructure must be addressed along with the costs associated with it.

Chairman Amann requested that the group focus their comments on the DSEMP's strategies and goals rather than respond to the questions in the back of the DSEMP. The Council will submit its comments to the Freeholders so that the can serve as a basis for identifying any issues that may warrant further follow-up with state officials. Comments that are particularly relevant to Somerset County can be shown in bold. Mr. DeFeo noted that since research and development focused on battery technology and battery recycling is needed, this is a potential green industry growth opportunity for the County. Ms. Kratina noted that the Freeholders might be interested in knowing that a potential collapse in the cobalt/lithium supply chain could impact EV production and deployment and economic growth in the County to the extent that it is tied to the transformation of the transportation system to electric. Mr. DeFeo noted that one of the biggest problems with hydrogen-fueled vehicles is it takes more power to produce hydrogen than the power hydrogen-fueled engines yield. He also noted that in as much as the electrolysis process for creating hydrogen is not cost effective, neither is ethanol production for that matter, but ethanol is still being produced.

Ms. Kratina noted that another way overall energy consumption associated with transportation can be reduced is through implementing the smart growth principles in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Through mixed-use, compact, center-based development patterns and the provision of pedestrian and bicycle connections and access to mass transit within centers transportation and mobility options can be increased while at the same time becoming more energy efficient. Need to invigorate the State Planning process consistent with the State Planning Act, and use it for coordinating infrastructure and land use investment decisions the way it was intended. Ms. Perantoni agreed that aligning the SEMP with regional and local land use planning is needed. Ms. Dorward noted that this can help decrease vehicle miles traveled.

Ms. Dorward pointed out that as the Sustainability Coordinator at RVCC, she will be submitting comments on the draft SEMP which include the lack of information about carbon capture, but this may not be something the Freeholders would want to focus on.

Chairman Amann pointed out the various studies that have been commissioned, which are described beginning on p. 98. For example, Integrated Energy Plans by the Rocky Mountain Institute. Some of these reports do not come out until 2020. The Energy Efficiency Market Potential Study by Optimum Energy has been completed and published. They looked at programs done elsewhere. We can save more energy, but as we found through the NJ Clean Energy Program, it is hard to get people to do it. Energy Storage is being analyzed by the Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation at Rutgers. This report may have come out. Other studies underway according to the DSEMP were noted. Chairman Amann commented that it is hard to evaluate the goals in the plan without this background information. It is more challenging to determine whether something is a good idea.

Section 2 – Deployment of Renewables: Ms. Dorward prepared comments aligned with the Plan questions as well as overarching goals. Her primary criticism is that there is one sub-goal about how to stop emitting carbon – with only one little piece tied to natural gas power plants and getting them to reduce emissions. It just seems to be ignored generally by the plan. Getting off of natural gas is a core problem if we are going to reduce CO2 emissions. They no not talk about negative emissions – i.e. allow some power plants to continue operating because
you need them for reliability reasons, and then have some way to off-set or capture CO2 emissions. Chairman Amann noted the plan does talk about this, and pointed out figure 2 on page 16, which shows terrestrial carbon sequestration. He referred to a recent study that shows there is enough vacant unused land that if it were planted as forests, the potential is enormous to sequester carbon. Aside from terrestrial, there was nothing about carbon capture under Strategy 2. Studies that address this in New Jersey have not been made available.

In response to question 7 in the DSEMP concerning offshore wind, Ms. Dorward noted that although this technology generally does not affect us, one of the things we can do offshore is sequester carbon involves a geological formation under the sea floor along the eastern Atlantic coast, which has been documented by the U.S. Geological Service. When placing the Wind turbines, care must be taken that they do not preclude utilizing this area for carbon sequestration. Mr. Breidenbruch noted that sequestration of carbon by pumping it into this formation will have a huge impact on sea life. He also noted that the wind turbines also generate magnetic forces which could impede fish migration and impact the fishing industry.

Mr. DeFeo noted that open space preservation and how preserved land is managed – i.e. through forestry restoration, can achieve CO2 sequestration. The County is still preserving land, and could be more aggressively continue to buy more land for reforestation. There are several studies that show that land preservation is often more cost effective for local governments than development because there is no public infrastructure and services costs. Preservation and reforestation is something the County can do. More Federal and State Incentive programs for preserving and reforesting land for CO2 sequestration are needed. Currently there is a federal program called EQIP. Preservation also has other benefits to the County (recreation, trail linkages, flood control… increased property values for properties that have access to open space, etc.)

In response to question 8 in the DSEMP concerning the state’s solar cost cap, Ms. Dorward noted that this concerns the SREC successor program. The Solar Transition Study is not going to be completed until 2020. This results in a gap between when the current program expires and when the next one starts. Ms. Dorward recommends that the current program be extended or the new program be made retroactive consistent with the Rate Council’s recommendation.

In response to question 9 in the DSEMP, Ms. Dorward commented that the allowance in the current RPS regarding the use of unbundled Renewable Energy Certificates interferes with state efforts to incentivize in-state renewable generation. Recommend that the BPU set a percentage of the RPS that must be generated in NJ and increase that percentage over time.

With regard to question 10 in the DSEMP, Ms. Dorward noted that she has a Professor at Columbia who is a renewable energy policy expert. He recently spoke about some of the policy mechanisms that can be used to lower the cost of capital for in-state renewable energy generation. She agreed to follow-up with him to let him know the Energy Council will be submitting comments and to ask for his perspective on this in order to possibly pass this along to the State.

Concerning question 11 in the DSEMP, Ms. Dorward noted that this deals with natural gas power plants, which are needed for reliability. She noted that technology is available that can be used to off-set their carbon impacts such as carbon capture, sequestration through forests and regenerative agriculture, salt marshes, etc. There is a start-up company in Piscataway that stores carbon in concrete. She said the State must find a way to keep these natural gas plants operating while still meeting the DSEMP goals. She noted that Net Power Company uses a
system that burns pure oxygen and they use the CO2 in the cooling process. This ties in to the innovation strategy portion of the DSEM.

Ms. Dorward noted that Goal 2.1.7 concerning the development of low-cost loans or other financing mechanism for DER should be strongly supported. This is an issue according to the Sustainability Coordinator at Rutgers who said that when the SREC timeframe went down from 15 to 10 years, it was no longer economically worthwhile for the university to develop solar.

Concerning Goal 2.1.8, Ms. Dorward noted that it can take 3 months or more from the time of finalizing a contract with a solar company to the beginning of the installation process for a residential system, depending on a town’s permitting process. This goal should be expanded to focus on reducing the amount of time it takes. Sustainable Jersey has model solar ordinances. Can these be endorsed by the NJDEP’s permit coordination group or by NJDCA so that municipal timeframes can be reduced?

Ms. Kratina noted that if municipalities had sustainable energy elements within their master plans, they would be in a stronger position to adopt implementation ordinances and changes to their land development review requirements and process. The municipal master plan can be the basis for municipalities to implement solar and other DER and also support energy efficiency Energy. MLUL does not currently require an energy element. However, ordinances are supposed to align with and implement the master plan. Ms. Dorward noted the State could provide training to municipalities regarding how to prepare energy elements and implementation ordinances. Ms. Kratina agreed that a guidance tool or model energy element is needed to help towns do this. Also, in order for municipalities to take the steps needed from a land use and local infrastructure planning perspective, municipalities will need help updating their circulation elements to support the transition to Electric and net-zero transportation systems; and likewise to facilitate the transition to a more energy efficient and energy conservative built environment through their ordinances as well as through the application of updated construction codes. By including these things in municipal master plans, you open the door for greater public understanding and buy-in, because of the opportunities for public involvement outreach and public hearing process that must be provided during the master planning and ordinance development processes. Municipalities need resources and support to integrate these into their master plans, functional plans and operations. For example municipal Circulation Elements can define where the most appropriate places are for public charging stations. Similarly, land use planners should be looking at where are the best locations for maximizing the benefits of DER in a way that adds resiliency and flexibility to the overall grid while also benefiting local EV goals. Regional and local planners are not familiar with this but there is an emerging field that cuts across energy planning, land use and transportation planning that is another economic growth opportunity. (7:35 pm reminder by Chairman Amann)

With regard to goal 2.3.1 concerning Community Solar, Ms. Dorward questioned the Sussex County project which advertises on its website a 6-year payback. If this is intended to help low- and moderate-income families, the financing does not make sense. It should be clear that one of the outcomes of community solar is reduced energy bills for low- and moderate households.

With regard to goal 2.2.3, Ms. Dorward noted that the expansion of work force training and voc-tech school curriculum should be encouraged in the plan to support the expansion of all renewable DER development.

Concerning goal 2.3.4, Ms. Dorward recommended the expansion of the non-wires solutions mandated on state-funded projects to projects at the county and local level but on a voluntary basis.
Concerning goal 2.3.6 pertaining to the separation of municipal organic waste from the waste stream – Ms. Dorward noted that she spoke with the County Recycling Coordinator who indicated that there is no room at the County Recycling Center to accommodate this. Mr. DeFeo noted that there is some legislation before the Governor now that mandates source separation of food waste and organics, and requires it to be recycled through composted, anaerobic digestion or other methods. The current bill includes amendments that say landfilling and burning is acceptable. Methane recovery at landfills is not an efficient form of recovery. It is a completely inefficient use of organics. Even in the most efficient landfill system, you can only recover about 85% of the methane, the rest leaks. Supporters of the bill are recommending that it be conditionally vetoed and restored to its original form. The bill will address this goal if it is adopted as originally drafted.

Chairman Amann noted that Section 3 and 4 are very similar since both address the building sector. The 2% and 0.75% reduction in consumption appear to be annual goals although this should be more clearly stated. Chairman Amann noted that PSE&G has been implementing the Goal 3.1.1 programs and accomplishing 1 % per year, and it appears that a doubling of this is being called for. PSE&G’s originally proposal was that it was going to be an exclusive provider, but the SEMP does not support this – and calls for a combination of effort by both utilities and third-party providers in implementing energy efficiency programs, which is good.

Chairman Amann recommended support for goal 3.1.2, which proposes an increase in funding for the State’s Clean Energy Programs.

With regard to goal 3.1.3, Chairman Amann noted that this topic has been talked about for a long time. Issues arise when the building owner is not paying the energy bill, or the tenant is not paying the energy bill. The tenants can’t benefit from savings achieved by their conservation efforts. Mr. Grant noted that buildings can be set up with “master –meters” so that commercial tenants are billed based on their energy they use. The mechanics are available that would make it beneficial for tenants to reduce their energy use and costs. Some residential properties provide individual meters for apartments, but there is little incentive to make improvements that have a 3 or more year payback periods. Incentives are needed for landlords to make EEE and EC improvements upfront.

Chairman Amann noted that goal 3.1.5 concerning street lighting make sense.

Chairman Amann noted that this strategy calls for establishing a new energy efficiency advisory group. However, it is not clear what purpose this group serves or how its members will be selected.

Ms. Dorward noted that goal 3.3.2 is about EV charging and rate design. Mr. Breidenbruch agreed to take a look at this and provide some comments.

Goal 3.3.1 advocates for net-zero carbon building design in new construction, which is very ambitious according to Chairman Amann. He does not believe this goal is realistic because creating net-zero buildings is very difficult to do, and therefore would be hard to mandate.

With regard to goals 3.3.3 and 3.3.4 Chairman Amann noted an integrated design is needed – rather than treating thermal envelop and EE separately.

Concerning goal 3.3.5, Chairman Amann noted that improved enforcement of compliance with mandated building and energy codes by the NJDDCA is needed.
Chairman Amann noted that goal 3.3.6 is unclear. Do we need a separate State energy labeling system, or can the National ENERGY STAR rating system be relied upon? This goal may have been included to provide protection from Federal rollbacks by adopting state statutes concerning appliance standards. The group acknowledged that in order to reduce our carbon footprint, it needs to be addressed from many angles. If an appliance manufacture wants to sell its products in NJ, it will have to meet NJ’s standards. Mr. Breidenbruch expressed concern about the impacts of higher appliance cost on housing affordability. Low-income households will not be able to afford them. Ms. Perantoni noted that from a social justice perspective, the DSEM is suggesting that the public subsidize the cost of high efficiency appliances in low-cost housing. Mr. DeFeo noted that Habitat for Humanity is making their units more energy efficient so that energy costs are lower for low-income residents. The building construction codes must also be updated to include higher efficiency standards.

Chairman Amann commenced discussion of Strategy 4 which concerns the Building Sector. The language in second paragraph of the introduction was questioned, which states, “the transition to electrification will depend on technologies that are still maturing”, which underscores the difficulties associated with evaluating the DSEM. He strongly agreed with the statement in the third paragraph, “reducing reliance on natural gas for building heat will be one of the state’s most vexing challenges”. It appears this means that over 75% of the state’s housing stock must be converted to heat pump systems. Chairman Amann indicated it is feasible, although heat pumps can only give you about 140 degrees. Several manufacturers make air-to-water heat pump systems, but they are not sold in the United States. They are sold in Europe and Japan, but there is no demand for them here, so they do not sell them here. It is possible to import one, but it will be 50 hertz and the wrong voltage for which a conversion would be required. Geothermal heat pumps are being utilized here but they are more suited to new construction. The transition period will be considerable due to the high cost and long life of heating and cooling systems. People will wait until there is a problem before changing to a new system. Current Residential solar incentives are not great enough to support a transition from natural gas to electric-dependent heating and cooling systems.

Mr. Grant also noted that Grid modernization must occur first in order to support solar deployment and similarly to support EV deployment. Mr. Amann noted that the only way EV charging works is with smart/managed chargers that control when charging occurs to coincide with off-peak. Mr. Grant questioned whether or not there is adequate upstream capacity to support the EV deployment goals. The electric distribution cable in most neighborhoods will have to be upgraded to 1.3 kV in order for this to occur. Mr. DeFeo noted that this infrastructure should be upgraded for resiliency as well.

Mr. Grant pointed out the importance of energy diversity from a resiliency perspective. Many back-up generators can keep a household running as long as they can continue to use their natural gas systems to heat their homes. Current back-up generators may not be big enough to power heating systems that depend on electric. Conventional fueled vehicles may enable travel in the event of a widespread power outage that constrains ability to re-charge EVs. The DSEM does not mention the importance of energy diversity from a resiliency perspective, and the plan needs to be strengthened in this regard.

Mr. DeFeo noted that the DSEM does not talk about the product life-cycle costs and impacts of solar panels and recycling thereof. There is legislation pending mandating recycling of the panels, which recognizes the importance of extracting rare earth minerals. We can’t say there are zero emissions from solar without taking into account the up-front environmental issues associated with panel production. There must be a way to recover the rare earth minerals at the
end of a panel’s useful life. Panel costs should account for de-manufacturing/recycling. For example, the cost of TVs went up about 35$ in response to de-manufacturing/recycling costs. Ms. Dorward noted that some solar contractors take responsibility for recycling the panels they install, which is reflected in the higher cost they charge. Mr. Grant questioned the carbon footprint of recycling processes. Mr. DeFeo said studies show that recycling is carbon negative rather than carbon positive for the vast majority of materials. An EPA model was available online that shows this. Mr. Breidenbruch noted that roof age of your roof must be taken into account, and may need to be replaced before a solar array is installed. He questioned whether recycling of roof materials should also be a factor. Asphalt shingles are currently not recycled according to Mr. DeFeo. Ms. Dorward noted that it would cost $1,800 to remove and re-install the array if a problem with the roof arises.

Mr. Grant agreed to review Strategy 4 goals and offer further comments.

Chairman Amann noted that Mr. Knox, Mr. Foose and Mr. Grant were responsible for reviewing the upcoming strategies. He noted that because they are not present, and due to time constraints we will not be able to complete a detailed review of these tonight. The deadline for submission of comments to the State is Sept. 16th. Time must be set aside for Freeholder review. He agreed to speak with Freeholder Sooy regarding how to best to approach this.

With regard to Strategies 6 & 7, Ms. Perantoni noted that she went over some of her general comments with Laurette and Walter when her Committee Met on July 11th. She asked Ms. Dorward and Mr. DeFeo to share their views. She indicated that the majority of the goals make sense, but the fundamental question regarding who pays for them is not clear. Ms. Perantoni’s general comment is that she does not want to see a lot of re-inventing and duplication, which some of the goals suggest. The DSEMP calls for setting up new task forces and study groups, rather than using existing organizations. Also, there appears to be some biases that result in aligning programs with the priorities of certain stakeholder groups. There are several references to workforce development. We should not be setting up a new workforce development framework – rather use the existing framework and existing programs. There should be a mechanism for certifying curriculum and WF development programs by various providers, and a way to out-source the development and implementation of these programs. In Somerset County with fewer income-eligible areas, its ability to take advantage of the Community Solar Program and Community Energy Plan provision is limited. But these programs do make sense to a wider audience of community types. Utilization of municipal green teams to identify needs and opportunities within their communities was recommended. Mr. DeFeo agreed that a lot of the WFD structure is in place and should not be reinvented. Ms. Dorward noted the DSEMP proposes a carbon neutral new technology incubator and green buildings hub (these should be in Somerset County!) These should piggy-back onto existing initiatives. Can these be accommodated at the “Center for Excellence” in Bridgewater? Maybe the County would want to advocate for that as well as utilize the existing WD framework provided at RVCC and the Vo-Tech to house the new Energy Management Program. Identify what the County can accommodate through update and expansion of their existing programs and curriculum. A partnership among the various workforce development programs among the state, and coordination and sharing of curriculum development among community and state universities may be what is needed.

Chairman Amann summed up by stating that there are a lot of issues that must be worked out before the DSEMP should be adopted. The County could be a good place to get a lot of the goals off the ground due to the existing focus at RVCC, and the fact that we have an Energy Council. Somerset County is already growing in leadership in this area and we want to continue to do so.
Ms. Dorward asked whether it would be appropriate to talk to the workforce development folks at RVCC, Paul Floors... Ms. Perantoni noted that the DSEMP talks about establishing program for training for “Energy Services Planners” who can help communities develop Comprehensive Community Energy Plans. RVCC is already doing a lot of this, but perhaps the development of a defined degree or certification program is needed. Local government jurisdictions are going to need access to trained Energy specialists to create these plans. This is a good thing because this type of expertise is not currently available. Mr. DeFeo noted there is a highly successful Certified Recycling Coordinators Program in place that this could be modeled off of. RVCC could create an education program based on this.

Ms. Dorward noted that in the past RVCC tried to offer training for solar installers, but too few were signing up for it so they had to cancel it. That was 8 or 10 years ago. It may be worthwhile to try that again. Section 7 – Establishment of a NJ Green Bank is strongly supported. There is so much already available on best practices, why re-invent the wheel. Ms. Perantoni suggested greater emphasis be given to the CT green bank model which has proven to be highly successful. In order for the green banks to operate successfully, they need to be open to all communities, not just the low-income, social justice areas. The private market must leveraged. Perhaps a point system could be used for ranking proposals higher in environmental justice communities, but all communities must be able to benefit. 1.2 Billion is leveraged in CT. The Environmental Defense Fund is copying the CT model according to Chairman Amann. The green bank should be supported, but it must be done right – using CT as a model.

New Brunswick Govt. Energy Aggregation Program was cited by Ms. Dorward as a great model – see their RenewableNB.com website. They have 2 options - 50% renewable or 100% renewable, both of which are lower than PSE&G’s rates. It provides 11 cents per kW hour for participants versus 12 cents per kW hour through PSE&G. More communities, particularly those that include low and moderate income neighborhoods should have access to this kind of program.

Chairman Amann questioned the feasibility of using Commercial Real Estate Brokers to promote energy efficiency as recommended in the plan, and considers this unlikely.

Chairman Amann asked everyone to put their comments into bullet points and send them to both him and Ms. Kratina to compile by August 15th. The bullet points will be organized by the sections and associated section goals. Ms. Kratina will re-structure the Excel Table accordingly and distribute it to everyone.

**Old Business**

**Council Position on Climate Change:** A paper copy of a Preliminary draft statement was available at the meeting and everyone was invited to work on wordsmithing it. An electronic copy will be provided following the meeting for this purpose.

**Renewable Energy & Technology:**
Resilience and Sustainability:

Public Policy:

**Upcoming Meetings and Events**

Chairman Amann noted that he will not be available for the Energy Council Meeting scheduled for August 20th. Ms. Perantoni will also be away. A motion to cancel the August 20th meeting was submitted by Mr. Breidenbruch and seconded by Mr. DeFeo. All approved and the motion carried.

Mr. DeFeo noted that a Mini Green-Build Conference “Build it Better” is being held on September 12th in Jersey City involving a full day of training and discussion opportunities which is open to a nationwide audience.

USGBC-NJ Summer Social on the beach at the shore, 5:30 pm

Neshanic Valley Golf Club Event by USGBC-NJ

**Public Comment**

No members of the public were present.

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was submitted by Mr. Grant and seconded by Mr. DeFeo at approximately 8:40 pm.