

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE TRI-STATE REGION

Most scientists agree that human activities affect air quality, water availability and purity, soil and tree conditions, which in turn affect the climate. RPA has launched an effort to identify policy responses that make sense under the widest range of political, economic and scientific circumstances.

Many government agencies are responsible for one or another aspect of climate change. Yet climate change impacts often go beyond particular political, bureaucratic or disciplinary boundaries. Dealing with its impacts will require both regional and systems approaches and input from such fields as transportation, construction, energy use, finance and insurance, coastal change, land use patterns, water supply and immigration.

RPA's initiatives over the past year included a series of breakfasts for senior representatives of the financial and business sectors, a survey of government agencies in the region and a workshop at the Regional Assembly.

As a regional, national and global center of the financial industry, the Tri-state region can play a key role in propos-



Participants at a recent breakfast meeting on Climate Change included Granger Morgan of Carnegie Mellon University and RPA Board Member Governor James Florio.

ing and responding to the initiatives now under discussion nationally and internationally. The more than forty participants at the breakfasts expressed strong interest but noted that their industry is not yet addressing climate change as a strategic issue.

Topics at the breakfast included a scientific assessment of climate change impacts on the region, U.S. policy considerations pre- and post the Kyoto international negotiations and a modeling process for integrating the range of climate change issues.

Government Actions on Climate Change in the Metropolitan NY/NJ/CT Region was part of the documentation for the Metro East Coast Climate Impacts Assessment Workshop organized by the Columbia University Earth Institute with RPA. In this survey of 80 public agencies in the region, respondents described innovative initiatives going forward in individual departments, but so far largely unconnected to the kind of policy formulation or inter-agency communication that effective climate change planning requires. A notable exception is the New Jersey Climate Change Work Group which is preparing a State Climate Change Action Plan, and which engages staff on a working basis from many government departments as well as from local government and the private sector.

The breakfast meetings were co-sponsored by EPA Region II. RPA hopes to continue the series in 1998-1999.

For more information on climate change, contact Rob Pirani at 212-253-2727 x305. To order RPA's report, please send \$5.00 to Publications Department, RPA, 4 Irving Place, 7th floor, New York, NY 10003.

Blueprint

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The passage of the Hudson River Park Act in July was a notable exception to an otherwise undistinguished 1998 Albany legislative session. To create the Hudson River waterfront park, which stretches from Battery Park City to 59th Street, the State and City agreed to put up the necessary capital funds and to share jurisdiction over the mix of commercial and open space uses. Governor George Pataki and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani reached agreement on this innovative solution with significant contributions from legislative leaders and after two years of civic coalition building and negotiations. The adjacent communities were given representation on a new form of public benefit corporation to administer the park's operations within strictly drawn parameters. The private revenues generated within the park boundaries were dedicated to maintaining the park. This bill, resulting from a hard-won cooperative effort between government and civic groups including the Hudson River Park Alliance, of which RPA is a member, establishes a template for future mixed-use park developments such as Governors Island.

Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr., a former member of RPA's New Jersey State Planning Committee was appointed as Chair of the New Jersey State Planning Commission.

RPA President Claude Shostal was appointed to Governor Pataki's Land & Water Conservation Task Force, which is seeking renewal of federal funds for state funded open space projects.

Newly elected to RPA's Board of Directors: William Bolster, President of CNBC; Richard J. Carbone, Chief Financial Officer, Prudential Insurance Co. of America; Michael R. Cowan, Sr. VP, Corporate Real Estate & Purchasing, Merrill Lynch & Co.; Ira H. Jolles, Sr. VP & General Counsel, GPU, Inc.; Matthew S. Kissner, President, Pitney Bowes Financial Systems; and Gary M. Rodolitz, Principal, The Rodolitz Organization.

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CREATING THE CAPACITY FOR GROWTH:

RPA'S EIGHTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

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Addressing an audience of nearly 600 during a special mid-morning program at RPA's 1998 Regional Assembly on May 6th, New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman praised RPA for its work in the region. Throughout the years, RPA has set the tone for sound planning and in the process has set an example for other regions across the nation. In producing the Third Regional Plan, you once again offered a blueprint for keeping our states on the path to progress. That document strikes a proper balance among diverse goals for the region, and I know I speak for my counterparts in Albany and Hartford in applauding you

Our state is going through the second round of an extensive cross-acceptance process [of the NJ State Plan] with the hope of giving local governments a greater stake in the success of the plan. And here I want to acknowledge the commitment to the State Plan made by my predecessor, Jim Florio, who is now member of your board.

With the Tri-State region entering its sixth year of growth, the anxiety that existed in the early 1990's has finally been replaced by a renewed sense of confidence in the region's future. This confidence, however, is tempered by reminders that a similar mood existed prior to the region's decline in the late 1980's. We clearly remain over-reliant on Wall Street with its inherent volatility and cycles of boom and bust. There is also concern that problems related to growth—labor shortages, high housing costs, congested highways and subways, disappearing open space, increased emissions and waste—could damage the region's quality of life and threaten the duration of the expansion. *Creating the Capacity for Growth* explored how we could harness our many assets—our transportation network, our waterfront and parkland, potential development sites in our cities, and the diverse and creative people who live there—to sustain growth, expand prosperity and enhance quality of life.



New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman at RPA's 1998 Regional Assembly.

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