
CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – October 5, 2018
Metropolitan Planning Council
140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60603

Attendees

Brad Kasberg, Audubon Great Lakes
John Mick II, Baxter & Woodman, Inc.
Sarah Coulter, Calumet Collaborative
Kim Siemens, CDMSmith
Marcella Bondie Keenan, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Hal Sprague, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Thomas Burke, Christopher Burke Engineering
Kira Baltutis, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Nora Beck, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Jane Grover, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Kelwin Harris, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Katanya Raby, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Lynnette Widder, Columbia University NY
Dylan O'Reilly, Current Water
Andrew Donakowski, Friends of the Chicago River
Karoline Qasem, Geosyntec
Patrick Lach, Hey and Associates
Ron Henderson, Illinois Institute of Technology, Landscape Architecture + Urbanism
Annie Turek, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Jeff Edstrom, Illinois State Water Survey
Jerry McGovern, Independent
Saki Handa, Mott MacDonald
Sarah Cardona, Metropolitan Planning Council
Josh Ellis, Metropolitan Planning Council
Justin Keller, Metropolitan Planning Council
Adam Slade, Metropolitan Planning Council
Richard Fisher, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Aida Guido, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Brian Hacker, Regional Transportation Authority
Bill Wood, SmithGroup JJR
Katherine Moore Powell, The Field Museum
Eric Boria, University of Illinois at Chicago
Dean Massey, University of Illinois at Chicago
Moira Zellner, University of Illinois at Chicago
Leila Ward, Village of Robbins (resident)
Juanita Williams, Village of Robbins (resident)



Member Updates

Marcella Bondie Keenan from CNT announced the APA-IL Diversity Committee is hosting the 2nd annual Equity in Planning panel discussion on October 18. This year's event will focus on diversity and inclusion in the field of transportation and will be held in the lower level of UIC's CUPPA Hall (412 S Peoria St., Chicago) from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The panel discussion will be immediately followed by a networking event. More information is available [here](#).

Jane Grover from CMAP reminded us that the [CMAP ON TO 2050 launch event](#) is being held on October 10 at Millennium Park. Although registration is officially closed, additional tickets are available by emailing Jane directly at jgrover@cmapp.illinois.gov.

Nora Beck from CMAP reported that the 2018 Call for Projects for the Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program closes on October 26, and they are looking for projects in the Calumet region. For information on how to apply, click [here](#). Brian Hacker from RTA added that transportation projects can be submitted through the same process, and such projects, if awarded, will be directed to the RTA Community Planning program.

Jerry McGovern shared that the Illinois Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers will be hosting a one-day green infrastructure seminar on November 7 at UIC. The seminar will focus on *completed* projects, lessons learned during actual construction and continued performance. Registration costs and other details are available [here](#). He added that special pricing is available for students.

Moira Zellner from UIC announced the Urban Data Visualization Lab is celebrating this year's GIS Day on November 16. Speakers will be presenting on using visualization in an era of uncertainty in addition to a poster session and workshops (potentially including how to use Q-GIS). Stay tuned for more details as the event approaches.

Lynnette Widder, lecturer from Columbia University NY, and Ron Henderson, professor at IIT, were visiting the CSC with a group of students as part of a design-based workshop which looks at green infrastructure and other sustainability challenges. Last year's course used Blue Island as the backdrop, and this year they visited the Village of Robbins. Any recommendations for next year's workshop, including another community in the Calumet region that might benefit from collaborating with sustainability students at Columbia, can contact Lynnette at lw268@columbia.edu.

Josh Ellis from MPC announced the 2nd annual Chicago Fishes event will be held on October 19. Sign up [here](#) to join MPC and various partners on the Chicago Riverwalk. Additionally, there is a [GoFundMe campaign](#) to raise money to buy fishing equipment which will later be donated to the Park District.

Sarah Cardona from MPC shared how the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative was featured as a regional model for cross-agency collaboration in climate resiliency at the Great Lakes Adaptation Forum last month in Ann Arbor, MI. During a 75-minute panel discussion, Sarah as well as CSC members Ray Bell (Faith in Place) and Jeff Edstrom (IDNR) talked about the CSC's track-record convening since 2014 and the accomplishments to date fostering collaboration in addressing urban flooding in the Calumet. They detailed the successful Chi-Cal Rivers Fund application involving multiple partners actively involved in the CSC joining with Faith In Place's efforts which collectively

have redirected an estimated 2,642,149 gallons of stormwater runoff. Through presentations like these, the word is spreading about the CSC's model of cross-agency bringing together resources towards project implementation, kudos to all!

Katherine Moore Powell from The Field Museum reminded that the second Chicago Wilderness workshop to discuss climate impacts in CW prairies will be held on October 15 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the [Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie Visitor Center](#). The workshop will convene experts to discuss impacts on both remnant prairies and created urban grasslands, and they hope to get more people involved; the workshop is not just climate change adaptation for prairies, but they also want to look at urban created greenscapes for stormwater management.

Presentation

Summary of ongoing flood mitigation and economic development efforts in the Village of Robbins

Richard Fisher, Senior Civil Engineer, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Moira Zellner, Associate Professor, UIC Dept. of Urban Planning and Policy, Research Associate Professor, Inst. for Environmental Science and Policy, Director, Urban Data Visualization Lab

Kelwin Harris, Senior Outreach Planner, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Brian Hacker, Senior Planner, Regional Transportation Authority

Theme: advancing the CSC's Goal 3: Increase the municipal capacity and reduce the fragmentation across Calumet government actors.

Discussion tied to CSC Activity: Establish baseline of municipal capacity in stormwater management.

Rich Fisher from MWRD began this exciting suite of presentations about the Village of Robbins. MWRD identified Robbins as an area of flooding and began analyzing flood control measures in 2014. Through their analysis, they found that 140 acres and nearly 100 home are impacted. In addition to continuous flooding, the village has a lack of investment, vacant land, limited open space amenities, and a poor relationship to transit. Through a coalition of partners leveraging local expertise, a bold initiative is underway to affect positive socioeconomic change for Robbins by reducing flooding and creating new recreational and economic opportunity near Midlothian Creek. During this process, it was very important to engage local residents and incorporate their desires into the planning process, so UIC was able to bring in a team to help with community engagement.

Moira Zellner discussed UIC's community engagement process, which ran from October 2017 to July 2018. Through various workshops, the team collected participant input to inform a strategy for addressing the existing problems using maps and modeling to consider changes to the proposed list of park amenities, and then facilitated a structured discussion around what resources are available to support the community. Key questions included asking residents what would improve their happiness, health and safety, and how flooding impacts the pursuit of these outcomes. The methods employed in and the community engagement—diagramming issues and opportunities, thinking spatially with maps and models, and considering what resources exist to bring the park to fruition—were highly impactful, both helping build a more thorough understanding of the project and project partners as well as yielding a multi-faceted discussion around the park and larger community needs.

From there, Kelwin Harris and Brian Hacker discussed CMAP and RTA's collaboration on the TOD and industrial area aspects of the project, as the Village of Robbins applied to CMAP and RTA for Local Technical Assistance to help ignite the conversation around land within a former floodplain now available for new transit-oriented development investment adjacent to the stormwater park and the nearby Robbins Metra station. Robbins has a rich history and many prominent former residents, but also suffers from disinvestment, a loss of industry and a legacy of environmental injustice. Kelwin and Brian discussed the status of their Existing Conditions Report and the ongoing community engagement to support the TOD and industrial area planning. For more information about the CMAP and RTA plan, visit their project site [here](#).

Visit the [CSC website](#) to review the full presentation materials.

Launch of the CSC 3-Year Work Plan and Meeting Wrap-up

Sarah presented the new CSC 3-Year Work Plan document, acknowledging and thanking everyone for their insightful input and time spent together formulating the direction of this body of work throughout the work planning process over these many months. Through that collective work, the CSC reaffirmed its fundamental goals and delineated measurable objectives to work towards in order to advance mitigating urban flooding and building a more resilient Calumet region. At the core of the multi-phased 3-Year Work Plan are 4 Foundational Activities which are:

Activity 1: Establish a baseline of existing green infrastructure

Activity 2: Establish a baseline of non-overbank flooding

Activity 3: Develop and begin to execute systems to provide relevant training strengthen management systems to bolster green infrastructure implementation and maintenance

Activity 4: Establish a baseline of municipal capacity in stormwater management

A copy of the 3-Year Work Plan can be [found here](#). A designed version of the Work Plan with photos will be ready by the end of the month for members to use in seeking funding or other support for their efforts that align with the broader CSC agenda in the Calumet region.

There are two remaining CSC meetings this calendar year. Friday, November 2 will be a Work Group meeting to give time to advance next steps on these Activities. At the December 7 meeting, Work Groups will present their Activities and next steps before breaking for the Year-End Celebration!

Next Meeting

Friday, November 2, 2018

Work group-focused meeting

10:00am to 12:00pm

Metropolitan Planning Council

140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago

For more information contact:

Sarah Cardona
Metropolitan Planning Council
312.863.6009
scardona@metroplanning.org