
CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – December 7, 2018
Metropolitan Planning Council
140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60603



Attendees

Kim Siemens, CDM Smith
Thomas Burke, Christopher Burke Engineering
Nora Beck, CMAP
Kate Evasic, CMAP
Christopher Antonopoulos, Cook County Dept. of Environment and Sustainability
Jack Eskin, Delta Institute
Matt Bardol, Geosyntec
Karoline Qasem, Geosyntec
Patrick Lach, Hey and Associates
Jeff Edstrom, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Annie Turek, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
Jerry McGovern, Independent
Anjolie Cheema, Jacobs
Saki Handa, Mott MacDonald
Lissa Domoracki, Metro Strategies
Sarah Cardona, MPC
Josh Ellis, MPC
Danielle Gallet, MPC
Justin Keller, MPC
Bob Newport, MPC
Adam Slade, MPC
Ted Haffner, Openlands
Cheryl Watson, RainReady Chatham Committee
Bill Wood, SmithGroup
Katherine Moore Powell, The Field Museum
Melissa Custic, The Morton Arboretum
Emily Okallau, The Morton Arboretum
Eric Boria, University of Illinois at Chicago
Moira Zellner, University of Illinois at Chicago
Mary Pat McGuire, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Karen Kreis, Village of Midlothian

Member Updates

Melissa Custic from the Morton Arboretum said the Chicago Region Trees Initiative will be hosting their 5th Annual Partner Recognition Celebration and launching their Master Plan on January 9, 2019. The event will take place at Morton Arboretum, and dinner and drinks will be served. Click [here](#) for more information and to register for the event.

Annie Turek from IDNR announced the Coastal Management Program is now accepting pre-applications for grant-funded projects to start in fall 2019. They will award grants to projects that protect, preserve, and restore the natural and cultural resources along the Illinois Lake Michigan shoreline. Pre-applications are due by 5:00 PM on January 18, 2019. Details are available [here](#), including a list of past awardees. Contact Annie Turek (annie.turek@illinois.gov) or Lisa Cotner (dnr.cmp@illinois.gov) with questions.

Katherine Moore Powell shared that the final Chicago Wilderness Prairies Climate Adaptation Workshop would take place on December 10, 2018. For more information about this initiative, visit www.cwprairies.org.

Danielle Gallet reported that the watershed plans for the Poplar Creek and the Lower Des Plaines River watersheds within Cook County are now complete with supplemental water-quality focused materials, making communities within their respective watersheds eligible to apply to Illinois EPA's Section 319 Grant Program. MPC led this work in partnership with Christopher B. Burke Engineering, and this complements the work done last year to update watershed plans for the Little Calumet and Cal-Sag Channel watersheds. The updated plans do not list or schedule specific projects, but rather create a framework under which stakeholders can plan projects that fit with community contexts and priorities and reduce pollutant loadings, such as non-pipe, nature-based solutions. Danielle thanked all partners involved and reminded everyone to encourage communities to apply to the IEPA Section 319 grant program.

Karen Kreis, a Trustee from the Village of Midlothian, shared the good news that MWRD broke ground in November on a \$7.63 million flood mitigation project benefitting Midlothian and Oak Forest. The project timeline is approximately two years, after which 237 homes and structures will be protected. She said this project began in 2013 with just one person advocating for the community, which shows that one person can make a difference.

Sarah Cardona from MPC congratulated Maggie Catania on becoming the new Village Planner for Robbins. Prior to accepting the role, Maggie was a fellow at MPC, and we are excited to continue working with her in this new capacity.

Josh Ellis from MPC announced that MarySue Barrett, President of MPC, was added to Governor-elect Pritzker's infrastructure committee. He also congratulated Danielle Gallet on being promoted to Director of Water Resources at MPC.

Danielle Gallet shared that [WEFTEC](#) is coming to Chicago in 2019. The event, held at McCormick Place and other venues around the city, will attract nationwide and international experts in water and stormwater management. WEF is seeking suggestions for local service projects in conjunction with the conference, which typically focus on green infrastructure. Email dgallet@metroplanning.org if you have suggested sites or for more information.

Extended Member Update

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant 2018-2019: hydrogeologic soil research for green stormwater infrastructure planning and design

Mary Pat McGuire, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant

IISG is conducting a study to assess soils and their impact on stormwater infrastructure in two Calumet region communities, the Village of Midlothian and Calumet City. Based on Goal 3 from CNT's RainReady Calumet Corridor, IL plan—which recommends retrofitting the landscape to

“sink” and “hold” stormwater—the study aims to investigate how the land can be retrofitted to accomplish that.

Imagery from the 1930s shows that, prior to urbanization, the region had lake bed geology, and a lakeshore ridge was still visible from former Lake Chicago. Soil samples found a mix of sandy textures in former breach ridges, mixed soils, and fill (i.e., soil manipulation). Using the April 2013 5” storm event to calibrate their models, researchers conducted hydrologic conductivity testing and saturated soil testing (i.e., infiltration rates). Next, they tested the potential effectiveness of green infrastructure, such as native plantings versus permeable pavers, in different types of soils and how large the infrastructure must be in order to be effective. Once the analysis is complete, the researchers will target communities and install pilot projects. The team will bring periodic updates to the CSC as this work continues in 2019.

Work Group Updates

Activity 1: Establish baseline of existing green infrastructure

Data & Modeling and Planning & Policy Work Group representatives

Annie Turek, IDNR, Karoline Qasem, Geosyntec and Sarah Cardona, MPC

To move forward Activity 1 in the [CSC 3-Year Work Plan](#), a combined group of D&M and P&P Work Group members, with help from external advisors, will conduct a needs and feasibility assessment for establishing a baseline inventory of green infrastructure in the Calumet region. CSC members previously identified there is limited understanding of where existing green infrastructure has been implemented. The IDNR Coastal Management Program is funding MPC to lead this needs assessment, including convening an Advisory Committee to answer some fundamental questions around the need for an inventory, whether something similar already exists, and what purpose such an inventory would serve.

The Advisory Committee will participate in a series of meetings, with the kick off to be held in late-January. The advisors will consist of CSC members as well as key partners with knowledge about green infrastructure or those who have a keen interest in green infrastructure being implemented more effectively. In addition, the D&M and P&P Work Group will give periodic reports and further discuss this work with the broader CSC. If the Work Group determines the inventory to be feasible and worthwhile, they will draft next steps for actually producing a Green Infrastructure Baseline Inventory.

[Anyone interested in participating in this effort should contact Sarah Cardona \(scardona@metroplanning.org\).](mailto:scardona@metroplanning.org)

Activity 2: Establish baseline of non-overbank flooding

Data & Modeling and Planning & Policy Work Group representatives

Justin Keller, MPC & Matt Bardol, Geosyntec

Similar to initial steps for Activity 1, a combined group of D&M and P&P Work Group members decided to conduct a needs assessment for advancing next steps in Activity 2, establishing a baseline inventory of urban flooding in the Calumet region. Based on previous conversations at the CSC, there is a need to assess the current state and extent of the problem of non-overbank flooding as a baseline understanding which can help determine whether current or future strategic investments make an impact on reducing said urban flooding. An Advisory Committee comprised of CSC members and external experts will meet to discuss an operational definition of urban flooding, identify potential data sources and data gaps, overall feasibility of establishing a baseline

and explore uses and users of such an inventory. If this Work Group determines the inventory to be feasible and worthwhile, they will draft next steps for actually producing an Urban Flooding Baseline Inventory.

Anyone interested in participating in this effort should contact Sarah Cardona (scardona@metroplanning.org).

Activity 3: Provide training and strengthen management to bolster implementation and maintenance of green infrastructure

Training & Maintenance Work Group representatives

Margaret Schneeman, IL-IN Sea Grant, Emily Okallau, Morton Arboretum & Jeff Edstrom, IDNR

The T&M Work Group has been hard at work developing trainings and new models. Efforts to advance Activity 3 include working with OAI, MWRD and WEF to bring the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program (NGICP) to Chicago in 2019. That program, which has a 25 student capacity, includes 35 hours of training and one day in the field. The Work Group is also advancing developing green infrastructure training initiatives adapting Rainscaping to Illinois and adapting the Chicago Region Trees Initiative's urban forestry basic training on topics about forestry and tree management.

The Work Group is also focusing on developing a system for shared green infrastructure maintenance services as well as improving the terms of procurements and contracts to ensure maintenance. This work can take the form of additional trainings as well as developing model procurement and contract language for stakeholders to use.

Activity 4: Establish baseline of municipal capacity in stormwater management

Municipal Outreach & Engagement Work Group representative

Adam Slade, MPC

A reconstituted workgroup of CSC members, the Municipal Outreach & Engagement Work Group is planning initial steps to advance Activity 4 by developing a survey to determine the level of capacity of governments throughout the Calumet region to manage stormwater. MPC is leveraging its broader work in government effectiveness supporting service sharing, trainings, and embedding staff in under resourced communities to help shape this new line of work with CSC members. The Work Group developed indicators that help define municipal capacity in stormwater management and are discussing how to ensure a robust response to a survey in 2019.

Anyone interested in participating in these conversations should contact Sarah Cardona (scardona@metroplanning.org).

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

CSC 2018 Wrap-up & Holiday Social

Sarah closed the meeting by recapping the tremendous progress made this year when the CSC undertook a robust strategic planning process to think about what longer term impact the group wants to make. Culminating with the [3-Year Work Plan](#), which will be updated regularly, the CSC has captured all of the exciting activities it will move forward as well as the amazing Member-led Activities that align with the goals of the CSC to comprise the full picture of what the CSC is up to in the Calumet region. If you have a Member-led Activity to add, please contact Sarah Cardona.

Sarah expressed appreciation to IDNR and the Crown Family Philanthropies who are supporting big pieces of our work going forward. MPC, with help from this financial support, will be bringing

additional resources—such as dedicated time from Justin Keller and Adam Slade—to support the CSC in advancing this body of work. MPC is eager to help leverage additional resources specifically for the CSC and its members over the coming months and are open to ideas and suggestions.

The meeting ended with holiday socializing, including bestowing prizes in recognition of commitment and diligence of members who attended the most monthly CSC meetings in 2018: Katherine Moore Powel, Kim Siemens, Annie Turek and Jeff Edstrom. This year, the Most Valuable Players award was given to the Training & Maintenance Work Group for their outstanding dedication and tons of volunteer hours meeting outside the CSC to advance their initiatives they are making great progress on!

Sarah acknowledged that everyone at the CSC is an All-Star, thanked everybody for a fantastic year and wished everyone a happy and safe holiday season!

Next Meeting

Friday, January 4, 2019
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Metropolitan Planning Council
140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago

For more information contact:

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