
CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – July 10, 2015

South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association

1904 174th St, E. Hazel Crest



Attendees

John Mick II, Baxter and Woodman, Inc.
Allison Neuman, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Burrell Poe, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Marcella Bondie Keenan, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Mary Debacker, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Monica Giermek, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Anjulie Cheema, CH2M
Nora Beck, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Louise Yeung, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Jane Hornstein, Cook County Department of Planning & Development
Jessica DeWitt, Cook County Department of Planning & Development
Eve Pytel, Delta Institute
Lyndon Valicenti, Foresight Design Initiative
Michelle Uting, Forests Preserve District of Cook County
Eric Otto, Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Anthony Cefali, Friends of the Chicago River
Mary Ellen Guest, Historic Chicago Bungalow Association
Amy Walkenbach, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
Josh Ellis, Metropolitan Planning Council
Danielle Gallet, Metropolitan Planning Council
Kelsey Pudlock, Metropolitan Planning Council
John Watson, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Tim Oravec, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Brent Shraiberg, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Beth Hall, Midwest Regional Climate Center
John Legge, The Nature Conservancy
Mollie Dowling, OAI Chicago Southland
Andrew Szwak, Openlands
Sean Kelly, Robinson Engineering
Dennis Latto, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
Reggie Greenword, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
Moira Zellner, University of Illinois Chicago



Karen Kreis, Village of Midlothian
Joe Sparrey, Village of Midlothian
Sarah Coulter, Village of Park Forest

Member Updates

Josh Ellis, MPC, notified everyone that there is a job posting for an Associate Director for the Environmental Change Initiative at Notre Dame that numerous Collaborative members have been passing around. If you are interested, please see the full description and list of qualifications here: <https://jobs.nd.edu/postings/2834>.

Burrell Poe, CNT, announced that the Midlothian Interim Report has been made public. You can find the report here: <http://www.cnt.org/publications/rainready-midlothian-interim-report>. CNT hosted a luau water parade in Midlothian that was well attended. Midlothian is also working with MWRD and CNT to apply for grants, and they are thankful for all the support of the Collaborative.

Eve Pytel, Delta Institute, announced that the green infrastructure template initiative they have been working on is essentially complete. They will all be on the web starting the week after the meeting. One component of the template are CAD files that can be used for your own purposes. She thanked everyone in the Collaborative for their feedback and support. John Watson, MWRD, asked about the delivery method. Eve replied that Delta will issue a press release, reach out to partners, make an announcement in CMAP's newsletter as well as many other places. They will likely do a thorough presentation on the work at the next CSC meeting. Another Collaborative member asked what firm did the design work. Eve said the team who did the work was Gydon Design based in Indianapolis. They are a relatively small firm but have good experience.

Mollie Dowling, OAI and High Bridge, announced that their first green infrastructure project had been installed in Blue Island along a parkway in a residential neighborhood. This summer High Bridge is installing various Illinois Green Infrastructure Grants (IGIG) projects. The installation created two jobs, but they are hoping to create more as well as be involved in more installations. Josh Ellis, MPC, asked what were the lessons learned from the first installation. Mollie replied that they intend to do curb cuts but the corner of 119th and Washington crumbled in the site preparation, which added an unknown delay to the project.

Dennis Latto, SSMMA, announced that they are halfway a green installation in Calumet Park – all of the site is excavated and they are now working on putting in top soil. A collaborative member asked how SSMMA selected sites. Dennis responded that the geographic site selection area was a combination of assessing topography, soils and community engagement. A total of nine sites have been scoped out and have engineering plans ready.

Louise Yeung, CMAP, recalled that she presented weeks ago on the National Disaster Resilience Competition. She announced that all applications in Illinois are continuing to move into phase II. Currently, they are working on coordinating the projects as well as looking into implementation. They are particularly looking to incorporate the planning and work of CMAP's regional planning update. Each of the four applicants chose different pilot areas based on the emphasis of each application. As of now, the applicants are working with mayors, public works and community residents trying to pinpoint areas for potential projects sites – this includes looking at space within commercial and industrial land uses. Louise pointed out that there are nine types of projects. They need to leverage funding to get projects through as well as embrace sound approaches (it is not just about the physical infrastructure). Agencies invested in the application are looking at how to engage individuals down to the site level. Applications are due October 27th with a 15-day public

comment period, and then awards are given out at the end of the year. Louise would like to do another presentation explaining the processes between the four applications, and overall, HUD's response to all areas was very positive.

John Legge, The Nature Conservancy, announced that the Nature Conservancy partnered with Northeastern Region Prairie Areas as well as the Nature Preservation to study that landscape's water storage capacity and purification capabilities. They will use probes to measure storage, and will look at what kinds of salts are getting into the prairie as well as determine what kinds of benefits they are providing. Another potential site would be at Big Marsh.

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Program is looking at green infrastructure infiltration and salt impact on groundwater. There are currently running one or two projects through the stormwater program application process.

John Watson, MWRD, announced that they are working on their Phase II projects. All project bids came in higher than expected. A collaborative member mentioned this might be a result of all the turnpike construction that is using up a good portion of concrete in the area. Additionally, MWRD has been doing design work with Christopher Burke on templates similar to those the Gydon Design put together for Delta Institute on the behalf of the Collaborative.

Working Group Update: Green Infrastructure Installation, Troubleshooting and Maintenance Training

Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Program, gave an update of the green infrastructure installation, troubleshooting and maintenance training work group. Mollie, Reggie and Dennis among others have been helping to lead the work group over the last six months. The long-term goal is to give people capacity (through tools and programs) to do green infrastructure work; the short-term goal was to do a logic model, which is now complete. The next step is to do a needs assessment, and second to that is to do a market analysis to see where gaps are in the markets related to green infrastructure. Margaret noted that Mollie's work is geared toward some of the long-term goals of the Installation, maintenance and troubleshooting work group. Funding is still needed for a larger market study that looks at return on investments for providing installation and maintenance of services. If anyone is interested and/or wants to become a part of the work group, they meet via conference call every third Wednesday of the month at 11:00am. The goal is to be done in December. The idea is to use the survey to gain feedback similar to what the Collaborative heard about the Blue Island installation process. In this process, the group would like to be comprehensive and be able to take on new data sets in the future.

Jason Berry, City of Blue Island, is highly concerned with the maintenance component. The Chi-Cal Fund is asking for costs and maintenance; therefore, down the line, these outputs can be beneficial to many members of the Collaborative. Eve Pytel commented that Cleveland Botanic Gardens is discussing maintenance and operation - specifically arguing that when choosing green infrastructure, engineers and planners should not select something that the community cannot maintain. Josh mentioned that Pete Mulvaney likely did consulting for the Gardens. Eve further remarked that Delta is facilitating this discussion.

Working Group Update: Modelling and Data-sharing

Anjolie Cheema, CH2M, gave an update on the modelling and data-sharing work group. She stated that the group meets about once a month to discuss what types of tools are being used

through the region and understand any updates on new tool developments. One tool they are working on is a regional mapping viewer which quickly provides geospatial data (building on SSMMA's work). The next step is determining who owns and has/will get permission to the datasets. Thomas Burke from Burke Engineering is also working on a data sharing portal where the Collaborative and other people can add tools and data for various watersheds – with the idea that when new projects arise, modelling efforts are not duplicated. The firm is also working with SSMMA and CMAP in the tools development and sharing capabilities. A third project is a stormwater extent layer which Mason Throneburg at CH2M is leading. He is still determining what is out there to make the layer as comprehensive as possible. Josh commented that if someone starts doing a project in Markham, you could pop up a layer showing what has been done (e.g. dates, contacts, etc.) so you don't have to start from scratch.

Brainstorming discussion + project identification: Coordinating upcoming grant opportunities

- [Section 319](#) - due July 31st

Josh Ellis, MPC, covered the plan for applying for Section 319 funding. He pointed out that in reality, the majority of Calumet is not covered or included in an approved watershed plan, and therefore is not eligible for 319 funding. MPC has talked with IEPA, and believes an application can quickly be put together. The idea is to apply for funding, then contract firms to add amendments to MWRD's detailed watershed plans that includes all the missing components of an EPA-compliant watershed-based plan. The amendments would then turn the existing detailed watershed plans into approved plans. MPC understands that the two MWRD detailed watershed plans (Calumet-Sag and Little Calumet) do not cover all geographies, but there are many Collaborative members that are potential applicants in the geographies that are covered. If everything goes to plan, those interested would be in a position to apply for the next round of Section 319 funding in the 2016-17 fiscal year. The deadline for this application is July 31st, 2015.

- [NOAA's new Regional Coastal Resilience Grants Program](#) - due July 24th

Louise Yeung, CMAP, gave a presentation on the proposal CMAP is putting together for NOAA's Regional Coastal Resilience Grant program. She stated that there are \$5 million available dollars, which is pretty sizable, and all of Cook County is eligible for these funds. CMAP is taking the lead as they have experience with managing federal money; and so far, the biggest challenge is the grant requires a 50% local match. Louise emphasized that the grant is really focused on planning aspects rather than implementation. The proposal recaps the main challenges of the region articulated by the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative – a lack of basic data, aging and inefficient infrastructure, and repeated, ineffective interventions. In response, there are three elements that are being proposed:

- 1) Condition assessments – this will look at a community or municipality's flooding, temperature change (heat and/or drought), and/or tree canopy cover. The plan of action is to follow up through capital improvement projects (CIPs). Currently there is one being done in Blue Island and Richmond Park.
- 2) Building regional capacity – this can be done by tying back results into the larger H&H models, or it can tie into Lydia Scott's tree canopy work at the Morton Arboretum.
- 3) Infrastructure assessments – this will be done by looking at green and grey infrastructure together; including water supply and transportation infrastructure conditions.

Overall, the work will be looking at municipal infrastructure and public utility systems (see CMAP's presentation for more details). The grant proposal covers a 3-year period. CMAP will be asking for a total of \$800,000; they currently have half of the local match.

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant will also be putting in a NOAA application given that NOAA is the 'umbrella' agency of Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant. They are putting in an application to offer Great Lakes network-wide grants in pilot communities across the Great Lakes region. They will be using NOAA's suite of resilience planning tools that have been distributed to agencies supported by NOAA. Margaret Schneemann noted that CMAP's is likely more comprehensive. If they received funding, they are focusing on Calumet City and others in Cook County.

- [Chi-Cal Rivers Fund](#) - due July 27th

Josh Ellis, MPC, stated that the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund has three categories: Green infrastructure, enhancing recreational amenities and habitat restoration. Those that are apply for Chi-Cal Rivers Fund are SSMMA and OAI for Calumet City, Olympia Fields for a stormwater green detention system, and Karen Kris on behalf of the Village of Midlothian. Karen noted that there is a house in the Village that needs to be demolished. The Illinois Housing Authority is paying for the demolition and they are using it as a match for a permeable parking lot with native planting buffers right where it floods from Natalie Creek. Alsip Park District will also be applying; they have two projects in the design phase, as well as work to be done along the Cal-Sag trail. There is more of a recreational component for the Cal-Sag trail, which runs through Blue Island on land leased by MWRD. Michelle Uting, Forest Preserves of Cook County, also stated that FPCC will be applying to the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund for a centennial volunteer project and habitat restoration in the Preserves.

John Legge, The Nature Conservancy, mentioned that he used to be an IDNR tech reviewer for habitat restoration projects that came through the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, and is available for input to all applicants. He pointed out that the grant comes from government and non-government funds, so the decision-making process can often be complex.

Josh Ellis stated that MPC will be applying to the Chi-Cal Rivers not on the behalf of the Collaborative, but for the Great Rivers Chicago initiative with Friends of the Chicago River. They will be applying for telescope technology, called '[Owlized](#)', that allows the public to view 3-D panoramic view of various imagery – historic, current and future – from right where they are standing (and looking into the telescope). The idea is to install these over the course of the next year or so, and acquire discretionary funds to then be set-up for neighborhood groups and non-profit organizations that want to implement projects that are in line with Great Rivers Chicago and activate the river/riverfront.

- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Josh Ellis, MPC, stated that the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has not set criteria or announced a call for applications yet, so there is not much to talk about now. It is likely that people will have a better understanding what the funding looks like and what that means for advancing the Collaborative's work when this information is made public.

- Others Grant Opportunities

Eve Pytel, Delta Institute, announced that the Great Lake Protection Fund just open some opportunities and Delta has historically engaged in this opportunity. Pytel mentioned that they do a lot of soil, water quality and agriculture (related to runoff) projects. She pointed out that it can be a difficult application process, and encouraged interested parties to reach out and have a conversation with the Fund managers first before applying. Josh Ellis commented that projects usually have to be applied across the greater Midwest region. Another Collaborative member mentioned that NOAA's SAARP, which is focused on extreme weather preparedness is accepting applications as well.

After each of these grant opportunities were discussed as a whole, the Collaborative broke out into three groups to discuss one of the following grant applications: Section 319 funding, NOAA's Regional Coastal Resilience grant, and the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund. Leads for each of these grants guided the smaller discussions and received feedback from those interested in the proposed project.

Final Remarks

The next meeting will be held from 10am-12pm on August 7th at MPC. The meeting will likely give an overview of what grants were submitted, MWRD's as well as Delta Institute's design templates, Moira Zellner's, UIC, modelling efforts, and a presentation covering IDNR's Report for the Urban Flooding Awareness Act.

Next Meeting

Friday, August 7, 10:00am – 12:00pm

Metropolitan Planning Council

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