
CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – December 6, 2019
Calumet Collaborative
1000 E. 111th Street, Chicago, IL 60628



Attendees

Olga Bautista, Alliance for the Great Lakes
Brad Kasberg, Audubon Great Lakes
Sarah Coulter, Calumet Collaborative
Marcella Bondie Keenan, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Grant Webster, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Drew Williams-Clark, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Emily Okallau, Chicago Region Trees Initiative/The Morton Arboretum
Kimberly Nowicki, Cook County DEMRS
Angela Tovar, Cook County Environment and Sustainability
Chelsey Grassfield, Friends of the Chicago River
Patrick Lach, Hey and Associates
Vidya Balasubramanyam, IDNR Prairie Research Institute
Jeff Edstrom, Illinois Coastal Program
Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
Jennifer Coryell, JLC Environmental Corp.
Danielle Gallet, Metropolitan Planning Council
Justin Keller, Metropolitan Planning Council
Adam Slade, Metropolitan Planning Council
Ryan Wilson, Metropolitan Planning Council
Jessica Hanlon, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Justin Hart, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Ted Haffner, Openlands
Jen Jenkins, The Nature Conservancy

Special Welcome

Our host for the day, Sarah Coulter of the Calumet Collaborative, thanked the CSC for coming to Pullman. She highlighted the limited access to public transit, which makes redevelopment of the Calumet challenging. She highlighted many of the great things going on, though, some of which were visible out the windows. The scaffolding recently came down from the Pullman clock tower, and it will open as a National Park Service visitor center in 2021. Also visible was the Method soap factory, Gotham Greens urban farm, Whole Foods distribution center, probably the greenest Walmart in the country, the Skyway connecting Illinois and Indiana, a golf course built on a brownfield site, and much more, including downtown Chicago's skyline.

Calumet Collaborative is happy to host community engagement meetings and workshops, so feel free to reach out!

Member Updates

Chelsey Grassfield from Friends of the Chicago River highlighted the great information available in their newsletter.

Emily Okallau said the Chicago Region Trees Initiative will host their annual meeting on Wednesday, December 11 in North Chicago. There will be food, drinks, and great speakers!

Kimberly Nowicki, Regional Planner with Cook County Department of Emergency Management & Regional Security, highlighted their new name and new URL (below). All the information is currently being transferred over, and they continue to populate links. This will take more time, but you can check it out now. She is also working with Angela Tovar from Cook County Environment and Sustainability (who was also present) to reach and work with more municipalities. The work is going well, and she will continue to keep us updated. New URL: <http://cookcountyemergencymanagement.org>.

Danielle Gallet announced that Ryan Wilson joined the MPC team, replacing Sarah Cardona but bringing his unique skillset and tremendous personality. Ryan added that he is happy to be back involved with the CSC and is looking forward to getting to know everyone better. (We are excited to work with you, Ryan!)

Presentations

Theme: Advancing the CSC's Goal 1: Significant reduction in non-overbank flooding; and Goal 4: Data-driven decision-making is more prevalent in stormwater management planning.

Connecting Community-Based Organizations to Create Environmental Equity

Olga Bautista, Alliance for the Great Lakes

Marcella Bondie Keenan, Center for Neighborhood Technology

Drew Williams-Clark, Center for Neighborhood Technology

CNT popularized the term "urban flooding" with their report, [The Prevalence and Cost of Urban Flooding](#). Whereas FEMA floodplain maps show riverine flooding areas, CNT's analysis found that the majority of flood damage claims were filed for locations away from lakes and rivers, often far away. In 2018, they received funding to look at how urban flooding occurs along racial lines in the City of Chicago. While flood claim payouts were made in 56 of 59 Chicago zip codes, they found that 87% occurred in communities of color (i.e., non-white, non-Hispanic households, based on Census data). Flooding impacts were felt most acutely in areas with over 90% households of color, and comparatively few claims were made in areas with less than 30% households of color. The [full CNT report](#) is available online, and check out the [blog post](#).

Transitioning to other environmental equity concerns, Olga discussed Chicago's southeast side, which juxtaposes Lake Michigan with the most heavily industrialized areas of the city. This area is similar to other post-industrial Great Lakes communities, but they have seen many social justice victories in recent years. For example, they successfully battled manganese dust pollution, as explained in [this video](#). The Alliance for the Great Lakes also made multi-year commitment to Calumet Connect and is working with group leaders to strengthen the communities' infrastructure, weighing in with community priorities of racial equity, community benefits, and challenging the type of development that is not desired in the area. In addition to these efforts, they received a commitment from Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development to co-create a databook to inform industrial corridor modernization in the Calumet, participated in the Lightfoot Administration's environment transition committee, and held a water summit with artists and panelists discussing pollution, flooding, water quality and affordability.

Calumet Stormwater Collaborative Year-End Review

Drew Williams-Clark, Center for Neighborhood Technology

Vidya Balasubramanyam, IDNR Prairie Research Institute

Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
Justin Keller, Metropolitan Planning Council

The CSC launched its [3-year Workplan](#) on October 5, 2018. Now that we're 14 months in, we heard an update from representatives of each of the foundational activities:

1. Establish a baseline of existing green infrastructure
2. Establish a baseline of non-overbank flooding
3. Develop and begin to execute systems to provide relevant training and strengthen management systems to bolster green infrastructure implementation and maintenance
4. Establish a baseline of municipal capacity in stormwater management

We are proud to be making great progress on each of these initiatives, and we are looking forward to more good things in 2020. For anyone interested in being part of these initiatives, continue attending CSC meetings and feel free to join any of the Work Groups! The next Work Group-focused meeting will be February 2020.

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

Next Meeting

Friday, January 10, 2020
10:00am to 12:00pm
Metropolitan Planning Council
140 S. Dearborn, Suite 1400, Chicago

For more information contact:
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