
CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – April 8, 2014

Metropolitan Planning Council

140 S. Dearborn Ave, Suite 1400, Chicago



Attendees

Jason Berry, City of Blue Island
Hal Sprague, Center for Neighborhood Technology
Benet Haller, Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development
Michael Berkshire, Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development
Aaron Koch, Chicago Department of Water Management
Jason Navota, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Nora Beck, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Zhanna Yermakov, Chicago Park District
Nancy Williamson, Chicago Wilderness
Kevin Schnoes, Cook County Department of Environmental Control
Dominic Tocci, Cook County Department of Planning & Development
Margaret Renas, Delta Institute
Eric Otto, Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Lisa Cotner, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Amy Walkenbach, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
John Watson, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
James Yurik, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Emy Brawley, Openlands
Dennis Latto, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
Ed Paesel, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
Reggie Greenwood South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
Bob Newport, USEPA
Josh Ellis, Metropolitan Planning Council
Abby Crisostomo, Metropolitan Planning Council

Observing

Susan Harper, Seattle Public Utilities
Laurens van der Tak, CH2M HILL
Kaitlyn McClain, Metropolitan Planning Council
Caroline Rendon, Metropolitan Planning Council
Deb Spencer, Metropolitan Planning Council
Mason Throneburg, CH2M HILL



Welcome and Context Setting

Josh provided a brief history of the Millennium Reserve and how the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative came to be as a result of the 2013 revamping of the entire initiative. Governor Quinn issued Executive Order 13-03 that created a task force and steering committee to identify key stakeholders and initiatives within the Millennium Reserve. The task force is comprised of agency directors of IDNR, DCEO, IDOT, IHPA and IEPA. The steering committee is comprised of individuals from local government agencies, state agencies, nonprofit organizations and foundations working within the Millennium Reserve region. The steering group solicited projects that focus upon improving the economy, community and environment of the region.

After substantial vetting of potential priority areas, the steering group named the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative, facilitated by MPC, as one of thirteen priority projects. Much more detail on the Millennium Reserve steering committee process will be available soon, once the State of Illinois releases the final report of that committee. This is anticipated to happen in May. Between now and then, the thirteen priority projects have been encouraged to get underway and the five state agencies identified above requested to identify resources with which they might support those projects.

The Calumet Stormwater Collaborative addresses three central problems: 1) Stormwater overwhelms current infrastructure; 2) Green infrastructure's role in stormwater management is still taking shape; and 3) Coordinated action between government units and other stakeholders controlling land, infrastructure, financing tools and regulatory powers is necessary to solve systemic problems in systemic ways. The Millennium Reserve steering committee identified this as a priority for both its potential for systemic change, but also because it was believed that but for the engagement of state agencies and various steering committee members, significant improvements might not be achieved.

Introductions

The primary purpose of this first meeting was for everyone to introduce themselves and talk about what they bring to the table (i.e. land, infrastructure, funds or regulatory powers) so that the group can get started working right away at the next meeting. Each individual and organization explained their role or interest in stormwater management issues in the Millennium Reserve footprint, and in the region more broadly. Detailed below are several new opportunities for engagement by the Collaborative which came to light through these introductions.

- **Zhanna Yarmakov: Chicago Parks District** has acquired 1,000 new acres of brownfields that they will be converting to wildlife habitat, with a potential for naturalized stormwater management.
- **Reggie Greenwood: South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association** is creating a social venture with workforce training that would install green infrastructure. This is a partnership with OAI, Inc. Currently have \$170,000 and need to bring more sites to the project.
- **Emy Brawley: The Cook County Land Bank Authority** has interest in using vacant land for stormwater mitigation, but only instances where it is the optimal use. Can the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative develop a tool or guidelines for how CCLBA should evaluate, strategically acquire and then move into new ownership targeted plots in floodplains or other stormwater hot spots?

- **Amy Walkenbach: The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency** is moving toward developing protocol for use of State Revolving Fund and Clean Water Initiative for stormwater management. Additionally, IEPA will likely be making a substantial commitment to the Millennium Reserve, but this has yet to be announced. In both cases, the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative is poised to offer strategic recommendations as it develops goals and action plans.
- **Dominic Tocci: Cook County** will be receiving substantial amounts of federal funds for disaster recovery. This funding is flexible, and could be used for issues as diverse as buyouts, infrastructure improvements and housing rehabilitation assistance. In late March, the County found out it would be receiving \$70 million instead of the \$14 million previously expected. As in the case with IEPA, the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative is poised to offer strategic recommendations as it develops goals and action plans.
- **Nora Beck: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning** offers Local Technical Assistance services on a range of issues. CMAP is seeking input on opportunities to incorporate and address stormwater issues as part of the land use and transportation projects that it pursues through LTA.
- **Michael Berkshire: City of Chicago Dept. of Planning and Development** is exploring ways to use flowpath modeling to better understand the movement of stormwater across urban landscapes, and to determine whether it can be used to identify possible stormwater interventions.
- **Lisa Cotner: Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Illinois Coastal Grant Program** spring deadline is May 30.
- **John Watson: Metropolitan Water Reclamation District** is quickly responding to filing of its Consent Decree to move forward on local stormwater improvements, many including green infrastructure, as well as several pilot stormwater planning studies throughout Cook County.

Discussion

Is anyone missing from Collaborative?

- The group should possibly include additional specific south suburban communities such as Homewood.
- Other entities that may need to be included are Thorn Creek Sanitary District and Indiana representation (DNR, NIRPC).
- The group may need to meet further south from time to time to make meetings more accessible and reflective of the geography of concern.

Next steps

- MPC will circulate summary and preparation materials in advance of the next meeting, including links to online surveys. These surveys will be very important to gauge the thoughts of Collaborative members.
- At subsequent meetings, a Resource Group will be invited to observe, provide expertise as needed, and otherwise support the decision making of the Collaborative. Decisions on priorities will be made by the members of the Collaborative.

Next Meeting

May, January 2, 10:00am to 12:00pm
Metropolitan Planning Council
140 S. Dearborn Ave., Suite 1400, Chicago

For more information contact:

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