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# CALUMET STORMWATER COLLABORATIVE

MEETING SUMMARY – June 4, 2021  
Metropolitan Planning Council  
Zoom meeting



## Attendees

Emilia Oscilowicz, Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice  
Matt Moffitt, Baxter & Woodman  
Marcella Bondie Keenan, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Drew Williams-Clark, Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Graig Neville, CERA Solutions  
Zach Wirtz, Chicago Region Trees Initiative  
Kim Hayward Buys, Cook County Dept. of Emergency Management and Regional Security  
Kim Nowicki, Cook County Dept. of Emergency Management and Regional Security  
Deb Kutska, Cook County Dept. of Environment and Sustainability  
Jack Eskin, Delta Institute  
Demetri Alexakos, Emerald South Economic Development Collaborative  
Ghian Foreman, Emerald South Economic Development Collaborative  
Chelsey Grassfield, Friends of the Chicago River  
Matt Bardol, Geosyntec  
Karoline Qasem, Geosyntec  
Megan Lewis, Grantify LLC  
Jeff Edstrom, Illinois EPA Nonpoint Unit  
Margaret Schneemann, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant  
Lisa Krause, IDNR Coastal Management Program  
Chloe Gurin-Sands, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Justin Keller, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Ryan Wilson, Metropolitan Planning Council  
Justin Williams, Metropolitan Planning Council  
James O'Brien, MWRD Office of Commissioner Davis  
Richard Greenfield, MWRD Office of Commissioner du Buclet  
Justin Hart, MWRD Office of Commissioner Shore  
Becky Nicodemus, NOAA Office for Coastal Management  
Kara Riggio, OAI  
Bill Wood, SmithGroup  
Michele Davies, Sustainable Systems LLC - Consulting  
Jen Jenkins, The Nature Conservancy  
Karen Kreis, unaffiliated  
& others

## Member Updates

Justin Keller from MPC said the CSC will not meet in July. To his knowledge, this is the first time the CSC has skipped a month, but, after a turbulent 15+ months, and with Illinois on the cusp of reopening, it seemed like the right time for a break. We'll see you back on Zoom in August!

Kim Nowicki from Cook County Dept. of Emergency Management and Regional Security introduced new Chief Deputy Director, Kim Hayward Buys. The pandemic has kept them busy, and now they are looking for ways to use [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) funding to support communities in Cook County, ideally focusing on regional projects that help more than one community at a time.

Kara Riggio from OAI said the Training & Maintenance Work Group is hosting a green infrastructure maintenance training on June 17 at 9:00 a.m. to noon in Orland Hills. Zach Wirtz from CRTI added that this is the second session of training started in February, and there are still a few spots open. Email Zach ([zwirtz@mortonarb.org](mailto:zwirtz@mortonarb.org)) if interested in attending.

Kara Riggio said, after delays related to municipal elections, OAI is piloting green infrastructure maintenance shared services in the Calumet, in partnership with Cardno. They have the capacity to add more sites. Email Kara ([kriggio@oaiinc.org](mailto:kriggio@oaiinc.org)) if you know of sites needing maintenance.

Drew Williams-Clark said the Center for Neighborhood Technology is making good progress on the Urban Flooding Baseline and will be ready to show a demo in August. They are moving into Phase 1 of the photographic data collection effort and are ready to cover all south suburban communities. Email Drew ([drewwilliams-clark@cnt.org](mailto:drewwilliams-clark@cnt.org)) with any questions.

Justin Keller said MPC is making good progress on the Green Infrastructure Baseline Inventory. Data collection for version 1 of the dataset is set to wrap up at the end of June, at which point it will be ready to share. MPC also hosted a meeting of the Advisory Committee in May to discuss long-term maintenance, hosting, and promotion of the inventory.

With the CSC's 3-year Work Plan set to wrap up at the end of 2021, Justin Keller discussed the CSC's efforts to develop a 1-year work plan. To date, MPC has facilitated conversations with the CSC Steering Committee and all of the Work Groups. The next step is to draft the feedback into a rough work plan to share with the Steering Committee, with the goal of having the work plan adopted prior to the end of the year.

Jen Jenkins from TNC said credits were developed in the Lower Des Plaines watershed for the StormStore pilot, but credits those are not available for sale. Rather, the municipality will use them as an economic development incentive. TNC is still looking for a project in the Little Calumet watershed and extended the deadline for the StormStore Opportunity Fund for through September 1. [The Call for Projects is available here](#), or contact Jen ([jennifer.jenkins@tnc.org](mailto:jennifer.jenkins@tnc.org)) to discuss potential projects.

## **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*

### **Urban Green Justice through Policy and Planning Practice**

*Emilia Oscilowicz, Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability*

The Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability is a research group partnered with the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the Hospital del Mar Medical Research Institute. Their [Policy and Planning Toolkit for Urban Green Justice](#) looks at urban greening as it relates to green gentrification based on 40 cities in Western Europe, the United States, and Canada. The report addresses anti-displacement, anti-gentrification and community mobilization and is intended for planners, green space developers, and community groups active at community level.

The presentation discussed some general “planning conundrums,” such as racial segregation and the prioritization of private wealth accumulation over social agendas, and provided a sampling of the tools in toolkit. Some tools include a fee paid by developers and directed to green funding, eco-district zoning (places to test green buildings, smart infrastructure, renewable energy), and green bonds to fund large climate projects. Other tools include financial schemes, such as rent control and a tax on vacant lands to discourage land speculation. Emilia stressed that these are not perfect solutions. Eco-district zoning, for example, can result in “islands of privilege” and displacement when interventions are not well-planned. It is vitally important to plan in collaboration with local residents and the business community.

### **Emerald South’s Terra Firma landcare initiative**

*Ghian Foreman, Emerald South Economic Development Collaborative*

Emerald South formed four years ago when the Obama Presidential Library was announced with a goal of generating community wealth, amplifying culture, and using data to inform development. The geography for this initiative is, generally, the mid-south side of Chicago, which, in addition to the forthcoming presidential library, has assets that include the University of Chicago, the Museum of Science and Industry, and a lot of vacant land. How can all of these be leveraged as a wealth creation tool *within* communities and *for* existing community members?

The Terra Firma landcare initiative took cues from an initiative in Philadelphia which aims to remove nuisance land uses through beautification and stabilizing the block, such as planting flowers, putting up attractive but inexpensive fencing. The idea is to indicate the value of a place. For example, [if someone travelling by sees something beautiful](#), they might stop and buy a cup of coffee. These are intended to be low-cost, sometimes temporary interventions, and Emerald South hopes to leverage the entire ecosystem of partners, such as tree-planting initiatives and native plant/pollinator grant programs, in effect, to transform vulnerabilities in assets.

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

### **Next Meeting**

**No July 2021 meeting**

Friday, **August 6**, 2020

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Location: virtual

For more information contact:  
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