

Newtown Creek CAG Steering Committee Call

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

12:00 -1:00 PM

Attendees

Leah Archibald
Lilli Genovesi
Christine Holowacz
Ed Kelly
Ryan Kuonen
Deb Mesloh
Paul Pullo
Jean Tanler
Kate Zidar
Walker Holmes

Meeting Summary

After a roll call, the steering committee members discussed the following topics:

1. Membership: Alice Baker has requested to join the CAG. Kate Zidar briefly explained Alice's background as an intern with Riverkeeper. Alice attended the last meeting of the CAG. The steering committee reached consensus vote on Alice's membership in the CAG.
2. Leadership: According to the CAG operating procedures, co-chairs serve one-year terms. Current co-chair terms technically end on June 20th (one year from the date that operating procedures were ratified in 2012). The CAG agreed that the co-chair positions should be rotating posts, and that co-chairs could serve multiple terms (need not be consecutive). Ryan Kuonen suggested that there should be one co-chair from Queens and one from Brooklyn in order to facilitate meeting scheduling. Co-chairs may be nominated or self-nominated and must be ratified by the full CAG. The steering committee did not decide on co-chairs during this call; however, members are considering their willingness and availabilities to serve as co-chairs. Discussion and nomination will continue via email and phone conversations.
3. Meetings:
 - a. Schedule: The steering committee members agreed that quarterly meetings are a good goal, depending on availability of information. If there is no new information from the EPA, and if no other meeting topics are pressing, there may not be a need to meet on that schedule. The CAG may also bring information to the EPA and schedule meetings to facilitate that information exchange (a member commented that the Gowanus CAG has been proactive about bringing information to the EPA). The EPA had proposed dates in June for a meeting about ecological risk assessment; the steering committee members agreed that June might be too soon given the recent March and May meetings; July dates would be better.

- b. Topics:
 - i. Ecological risk assessment: Both the boat club and the EPA would have information to offer on this topic.
 - ii. Business interests: This meeting topic is still on the table; the steering committee will pursue this topic when the time is right.
 - iii. Examples of dredge operations: The CAG could learn from other dredging projects. One CAG member suggested New Bedford, MA, site of a multi-decade dredge operation for PCBs in the bay. The site is in the middle of a large human population and an active port, which makes it an interesting analogous situation to Newtown Creek. Hudson, NY and Laerton, NJ could also be examples to consider. The CAG might be interested in advancing their knowledge of the range of dredging technologies. Multiple methods are available, depending on conditions and needs at the site in question. A steering committee member suggested that the CAG ask the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to speak with the CAG about dredging methods and processes.
 - iv. Restoration opportunities at the end of the cleanup process: The CAG could look at other sites that have demonstrated success in post-cleanup restoration efforts. In general, the CAG is interested in what happens at the end of the cleanup process? Where does the EPA stop?
- 4. CAG Website: Is the CAG website serving its purpose? How could it be more useful? Steering committee members commented that the document-sharing function on the website is a bit awkward; this will be fixed. Steering committee members who have suggestions for improving the website may contact Walker with ideas, comments and requests.

Meeting Wrap-Up and Discussion of Next Steps

1. Adjust website to better handle posted documents (Walker).
2. Ask the EPA about meeting dates in July (Walker).
3. Conduct Doodle poll for meeting times (all).
4. Consider CAG leadership transition (all).
5. Add Alice Baker to CAG member list (all).