

**Newtown Creek CAG Steering Committee (SC) Meeting**

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Via Conference Call

**Attendees**

Deb Mesloh

Jean Tanler

Lilli Genovesi

Mike Schade

Mitch Waxman

Paul Pullo

Sean Dixon

Walker Holmes

Willis Elkins

**Notes**

1. Contaminated Sediments Technical Advisory Group (CSTAG) Update
  - a. Newtown Creek CAG, Newtown Creek Group (NCG), and New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP) are presenting to EPA's CSTAG to share their views, comments, concerns, and recommendations on how the Superfund process is going thus far. Each group will present. The meeting will be on May 20, 8:00-10:10 a.m.
  - b. Mike Schade, Willis Elkins, Sarah Durand, and Sean Dixon developed a presentation for the meeting.
  - c. Mike, Willis, Sean, and possibly Sarah will attend. They will report back after the meeting. Main points to be covered by CAG presentation:
    - i. Need for community engagement and communication throughout the process – the CAG would like to see more of this, with more regular updates from EPA (possibly monthly).
    - ii. Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs): The CAG would like to see them taken into consideration; based on submittals for the CSTAG meeting, NYC DEP seems to be saying that CSOs are not the contamination problem; NCG seems to be saying CSOs are the problem.
    - iii. The CAG sees an emerging Superfund focus on Newtown Creek's current and future use as an industrial waterway; would like to see potentially responsible parties (PRPs) take responsibility for damage to the natural state of the Creek. The Superfund process should be about repairing the damage done. Ecological reuse should be a focus here.
    - iv. The CAG would like to reiterate the current and increasing recreational use of Newtown Creek. The Steering Committee will try to get counts from boat clubs to show increase in recreational use in recent years – for both Brooklyn and Queens clubs. (Willis Elkins and Mitch Waxman will do followup on this.)

- v. Steering Committee members interested in attending the CSTAG meeting should contact Mike.
2. Next Full CAG meeting
    - a. Borough: Brooklyn.
    - b. Proposed location: McCarren Pool Community Room. 6:30-8:30 meeting; ½ for setup before and cleanup after. (Ryan Kuonen to reserve.)
    - c. Topics:
      - i. NYC DEP: 5-10 minute update on the habitat restoration project. (Sarah to make request; Willis to assist.)
      - ii. Mayor’s Office of Long Term Planning about OneNYC, NYC’s new master plan – “the plan for a strong and just city.” (Sean to keep contacting them.)
      - iii. Update from EPA (Mike will make request to Wanda Ayala.)
    - d. Proposed dates: June 9, 16, and 18. EPA attendance is critical; Mike will ask about their availability.
    - e. The Steering Committee will sort out remaining meeting logistics via email.
  3. Update on a previously proposed meeting topic: Randy Austin with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has offered to do his “how to recognize an oil spill” talk, which lasts two hours. Mitch Waxman describes them as some of the most valuable two hours he has ever spent. Willis says that this will be happening, likely outside of the normal quarterly CAG meetings.
  4. Visioning Statement
    - a. Willis is synthesizing the notes from last meeting, which include the vision statement exercise. He is still working on this.
  5. EPA Phase II Letter
    - a. In lieu of writing an official response to EPA’s response, the Steering Committee agreed that at the next meeting, when EPA gives an update, the CAG can ask followup questions.
    - b. Sean Dixon will prepare a list of questions.
  6. TASC assistance through Skeo
    - a. Staffing change: Walker Holmes will no longer be able to assist the CAG after June. The Steering Committee briefly discussed the administrative assistance that Skeo provides through EPA’s TASC contract.
    - b. The Steering Committee agreed that the facilitator for the first few meetings was extremely helpful, but at this point a formal facilitator not needed. However, the Steering Committee feels that the administrative support is invaluable and has made the CAG able to operate.
    - c. Steering Committee and Walker will develop a list of current administrative assistance provided. Mike and Ryan will continue to discuss TASC services with Wanda Ayala at EPA.
    - d. Additional technical services through TASC are still of interest; Mike is pursuing this.