

Newtown Creek CAG Meeting  
Tuesday, July 25, 2017  
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
McCarren Park Play Center

Meeting Attendees: 41 people (see attendee list in Appendix A)

## **Agenda**

1. Introductions
2. EPA Updates
3. New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP) Combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term Control Plan (LTCP) Update
4. Newtown Creek Visioning Project

### **1. Introductions**

#### **2. EPA Updates (Caroline Kwan, EPA)**

- EPA finalized the Baseline Human Health Risk Assessment and shared the document with local groups.
- EPA is now planning summer field sampling for groundwater and seepage, shoreline, and non-aqueous phase liquid (NAPL) surveys over the next two months.
- EPA finished compiling over 1,000 draft Remedial Investigation (RI) Report comments from EPA, NYC DEP and the Newtown Creek Group. EPA plans to have another RI update for the CAG in September.
- Fish advisory signage is complete. EPA will post final signs in 10 to 20 locations along the creek. EPA's contractor will begin installing them in late July. EPA has requested the signage be made into postcard and Posters to be distributed to the business along the Creek. The NCG's PR firm is working with the printing company to have them printed.
- EPA finalized the Community Involvement Plan. It is now available online: <https://semspub.epa.gov/work/02/510612.pdf>.

#### **3. NYC DEP Combined Sewer Overflow LTCP Update (Mikelle Adgate and Keith Mahoney, NYC DEP)**

The presentation focused on NYC DEP's recently finalized LTCP for Newtown Creek. NYC DEP engaged with the community to provide an opportunity for public input on the LTCP. The goal of the LTCP is to identify appropriate combined sewer overflow (CSO) controls necessary to reduce or eliminate discharges to Newtown Creek and achieve New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) water quality standards that are consistent with the Clean Water Act and Federal CSO Policy. Please see the presentation posted on the CAG website for more information: [https://newtowncreekcag.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/cso-ltcp\\_newtown-creek-cag-mtg\\_final.pdf](https://newtowncreekcag.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/cso-ltcp_newtown-creek-cag-mtg_final.pdf). The LTCP is also available online: [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/cso\\_long\\_term\\_control\\_plan/ltcp-newtown-creek-cso.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/cso_long_term_control_plan/ltcp-newtown-creek-cso.pdf).

1. Q: Can you explain “seasonal activation”?

A: The typical period of recreational activity is between May and October. In the case of the proposed Newtown Creek LTCP, if the project is implemented as proposed Newtown Creek will achieve 100% attainment for fecal coliform criteria ten months out of the year and 96 – 100% attainment for dissolved oxygen annually.

2. Q: How does the LTCP interact with the Superfund cleanup? Are LTCP standards aligned with the EPA cleanup?

A: They are separate processes addressing different contaminants. However, there is close communication and coordination between NYC DEP and EPA, as well as with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, to ensure that Newtown Creek is cleaned up properly.

3. Q: Has it been established that CSOs are contributing to the CERCLA-regulated chemical contaminants at the reference sites?

A: EPA is still in the early phases of the Superfund process. EPA is still conducting sampling and modeling at this point. Future work will look at this issue.

4. Q: How does the Newtown Creek LTCP and planned future reduction of CSOs potentially impact other surrounding waterways such as the East River?

A: The proposed project includes a pump station upgrade to reduce CSOs by 75% to Dutch Kills. This will result in 110 million gallons per year (MGY) reduction in Newtown Creek with 30 MGY sent to the Newtown Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant. During large infrequent storms, the remaining MGY may be discharged at East River outfalls that have floatables control. Additional CSO reductions to the East River will be evaluated under a new LTCP that is due to NYSDEC in December 2018.

5. Q: Are there maps of each waterway?

A: Yes. There are several maps on the NYC DEP website.

6. Q: Is there any consideration of separating the stormwater system from the sewage system?

A: In some areas, such as southeast Queens, this is done to improve drainage. For Newtown Creek, there are not many opportunities to do so.

7. Q: Is there still a public comment opportunity for the LTCP?

A: NYC DEP’s formal 30-day comment period ended in May. However, comments can still be submitted to NYC DEP at [LTCP@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:LTCP@dep.nyc.gov).

#### **4. Newtown Creek Visioning Project**

The presentation had three parts: an update from the June 3 community visioning workshop (Chrissy Remein, Riverkeeper), an overview of key takeaways distilled from community feedback gathered during the visioning workshop (Sean Dixon, Riverkeeper), and a discussion of implementation strategies to improve the resiliency, recreation, remediation and use of Newtown

Creek (Mike Aziz, Perkins+Will). Please see the presentation posted on the CAG website for more information: <https://newtowncreekcag.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/community-vision-newtown-july-25-cag-final.pdf>.

Community comments and feedback are encouraged. Please email Chrissy Remein at Riverkeeper at [cremein@riverkeeper.org](mailto:cremein@riverkeeper.org).

1. Q: Are there discussions with the city to codify some of these future projects through zoning?  
A: Yes. There is a dialogue and planned meetings with the Department of City Planning about zoning in the Newtown Creek watershed.
2. Q: Are there thoughts about programs to assist businesses near the creek with reducing their environmental impacts, particularly regarding waste prevention, air quality and wastewater?  
A: Yes. There are similar programs in place for Gowanus Canal as a model and this type of business assistance program is definitely a consideration in the project. In the final Newtown Creek Community Vision report, Riverkeeper plans to include a resource guide for community members and businesses. It will be available online as well.
3. Q: Are local business owners and waterfront-dependent businesses being engaged as part of the process? What could be the potential impacts of these future projects on local businesses and industry? Can the projects be done in a way that does not lead to gentrification and displacement of blue-collar businesses and residents?  
A: Yes. This is part of the project. Beyond engaging residents through the community visioning workshops, local businesses are engaged through outreach efforts. Evergreen is completing a business survey and Riverkeeper is engaging other business associations such as the Maspeth Industrial Business Association. Potential impacts to businesses and residents are also part of the ongoing zoning discussions with the Department of City Planning.

## **Appendix A**

### *List of Meeting Attendees*

Aileen Sheil, Council Member Van Bramer  
Amanda Shellenberger, Anchor QEA, LLC  
Bradley Kerr, North Brooklyn Boat Club  
Caroline Kwan, EPA  
Charles Yu, Long Island City Partnership  
Chitra Prabhu, Louis Berger  
Chrissy Remein, Riverkeeper  
Daby Marulanda, NYC DEP  
Ira Gershenhorn, Resident  
Jan Mun, CAG Member  
Jens Rasmussen, North Brooklyn Boat Club  
Joe Mayo, CDM Smith  
Johanna Phelps, CAG Member  
Keith Mahoney, NYC DEP  
Lacey Tauber, Council Member Reynoso  
LaShaun Lesley, PDRC  
Louis Kleinman, Waterfront Alliance  
Madeline Cottingham, Photographer  
Maggie Macdonald, Self  
Marc Lavaia, Connective Strategies  
Marcella Eckels, NYC DEP  
Michael Leete, CAG Member  
Mike Aziz, Perkins+Will  
Mike Schade, Neighbors Allied for Good Growth  
Mikelle Adgate, NYC DEP  
Natalie Loney, EPA  
Nick Hubbard, Floating Studio for Dark Ecologies  
Peter Fend, Ocean Earth Development Corporation  
Peter Spellane, City Tech - City University of New York  
Rick Windfield, New York City SWIM  
Ron Weissbard, NYC DEP  
Rosemary Han, Skeo  
Ryan Thomson, TIG  
Sarah Durand, City University of New York – LaGuardia  
Sean Dixon, Riverkeeper  
Steve Chesler, Greenpoint Resident  
Susan Boehme, Environmental Resources Management  
Tanya Bley, NBCP  
Tom Schadt, Anchor QEA, LLC  
Tyquana Parson, Connective Strategies LLC, on behalf of Newtown Creek Group  
Willis Elkins, Newtown Creek Alliance