Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) Alley Creek Kickoff Meeting – Summary of Meeting and Public Comments Received

On October 24th, 2012 DEP and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) co-hosted a Public Kickoff Meeting to initiate the water quality planning process for long term control of combined sewer overflows in the Alley Creek and Little Neck Bay Waterbody. The two-hour event, held at the Alley Pond Environmental Center in Queens served to provide overview information about DEP's Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) Program, present information on the Alley Creek watershed characteristics and status of waterbody improvement projects, obtain public information on waterbody uses in Alley Creek, and describe additional opportunities for public input and outreach. The presentation can be found at http://www.nyc.gov/dep/ltcp. Fifteen stakeholders from over 10 different non-profit, community planning, environmental, economic development, governmental organizations and the broader public attended the event.

The Alley Creek LTCP Kickoff Public Meeting was the first opportunity for public participation in a LTCP for the Alley Creek and Little Neck Bay Waterbody. As part of DEP's LTCP Public Participation Plan, Alley Creek's Long Term Control Planning process will be posted on DEP's website, shown above. The public will have more opportunities to provide feedback and participate in the development of Alley Creek's waterbody-specific LTCP. Specific questions asked during the Alley Creek LTCP public kickoff meeting are summarized below with DEP's responses for each.

- What are the CSO related projects in Alley Creek? When will they be built? How much did they cost?
    - *Sewer improvements and a new outfall have already been constructed to help increase sewer system capacity and reduce sewer surcharging and street flooding. This project consisted of installing storm sewers and the construction of a new outfall at a cost of $93 million. In addition, a combined sewer overflow (CSO) retention facility was built to collect about 5 million gallons of combined sewage during rain event. This facility, also referred to as a CSO retention tank, reduces CSOs discharging to Alley Creek by more than 50% or 517 million gallons per year (MGY) down to 256 MGY. The remaining CSO receives partial treatment before being discharged. This facility was built at a cost of $29 million.*

- Which CSO outfalls are connected to the CSO tank? Is TI-024 connected to the tank?
    - *Outfalls TI-008 and TI-025 are connected to the CSO tank. TI-025 receives partially treated overflow from the tank and TI-008 will rarely overflow (under extreme storms) due to the reconfiguration of Chamber 6 weir to divert all flows for a design storm towards the tank. Outfall TI-024 is connected to a pump station relief which rarely overflows.*

- Are the CSO projects that have been built included in the baseline of the model?
    - *Yes, the CSO improvement projects will be part of the baseline in the model.*

- Is DEP using JFK rainfall data only? What years of rainfall numbers is DEP using to model and plan for the long term control of combined sewer overflows in Alley Creek? How is climate change being taken into account?

- *DEP has been using local rain gauge data (LaGuardia Airport and Douglaston Pump Station) and supplementing with radar rainfall data to support the model calibrations. However, to provide consistency in planning for citywide LTCP projects, DEP is using a specific rainfall record from JFK for baseline and alternatives' analyses scenarios. 2008 data from JFK which includes an annual rainfall of 46.3 inches was chosen based on statistical analyses. Projections for future rainfall and sea level rise conditions will be incorporated into the modeling scenarios as will a longer rainfall record covering the last 10 years (2002-2011) to assess pathogen compliance for meeting the appropriate water quality standards.*

- Does the model take into account wastewater treatment plants that are not controlled by DEP, such as the Great Neck Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in Nassau County?
    - *Yes, the model accounts for flows and loadings based on discharge monitoring reports for the Belgrave WWTP in Great Neck.*

- How is the water quality data being collected in the Alley Creek and Little Neck Bay Waterbody? Is it automated or manual? Is data being collected from the CSO tank?
    - *DEP's Harbor Survey program collects ambient water quality grab samples at 3 locations in Alley Creek and Little Neck Bay weekly during recreational season (May 1-September 30) and monthly during non-recreational season (October 1-April 30). In addition, NYC DOHMH monitors Douglas Manor Association Beach 5-times in a 30-day period during recreational season for bacteria indicator concentrations. The ambient water quality monitoring data will be supplemented by additional water quality surveys that DEP will conduct in the fall of 2012 during wet and dry weather periods. Overflow data from the tank is being collected as part of the post-construction monitoring program, which will also be used to refine the model for supporting the LTCP project.*

- Does the model simulate tides? Was the sampling activity timed with the tides?
    - *The model does simulate tides. Kings Point is the closest tide station maintained by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Tidal adjustment factors developed by NOAA are applied to the Kings Point data to develop tidal conditions within AC/LNB waterbody. AC/LNB is part of the larger East River Tributaries Model (ERTM) to be used for the receiving water quality analyses. ERTM covers from Long Island Sound through the lower New York Bay/ Newark Bay areas and simulates the entire tidal variations within this area, calibrated based on NOAA gage data from Sandy Hook (NJ), The Battery and Kings Point. For the additional water quality sampling to be performed by DEP, sampling will take place in morning and afternoon surveys and bottom and top layer samples are collected. This is the protocol for city-wide sampling, being performed in a number of waterbodies over a period of several years.*

- Does the model simulate actual storms?
    - *Yes, the model simulates actual storms for an annual rainfall record. Spatially varied hourly rainfall records are provided as input, but the models have the ability to take 5-*

minute data if available and needed to meet a project need. Outputs can be generated at 5-minute intervals, although the receiving water quality models typically require hourly average inputs from the watershed models.

- What is the plume in the satellite images of Alley Creek and Little Neck Bay in the presentation? Could it be smoke?
    - *As this is an image retrieved from publicly available Google maps, which are snapshots taken at different time periods, it is likely that these images had captured cloud cover. Images available from different public-domain sites were reviewed and this cloud cover didn't exist in those images.*

- What is the estimate of total CSO that goes into Little Neck Bay? What is the estimate for the total diluted sewage into Little Neck Bay?
    - *With the tank online, it is projected that 256 MGY of partially treated CSOs would be discharged to Alley Creek before flowing into Little Neck Bay. While the new annual rainfall from 2008 will create more overflows (in comparison to the above estimates developed from 1988 rainfall), DEP anticipates that the tank will perform better than projected and reduce CSOs further. DEP will continue to monitor the post-construction performance of the tank and will update the model with new data and use to generate revised annual overflows into Alley Creek and eventually into the Little Neck Bay.*

- Are there plans for separate sewers in the watershed/waterbody?
    - *DEP will evaluate the potential for separate sewers in the combined sewer area of the watershed and other alternatives as part of the LTCP development process. Stormwater from some portions of the Alley Creek/Little Neck Bay watershed are currently managed using seepage pits and the DEP's capital plan includes installation of new storm sewers in these areas since the seepage pits were originally built as temporary structures to manage Stormwater until new storm sewers were built.*

- Is DEP installing a new outfall on Udall's Cove? Where was storm water going before (at Udall's Cove)? How are storm water outfalls planned in Little Neck Bay and how is this related to the Bluebelt program?
    - *DEP, working with the Department of Parks and Recreation, is installing a new storm sewer outfall and outlet-stilling basin. Previously the stormwater runoff went directly overland into the cove. The project is similar to the DEP Bluebelt program which discharges stormwater into a managed wetland with a forebay before discharging to a receiving waterbody via an outfall structure.*

- When will a date be set for the second public meeting for Alley Creek and Little Neck Bay Long Term Control Plan Public Participation process?
    - *The next public meeting is scheduled for winter 2013. DEP will provide the date of the next meeting to stakeholders and community members well in advance to ensure maximum participation.*