

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

On June 11th, 2014 DEP hosted a Public Kickoff Meeting to initiate the water quality planning process for long term control of combined sewer overflows in the Flushing Creek waterbody. The two-hour event, held at P.S. 020 John Bowne in Queens served to provide overview information about DEP's Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) Program, present information on the Flushing Creek watershed characteristics and status of waterbody improvement projects, obtain public information on waterbody uses in Flushing Creek, and describe additional opportunities for public input and outreach. The presentation can be found at <http://www.nyc.gov/dep/ltcp>. Twenty stakeholders from 14 different non-profit, community, planning, environmental, economic development, governmental organizations and the broader public attended the event, and two reporters from local Queens papers.

The Flushing Creek LTCP Kickoff Public Meeting was the first opportunity for public participation in the LTCP for the Flushing Creek Waterbody. As part of DEP's LTCP Public Participation Plan, Flushing 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 Flushing Creek's waterbody-specific LTCP. Specific questions asked during the Flushing Creek LTCP public kickoff meeting are summarized below with DEP's responses for each.

- Is Class I (the water quality standard for Flushing Creek) the lowest and what does it protect?
 - *Class I waterbodies such as Flushing Creek are classified for secondary contact recreation and fishing and includes limits for dissolved oxygen and bacteria. Class SD does not have a bacteria standard and has a lower dissolved oxygen standard than Class I.*
- What is DEP planning to do to for the three CSO outfalls that discharge into Flushing Creek?
 - *The long term control planning process for Flushing Creek has just recently begun. Additional water quality sampling and flow monitoring has recently been completed and the results are being reviewed. The next steps include evaluating grey alternatives for reducing CSO discharges into the creek. In addition, a number of green infrastructure projects have been completed as presented, and DEP will soon be developing designs for additional right-of-way and public property retrofits.*
- What are plans to identify available land to build another CSO storage tank?
 - *As planning continues, a number of different alternatives will be evaluated, including additional storage.*
- Modeling done in 2008 shows different projections for CSOs after implementation of the Waterbody Watershed Facility Plan than current projections, why?
 - *The models are continuously refined and updated with new information. In addition, DEP recently began using 2008 for the base year, which is a wetter year than the previous base year of 1998.*

- Is DEP going to dredge Flushing Creek?
 - *DEP is currently working with the Army Corps of Engineers planning for ecological restoration within Flushing Creek.*

- How are population increases due to development being considered?
 - *The modeling that is used in developing the LTCP incorporates population projections to the year 2040. DEP evaluates requests for new development, which sometimes lead to sewer system improvements. Additionally, a new stormwater rule was implemented in 2012 for any new or substantial redevelopment, which requires the developer to substantially reduce stormwater runoff from the site. DEP shares enforcement responsibilities with other departments.*

- Does the planning include the effects of climate change?
 - *The City has been evaluating resiliency over the last three years and released a report in 2013 (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/sirr/html/report/report.shtml>). For the LTCP development, climate change is reflected in the selection of a new wetter base model year (2008), which includes larger more frequent rainfall events than the previous base year. The evaluation will also look at performance over a longer rainfall record covering the last 10 years (2002-2011) to assess pathogen compliance for meeting the appropriate water quality standards.*

- During the City-wide Kickoff meeting, it was noted that twelve of 16 waterbodies are anticipated to meet existing water quality standards, but the four that will not include Flushing Creek. What is DEP going to do about that?
 - *The LTCP process evaluates how the water quality is in relation to the standards. DEP must first complete the LTCP process.*

- What is DEP doing about people dumping oil in drains?
 - *If someone witnesses illegal dumping, they should call 311 and DEP will send out a response crew.*

- Is the water quality sampling over and what are the plans for sharing with the public in an understandable way?
 - *The recently completed sampling summarized during the meeting was done for the purposes of updating the models and the data is still under review. The DEP will present more details of the data in the next meeting. In addition, information from the ongoing Harbor Survey (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/harborwater/index.shtml>) is available online. Additional sampling and monitoring will also occur after the plan is implemented.*

- Will the long term control plan meet water quality standards all of the time? Will the waterbody be upgraded and will the goal be for the creek to be fishable and swimmable?
 - *The ability to improve the water quality in Flushing Creek to meet the Clean Water Act goal that waters of the U.S. should be fishable and swimmable where attainable will be evaluated as part of the long term control planning process. This process will*

consider the feasibility and cost of various levels of water quality improvement. This is a long term process and it is anticipated that water quality will continue to incrementally move toward that goal.

- Is Con Edison contributing to cleanup PCB cleanup on the east side of the creek?
 - *An attendee, who is a representative of the Friends of Flushing Creek indicated that the DEC is currently reviewing the Con Edison remediation plan.*
- How will DEP incorporate the input it receives from stakeholders into the LTCP?
 - *The planning process will identify alternatives that can be implemented and the associated costs of the various implementation scenarios. Input from stakeholders on how they would like to use the creek, as well as the willingness to pay for the improvements that would be required to provide those uses, will be considered when selecting what is to be implemented under the long term control plan.*
- What is the green infrastructure plan for Citi Field?
 - *The parking lot at Citi Field already has some porous pavement. At this time, DEP is focusing green infrastructure development efforts on right-of-way and public property, but the field may present a partnering opportunity. Additionally, DEP maintains a grant program for funding green infrastructure development on private property.*
- Why does the creek smell and can the odors be addressed?
 - *The smell occurs during low tide when sediment is exposed. DEP is working with the Army Corps of Engineers in developing a wetlands mitigation project that will include removal of some sediments exposed at low tide.*
- Is DEP moving to provide more information on CSO volumes and activations as they occur?
 - *The DEP is currently evaluating alternatives for providing more detailed information on CSOs when they occur. The predictive models are being improved regularly and the DEP is currently piloting some new outfall flow monitoring.*