# Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) Gowanus Canal Public Meeting #2 – Summary of Meeting and Public Comments Received

On May 14, 2015 DEP hosted the second of three public meetings for the water quality planning process for long term control of combined sewer overflows in the Gowanus Canal Gowanus Canal waterbody. The two-hour event was held at Public School 32, 317 Hoyt Street in Brooklyn. DEP presented information on the LTCP process, Gowanus Canal watershed characteristics, and the status of engineering alternatives evaluations, and provided opportunities for public input. The presentation can be found at http://www.nyc.gov/dep/ltcp. Approximately 35 stakeholders from 20 different non-profit, community, planning, environmental, economic development, governmental organizations and the broader public attended the event and one representative from the local media.

The Gowanus Canal LTCP Meeting #2 was an opportunity for public participation in the LTCP. As part of DEP's LTCP Public Participation Plan, Gowanus Canal 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 Gowanus Canal waterbody-specific LTCP. Specific questions asked during the public meeting #2 are summarized below with DEP's responses to each.

- Why is there foaming in the Canal? People are referring to it as the "Gowanus milk shake" and it appears to some type of soap.
    - DEP responded that an investigation is underway to determine the cause of the foaming. Preliminary thoughts are that it is due to the aeration/air entrainment but DEP will continue to investigate.

- Why has visibility in the Canal gotten worse? It used to be you could see to the bottom in some locations.
    - Algae from Buttermilk Channel are suspected. Investigations of the cause are continuing.

- There is a history of dry-weather discharges in the Canal. Has this stopped?
    - DEP responded that there has been an investigation into past discharges over the past 20-25 years and those results indicate that dry weather discharges have decreased drastically.

- How do the measurements in the turning basins change?
    - The bacteria and dissolved oxygen levels are reasonably consistent between the Canal and the turning basins. They seem to be well mixed.

- Has DEP used flow metering?
    - DEP has performed flow measurements throughout the City. Recently outfalls OH-007, OH-026 and RH-034 have been studied. The model predictions and flow metering measurement have corresponded nicely. DEP is a co-author of a recent study being published by WERF (Water Environment Research Federation) that presents the technical findings of the metering efforts.

- If the park location is chosen for a retention facility, is there funding?
    - There is no current funding assigned for construction as DEP is still in the siting and design phase. Whatever alternatives are chosen, DEP will allocate funding.

- Is it possible to send flow from outfall OH-003 to outfall OH-007?
    - No the regulators do not allow this.

- Does the DEP include population and development growth in the plan?
    - Yes the plan includes projected development and growth.

- Are you going to recommend a smaller tank than the ROD recommended?
    - We are looking at smaller tanks that meet the criteria as they are less costly. No decision has been made.

- Has the DEP talked with land owners about the possibility of eminent domain?
    - Yes DEP has talked with the land owners.

- The Bond Lorraine Sewer is still a flooding problem and should be repaired. In addition the impacts of climate change should be considered.
    - The DEP has a separate group that is studying the impacts of climate change and the impact on the sewer system.

- Why is the DEP not using more Green Infrastructure?
    - DEP has already installed 18 green infrastructure assets and will begin construction on 92 bioswales in the public right of way in June 2015. Preliminary investigations have also begun to retrofit two New York City Housing Authority properties with green infrastructure. DEP will continue to work with city agencies to identify other opportunities for green infrastructure. DEP also offers a grant program for private property owners to install green infrastructure on their property. The GI Program is a 20-year program and more green infrastructure will be added to the Gowanus watershed over time.

- How are bioswales maintained and how does DEP select the locations?
    - City crews regularly maintain the bioswales. They are responsible for removing litter, preserving the grading, and caring for the tree and plants. In selecting bioswale locations, DEP begins by conducting a hydraulic analysis. Then walkthroughs are conducted with the Departments of Transportation and Parks & Recreation to review potential locations. If potential locations meet City requirements for access and pedestrian safety, then geotechnical investigations and surveys are performed. This step requires collecting and testing the underlying soil to ensure it can absorb stormwater. If the soil conditions are acceptable, the design team then prepares construction drawings (including specific bioswale placements) in conjunction with utility companies to avoid and eliminate conflicts with existing service lines.

- Why is a head house needed for the new facility?
    - The head house is where the mechanical and electrical equipment are kept. It includes items such as electrical power, odor control equipment, pumps and other equipment needed to operate the facility/tank.

- What is the annual operation cost?
    - DEP has yet to determine this.

- Can a new pool facility be built at the park to replace the old one?
    - The City parks department would determine the feasibility of this. DEP would work with the parks department as needed.

- What kind of absorption is expected with a bio swale?
    - A 20x5 bioswale can manage approximately 2,992 gallons of stormwater runoff.

- Will the GI improvements be coordinated with the NYCHA (New York City Housing Authority)?
    - DEP works closely with the New York City Housing Authority on identifying opportunities for green infrastructure improvements on NYCHA properties. Preliminary investigations are currently underway at Gowanus and Wyckoff Houses.

- Can more rainfall runoff be absorbed by green infrastructure as opposed to catch basins?
    - Green infrastructure practices such as bioswales, green roofs, and rain gardens collect and manage stormwater runoff. DEP is currently planning, designing, and constructing green infrastructure practices in the CSO areas of the Gowanus Canal watershed. Even with these green infrastructure practices, catch basins will continue to be an important component of the City's drainage system.