

Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) Westchester Creek Kickoff Meeting -
Summary of Meeting and Public Comments

On February 26, 2014 DEP hosted a kick off public meeting for the water quality planning process for long term control of combined sewer overflows in the Westchester Creek and Pugsley Creek waterbody. The two-hour event, held at the JHS 125 Henry Hudson School in the Bronx provided information about DEP's Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) development for Westchester Creek. DEP presented information on the Westchester Creek watershed characteristics and status of waterbody improvement projects, obtained public information on waterbody uses in Westchester Creek, and provided opportunities for public input. The presentation can be found at <http://www.nyc.gov/dep/ltcp>.

Approximately ten people from the public attended the event as well as representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

The following summarizes the questions and comments from attendees as well as responses given.

1. One attendee asked DEP to look into whether the marina on Westchester Creek might be contributing to a water quality problem because the boats are occupied full-time and they might be discharging sewage into the creek.
2. Another attendee intended to solicit comments from the marina occupants to encourage further public participation in the LTCP process.
3. An attendee estimated that 5,000 to 8,000 people use the soccer fields on Ferry Point Park and there are no toilets at the facility, the implication being that at least some of these people may be contributing to water quality issues due to inadequate sanitation. She also noted that the Parks Department has millions of dollars they received as part of the Croton water treatment work (which Shane reminded her came from DEP) but Parks has been resistant to installing restroom facilities at the park.
4. An attendee noted that the Schildwachter facility at the head end of Westchester Creek has a SPDES permit of some kind. DEP was unaware of such a permit, but agreed that they would look into it and incorporate it into the LTCP as a water quality influence if appropriate.
5. An attendee asked whether the sewage from Co-Op City influences Westchester Creek and DEP stated that all Co-Op City runoff and sanitary sewage that is not discharged as CSO passes through the Hutchinson River watershed on its way to the Hunts Point WWTP for treatment. The attendee noted that her question stemmed from the poor water quality in the vicinity after Hurricane Sandy, which she characterized as the worst in the city related to that surge. DEP noted that Sandy is not the design condition for the sewer system, and that no municipality sizes their sewers to accommodate such a relatively rare occurrence.
6. An attendee noted that DEP was talking a great deal about rainfall but did not seem concerned about addressing increased sanitary flows related to economic development. Keith from DEP explained that the city is using sanitary flows based on a 2040 population projection that includes all known planned developments, changes to zoning, etc. The questioner added that

there were several new malls, a hotel, and other new development that would seem to increase the CSO problems. DEP responded that, although this might seem to be the case, in actuality the stormwater flows are a large percentage of the flow, so even large increases in sanitary flow have only a marginal effect on CSO.

7. An attendee asked whether DEP was working on green infrastructure projects to capture the runoff from the Bruckner cloverleaf that sits on top of Westchester Creek. It was noted that the runoff from large highways usually doesn't go into the sewer system; more often there are dedicated stormwater outfalls or the stormwater drains directly to the waterbody. DEP responded that this will be addressed in the near future when DEC begins issuing MS4 (stormwater) permits. The LTCP process is concerned with CSO areas only.