

**Urban Waters Federal Partnership: Delaware River Location Monthly Workgroup Call**  
**Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 1:00-2:00pm on Zoom**

Attendees: Erica Rossetti, PDE; Kathy Klein, PDE, Haley Burns, PDE; Irene Purdy, EPA2; Frank McLaughlin, NJDEP; Megan Mackey, EPA3; Simeon Hahn, NOAA; Joseph Duris, USGS

1. Introductions and Opening Discussion

- As folks joined the meeting there was a great deal of discussion surrounding last week's storm (Hurricane Ida) and the resultant flooding and damage, as well as the connection to the work that we are doing.
  - Money is important and needed, but you can't plan and build for everything, like this kind of storm.
  - Irene mentioned that the NY/NJ ambassador is collecting flood photos to share stories about the storm; a good opportunity to use this as a case study
  - Frank mentioned that these types of storms are going to become more frequent as higher temperatures result in more moisture in the atmosphere. He also drew attention to the Scientific Report on Climate in New Jersey.
  - In regard to messaging about flooding in urban areas- Simeon said it would be important to remind people that it doesn't take a Hurricane like Ida to get serious flooding in some areas.
- Simon also said UWFP is going through a re-signing/recommitment, so a document should be shared with PDE soon for comment.
- Frank said that we need all hands on deck, and even though our focus is and should be urban, we need to think about rural areas of watershed as well; there is such an urban/rural divide, and we need to start working on and messaging our common interests among broader constituents, working with rural and suburban partners.
  - Frank also mentioned the William Penn Foundation's Civilian Climate Corps initiative, through which they have selected 10-12 cities in the Delaware River Basin... he thought it might be good to invite a WPF rep to speak with us about how our group may be able to help leverage what they are looking to do.
  - Kathy added that she was in a meeting where the Civilian Climate Corps project was discussed and got the sense that William Penn is looking to contract with organizations to run the program in the identified cities. She said she provided feedback that she thinks there needs to be a mentoring program/career development portion so that it can help people move out of low paying jobs, not just shuffle them from one low paying job to another.
  - Erica is able to reach out to Nate Boon from WPF to potentially talk to the group in the future
  - This program is evolving, so we will learn more as it grows.

2. Housing Webinar Update

Erica shared that with the help of HUD, planning is getting underway for a 3 part webinar series.

- a. The first part is expected to be a framework that explains the intersectionality between housing, equity, environment, and community.

- i. Irene share a link the chat for UWLN Equitable Development and Anti Displacement, and recommend Erica get in touch with Elizabeth Balladares, the Passaic Ambassador.
- b. The second will showcase local success stories, and will hopefully be a chance for agencies and other community projects to take away lessons from people who are already doing successful work on equitable and resilient development projects.
  - i. It was suggested that through our growing relationship with Chester we might be able to identify a contact/potential speaker to represent work being done in Chester. Orlando Tucker was mentioned as an option to look into.
  - ii. A retrofitted high density housing project in Claymont, DE was brought up.
  - iii. Simeon mentioned that Bobbi Britton may be someone to talk to about work in Wilmington Northeast.
- c. The third webinar in the series will cover Federal Agency Response.
  - i. Simeon said the DOT, HUD, and EPA frequently work coordinate and work together on funding.
  - ii. Frank mentioned the original EPA Sustainable Communities approach, and the newer Community Driven Solutions, based out of the Office of the Regional Administrator for EPA Region 2, which he thought might fit into either the first or third webinar.
- d. Timeline and target dates for the series were discussed. In order to potential conflicts with holidays and other events, it was determined that it might be best to push this into the New Year and start the series in January 2022. This would allow more time and space to get everything in order as well.

### 3. CDRW Panel Poll Questions and other Forum Matters

Erica said that we want to check in with the audience to see if they have heard of UWFP and if they knew of the Delaware River location, and then at the end gauge their priorities, through the following poll questions:

- a. Have you heard of UWFP?
- b. Did you know that UWFP has a Delaware River location?
- c. What do you see as the biggest workplan priority for the UWFP?
- d. What workgroup(s) would you be most interested in?
  - Simeon mentioned possibly asking whether audience members know who the location ambassador is, how to contact them – to really stress the role of the ambassador
  - Erica will be moderating the session and introduce herself as ambassador
- We need to provide the coalition with our slides by September 17<sup>th</sup>- Bobbi needs to be looped into discussion to be sure we have the information that she is presenting. Erica, Haley, and Kathy can work on putting everything together once we have all of the content.

4. Chester River Fest Event Update

- Erica reported that the Chester River Fest Event is shaping up to be a pretty big event, with around 35 tables, a DJ, dancing, and much more. We have ordered banners and PDE will have two tables at the event for an Urban Waters presence.
- The event is on Saturday October 2<sup>nd</sup> at Subaru Park Plaza. Please let Erica know if you would like to be involved.

Our next meeting will take place on Zoom on October 13, 2021 from 1-2pm.