



**GREENPOINT
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Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Note: The following is a summary of the Greenpoint Community Advisory Panel (CAP) meeting held on 11/20/2013. The notes represent an ongoing dialogue with the CAP related to the development and implementation of the Greenpoint Environmental Benefit Projects Program aka the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund (GCEF).

Introduction, Purpose and Meeting Goals: Amanda Bassow, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) described the primary goals of the meeting, which included discussion about: 1) the status of the GCEF applicant assistance process; 2) next steps in the grantmaking process 3) next steps for the CAP.

Notes, Updates and Other Business: Laura Treciokas (NBDC) informed the CAP that Filip Stabrowski (NBDC) will be taking over CAP management and meeting chairmanship (including meeting summaries). The CAP approved the notes from the 10/9/2013 meeting. NFWF updated the CAP on the status of the GCEF website noting that FAQs and a community bulletin board (with approximately 10 postings thus far) have been added to website. A final version of website is in progress, which will be able to track number of visits. NFWF is open to suggestions on the existing website from the CAP.

Status of Applicant Assistance Process: Laura Treciokas distributed and explained the document “GCEF Community Collaboration by the Numbers,” an effort to quantify the outreach and applicant assistance provided by the GCEF (including outreach meetings, public meetings, listserv, survey, applicant workshops, webinars, and networking events, applicant phone calls and emails, and one-on-one assistance provided). Amanda Bassow explained the content of the applicant workshops, webinar, and networking event. The first workshop focused on the priorities of the GCEF program and “front end” issues (such as the role of fiscal agents and common applicant difficulties). The webinar and second workshop focused more on “nuts and bolts” of the application process (including ez-grants). NFWF has an online specialist for ez-grants. The networking event was



organized in response to community requests for a forum for potential applicants to find other like-minded people. There were a lot of substantive discussions and positive feedback from the events.

CAP discussion and feedback: The CAP inquired about: workshop attendance (how many people from each group, how many repeat attendees); number of proposals submitted to date; and whether community members were in need/search of fiscal sponsors. NBDC and NFWF responded that the sign-in sheets have not yet been parsed (but they have noticed some overlap), and no proposals have yet been submitted. The CAP discussed how best to link interested community members with possible fiscal sponsors; concern was expressed that reaching out to fiscal sponsors on behalf of community members may give the appearance of favoritism. NBDC has responded to public inquiries of possible fiscal sponsors with basic information on options (not recommendations). It was also noted that some interested applicants had asked to be linked with local community organizations. NFWF remarked that in their experience the most successful partnerships between communities and fiscal sponsors have developed “organically”, without the facilitation of a third party. NFWF has provided a fiscal agency resource link as part of its “successful tips for applicants,” but this does not include information on potential fiscal sponsors. NFWF said that it would post an announcement for interested fiscal sponsors on the GCEF bulletin board. The CAP discussed other information that might be worth sharing and capturing, such as potential applicants in need of project sites, project categories and community feedback on the process thus far. The CAP suggested developing a survey to elicit applicant feedback to improve the process in subsequent rounds; NFWF responded that the online application does include a survey at the end (with a free response option), which it will share with the CAP after the application closing date. A CAP member inquired about whether directing open space related project proposals to the Open Space Alliance constitutes a kind of “pre-review” before the formal application process. The CAP recognized the need for NYC Parks Department approval for projects located on parkland but also raised the concern that the agency might have its own agenda that would not necessarily coincide with a particular project proposal. It was agreed there was a need to determine whether the issue posed a concern. The CAP concluded that it should be possible to capture information on how many project ideas have been shared with the Open Space Alliance and the Parks Department, and to ask Open Space Alliance to



provide explanations for the project ideas it has supported and those it has discouraged.

Next Steps in the Grantmaking Process: Amanda Bassow explained the proposed next steps in the grantmaking process for the Small Grants and Large and Legacy Grants. Small Grant proposals and Large and Legacy Grant pre-proposals are due on December 18, 2013. NFWF will then quickly review the proposals and pre-proposals to determine whether they have met the minimum eligibility requirements (yes/no) and will sort the proposals and pre-proposals into three categories: 1) meet requirements; 2) do not meet requirements; 3) could be “tweaked” to meet requirements. NFWF will pass those proposals that did not meet the minimum requirements to NBDC for review and possible referral to category 3; applicants with proposals placed in category 3 would be notified and offered three days to supplement their proposals to address flaws related to meeting minimum requirements.

For the slate of proposals and pre-proposals that meet minimum requirements, a review team from NBDC and NFWF (three reviewers per proposal) will be formed to review proposals according to RFP criteria. At the same time, a subset of the Independent Review Committee (including representatives from NYC DEP, NYS DEC, and the EPA) would then perform a “red flag” review to identify projects with barriers to implementation. Peter Washburn added that a red flag would not necessarily eliminate a project from funding eligibility, just provide an opportunity to identify and, as possible, solve problems in advance. Projects that, on average, exceed a threshold score (e.g., 3, on a scale of 1 to 5) will be deemed fundable or invited to submit a full proposal. Peter Washburn remarked that pre-proposals that have been identified with significant technical issues may be allowed to proceed to full proposal stage, because technical assistance will be provided. Amanda Bassow, NFWF, also noted that at the conclusion of the review, small grants would be announced in February 2014 and large/legacy grant applicants would be invited to submit full proposals.

CAP discussion and feedback: The CAP discussed whether three days would be enough time for applicants to resubmit proposals and pre-proposals. Peter Washburn, NYSOAG, expressed concern that three days will not be enough time to supplement a proposal, and explained that the point of allowing revisions was to be as inclusive as possible with proposals with “fixable flaws.” Several CAP



members suggested that providing more time for proposal revision may not necessarily be better. In recognition of the holidays and based on a suggestion from a CAP member, Amanda Bassow, NFWF, proposed that applicants be notified by January 2, 2014 and then provided time to revise and resubmit.

Technical Assistance: Amanda Bassow, NFWF, explained that potential applicants have been receiving assistance throughout the application process, but NFWF intends to identify 3-5 technical assistance contractors with which to consult directly on specific projects. To this end, NFWF intends to issue a request for contracts that asks prospective contractors to describe their expertise and experience (not scopes of work). NFWF will pre-select 3-5 contractors to provide technical assistance once pre-proposals have been submitted. The contracts will range from \$3000 to \$7000 and are not intended to substitute for project partnerships, just to assist with developing pre-proposals into full-proposals.

CAP discussion and feedback: The CAP asked for examples of technical assistance. NFWF provided the following: help on landscape design for a park improvement project; help with permitting; and help with community outreach for a project. A CAP member asked how NFWF would ensure that there is equity in providing technical assistance. NFWF responded that the intent is to make sure that all pre-proposals that are invited to full proposal review have a good chance of success. To the extent possible, technical assistance will be made available to all large/legacy grant applicants upon request. A CAP member asked about the total amount of technical assistance funding. NYOAG responded that an aggregate amount of \$200,000 is reserved for technical assistance.

IRC: Regarding the Independent Review Committee, Amanda Bassow, NFWF, proposed it consist of approximately 10-12 volunteer members from local, state and academic institutions (experts in air quality, open space, parks, etc.), with at least 5 reviewers per proposal (depending on number of proposals).

Next Steps for the CAP, Peter Washburn, NYSOAG, explained the proposed role of the CAP (or CAP subcommittee) in providing input on small grant proposals (by reviewing the slate of small grant proposals being considered for funding) and the process for evaluating large and legacy grant pre-proposals (by providing guidance on scoring criteria to be provided in full grant RFP and used by the Independent



Review Committee in evaluating proposals). With respect to the large and legacy grant full RFP, the CAP subcommittee will be asked to provide input on the definition of criteria (e.g., environmental results, work plans, budget) and how they will be scored. CAP members who are either board members/officers or employees of organizations submitting proposals would be ineligible to serve on a CAP subcommittee providing the above input. It is hoped that the CAP subcommittee will be comprised of at least a few existing CAP members; expanding CAP membership is a possibility. Peter Washburn also suggested that the CAP begin thinking about the process of sharing the slate of large and legacy grant proposals with the community at large, with the aim of meeting in early spring 2014 to discuss/plan.

CAP discussion and feedback: The CAP was asked to indicate who would be eligible to serve on the CAP subcommittee by a show of hands; only one CAP member (Joanna Micek) raised her hand. Another CAP member was uncertain. Two CAP members not in attendance were mentioned as possible candidates. A CAP member asked how often the CAP subcommittee would meet. Peter Washburn suggested monthly meetings (with the possibility of conference calls instead) until early summer, when the full proposal RFP is completed. It was asked whether representatives from the local elected officials' offices could serve on the CAP subcommittee and Peter Washburn, NYSOAG responded yes, in an ex-officio capacity. One elected official's representative asked whether providing letters of support for projects makes her ineligible and Peter Washburn, NYSOAG responded yes; another representative informed the CAP that her office is assisting with the preparation of a proposal and Peter Washburn, NYSOAG responded that participation by an elected official in a proposal would make the official's office ineligible to serve on the subcommittee. The elected officials' representatives informed the CAP that they would confirm their offices' respective activities and get back to the CAP. A CAP member asked whether a scoring sheet (with scoring weights by category) would be provided for small grants in subsequent rounds to provide guidance to applicants on how their proposals will be evaluated. Peter Washburn responded that scoring criteria (and corresponding approximate weighting) that will be used to guide decision-making on proposals was provided in the RFP (in narrative as opposed to quantitative form).. Laura Truettner, ESE, added that the category scoring weights are the same for the small grant proposals and the large and legacy grant proposals. The same CAP member



responded that the RFP suggests that the scoring criteria and weights were applicable only to the review of Large and Legacy Grants. To clarify that the scoring criteria and weights presented in the RFP will be used in the evaluation of Large/Legacy and Small Grant proposals, it was agreed that an additional document -- e.g., "Overview of the Small Grant Review Process" -- that included this scoring information be developed.

NFWF suggested a tentative meeting date for the CAP subcommittee in late January or early February, 2014. Peter Washburn asked the CAP for their thoughts on a minimum required size for the CAP subcommittee; the CAP suggested that at least 5 members should serve on the subcommittee. One CAP member asked whether a CAP subcommittee even makes sense for the purpose of reviewing the slate of small grant proposals under consideration for funding, given the small number of CAP members eligible to participate, the need to recruit new CAP members to participate in the subcommittee, and the potential appearance of conflicts of interest. Other CAP members expressed comfort with leaving the review of the small grant slate to NFWF and NBDC. Peter Washburn suggested that a CAP subcommittee -- or possibly, the full CAP -- provide feedback on the proposed number and total dollar amount of small projects to be funded. Peter Washburn called for a show of hands objecting to this role for the CAP subcommittee/CAP. There were no objections from CAP members.

Closing Business – Future CAP Meetings and Other Topics: Several CAP members had to excuse themselves from the meeting as discussion about the CAP subcommittee continued. No date for the next CAP meeting was established.

Next CAP meeting TBD over email.

Participants in 11/20/2013 CAP meeting:

Christine Holowacz	Newtown Creek Monitoring Committee (NMC)
Michael Heimbinder	Newtown Creek Alliance (NCA)
Heidi Shea Springer	Greenpoint Gardens
Joanna Micek	Independent Consultant
Katie Denny	Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn (OSA) Community Committee
Phillip Musegaas	Riverkeeper



Manuel Zuniga	47 Java Garden Collective
Laura Hoffman	Barge Park Pals
Zeeshan Ott	NY State Senator Daniel Squadron's Office
Lisa Bloodgood	New York City Councilmember's Steve Levin's Office
Emily Mijatovic	NY State Assembly member Joe Lentol's office
Peter Washburn	NY State Office of the Attorney General (NYSOAG)
Joe Haas	NYSOAG
Amanda Bassow	General Administrator (GA)/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
Courtney Kwiatowski	GA/NFWF
Rich Mazur	GA/North Brooklyn Development Corporation (NBDC)
Margaret Kostecki	GA/NBDC
Laura Treciokas	GA/NBDC
Filip Stabrowski	GA/NBDC
Laura Truettner	State Outreach Consultant, ESE

