



## PRESS RELEASE

# OpenHouseGCEF Showcases Progress on Making Greenpoint A Healthier, Safer, and Greener Community

*Groundbreaking Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund (GCEF) Projects Will Be On-Display for Community to View First-Hand, Volunteer to Join*

*In Partnership with Community, GCEF Has Invested Over \$54 M in Environmental Improvements In Greenpoint*

**Brooklyn, NY** (October 14, 2016)—Greenpointers will convene this Saturday for OpenHouseGCEF, a unique opportunity to get a first-hand look at 13 groundbreaking environmental improvement projects that are on-going around the community. The projects are sponsored by the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund (GCEF), a competitive grant program created by the New York State Office of the Attorney General and Department of Environmental Conservation from monies obtained from the state's settlement with Exxon over its Greenpoint oil spill. OpenHouseGCEF is being held during OpenHouseNewYork (OHNY) weekend.

Through OpenHouseGCEF, the Greenpoint community will get an insider's look at some of GCEF's most exciting projects, and learn about the many volunteer opportunities available to join them. Residents will be encouraged to become a part of a community-wide effort to make Greenpoint a healthier, safer, and greener place to live.

GCEF has provided 46 grants totaling \$16.8 million to 40 projects identified as environmental improvement priorities by the community. This funding has leveraged \$37.6 million in matching funds from the grantees, bringing GCEF's total investment into these projects – and the Greenpoint community – to over \$54 million.

"GCEF's 40 projects are helping to reverse Greenpoint's legacy of environmental abuse and neglect," Peter Washburn, Policy Advisor for the New York State Office of the Attorney General said. "OpenHouseGCEF allows GCEF to share its accomplishments with the community, and also gives Greenpointers an opportunity to get involved in some of its groundbreaking projects. The Attorney General's Office is proud to partner with the community on GCEF, and proud of the role the program is playing in creating a healthier, safer, and greener future for Greenpoint."

"DEC is pleased with the projects chosen to improve Greenpoint's environment, which include greening streets, enhancing parks, and preserving natural resources," said Steve Zahn, Regional Director of the NYS DEC's New York City office. "The projects funded by the GCEF program are already paying dividends and creating a brighter, cleaner future for the community."

“All projects featured at OpenHouseGCEF address community priorities, provide important environmental benefits, and were supported by the popular vote of Greenpoint residents. I hope Greenpointers will come out, join in the open house, and see for themselves the tremendous contributions these projects are making to our community” said Christine Holowacz, GCEF Community Advisory Panel and Newtown Creek Alliance member.

Since 2011, GCEF has mobilized Greenpointers to action, partnering with them to identify community environmental improvement priorities and then ensure the funding of projects that address these priorities. These projects include greening streets, community facilities, and businesses, enhancing parks and open space, revitalizing the waterfront and its infrastructure, and educating community members of all ages about environmental issues in Greenpoint.

OpenHouseGCEF will provide Greenpointers with four separate venues to see GCEF funded projects in action. These include:

**McGolrick Park** (Central Plaza); Tree and bird identification with Audubon New York and visit the new pollinator garden with The Horticultural Society of New York.

**McCarren Park** (457 Leonard Street behind the pool); Urban farming and cabbage picking with Grow NYC and a composting demonstration with the Soil Cycle bicycle.

**Newtown Creek Water’s Edge** (51 Ash Street at McGuinness Blvd.); The environmental “Ed Shed” educational center at the North Brooklyn Boat Club, Newtown Creek Alliance canoe trip, and intertidal wetlands visit with LaGuardia Community College.

**Newtown Creek Rooftop Garden** (520 Kingsland Ave.); Wildflower rooftop garden with amazing vistas of New York City presented by NYC Audubon and Alive Structures.

For more details about OpenHouseGCEF, as well as information on GCEF’s background, partnership with the Greenpoint community, and the exciting environmental improvement projects it has funded, visit: [www.gcefund.org](http://www.gcefund.org)

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*The Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund (GCEF) is a joint program of the New York State Office of the Attorney General and Department of Environmental Conservation. The GCEF program is an environmental grant program created by the State of New York with monies obtained through a settlement with ExxonMobil over its Greenpoint oil spill.*



## Quotes from Brooklyn's Elected Leaders OpenHouseGCEF Ceremony October 15, 2016

### Representative Carolyn B. Maloney:

“Greenpoint might be a small neighborhood, but the *Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund* has played an enormous role in making North Brooklyn a more environmentally friendly place,” said **Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-12)**. “It has been a joy to watch the community come together to improve their neighborhood, and each of the 15 on-going projects is a testament to the hard work and dedication of GCEF and its members. I want to thank everyone who has played a part in making sure we keep Greenpoint green!”

### New York State Senator Daniel Squadron:

“The *Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund* has been a big part of making North Brooklyn a greener, healthier community, and honoring Greenpoint's rich history of environmental advocacy,” said **State Senator Daniel Squadron**. “Thank you to GCEF, the Attorney General, DEC, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the New York City DEC, their respective teams and partners, as well as the local organizations, for their commitment to improving Greenpoint.”

### New York State Senator Martin Malavé Dilan:

“The *Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund*, the members of its advisory panel and the many volunteers and concerned citizens in the Greenpoint community, serve as a prime example of how a community can come together and make a real difference. Having seen the impact of environmental blight in Greenpoint, and other locations throughout the Senate district, I’ve paid particular attention to environmental causes throughout the state. I’ve pushed for investments in clean renewable energy, and against hydrofracturing and fossil fuel energy production bail outs. I was proud to increase the Environmental Protection Fund by a record \$300 million this year.

But what I see happening here in Greenpoint is really what drives it home for me. It’s more than that after decades of neglect we’re beginning to address these areas, it’s that, I’m seeing that the care, commitment and labor of everyday people honestly and truly has an impact on one of the worst environmental disasters this nation has known. It is an inspiration,” said **Senator Martin Malavé Dilan**.

**New York State Assemblyman Joe Lentol:**

**Assemblyman Joseph Lentol**, District 50, said: “We are so proud of the work of our families and our citizens in Greenpoint. It’s a small neighborhood, only 2.75 square miles of space, and yet the environmental improvement and work output with conservation organizations has been immense.”

“The Greenpoint community has spoken and the state and our leaders at *Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund* have heard you. You asked for technical help with your projects. You asked for financial assistance. You asked for volunteers to help your community organization make it happen. Now, we can look at McGolrick and McCarren Park organizations and Newtown Creek Alliance and see that it all has transpired. We got enormous assistance from the Office of the Attorney General. Today is more like a celebration to me!”

**New York City Councilman Stephen Levin:**

"The community is fortunate to have an organization working hard to create a sustainable, greener, and more vibrant Greenpoint," said New York City Council Member Stephen Levin. "It's true that we face numerous challenges relating to our environment, but the *Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund* continues to make progress one project at a time. Each step takes us closer to creating the type of lasting change that will benefit future generations. I applaud GCEF's continued commitment to innovative and inclusive solutions."

For More Information Please See – [www.gcefund.org](http://www.gcefund.org)