

**Greenpoint Environmental Benefit Projects Program (the Program)  
Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Conference Call Meeting Summary  
April 18, 2013**

***Note: The following is a summary of the Greenpoint Community Advisory Panel (CAP) conference call held on 4/18/2013. They represent an ongoing dialogue with the CAP related to the development and implementation of the Greenpoint Environmental Benefit Projects Program.***

***Appendix 1: Participants in the conference call.***

**Introductions:**

***Rich Mazur, North Brooklyn Development Corporation (NBDC)*** introduced Laura Treciokas who will serve as the temporary community liaison assisting with implementation of the community engagement process and coordinating all CAP activities.

***David O'Neill, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)*** introduced the purpose and the meeting agenda which included highlights of the 3/21/13 CAP meeting, CAP decision making moving forward, and a discussion of key issues resulting from March CAP meeting. Those key issues were the pre-proposal process, multi-round grant program, small grants and grant decision making.

**Highlights of the 3/21/2013 CAP meeting**

At the 3/21/2013 meeting, NFWF provided an overview of the first year General Administrator's (GA) Program workplan including the: pre-proposal process, year one deliverables, the suite of proposed communication tools to engage the community, and establishment of a CAP and community consultation and community outreach process. Deliverables of the year one workplan are to: conduct an extensive community engagement program, release a pre-proposal Request for Proposals (RFP); begin to deliver a technical assistance program for applicants, implement a small grants program and release a full proposal RFP. NFWF also laid out an operational plan that included proposed delivery dates; however, the deliverable dates will be adjusted based on the feedback NFWF received from the CAP. Also during the meeting, NFWF discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a pre-proposal stage with the CAP. These are detailed in the 3/21/2013 meeting notes sent to the CAP.

CAP members posed a number of questions in the course of the meeting. Would an application during a pre-proposal stage be mandatory to move to full proposal? Will there be multiple years/rounds of grants? Will there be a small grant process and if so, how will it work? Will there be matching requirements? Can funds be provided for endowments? Next steps emerging from the 3/21/2013 meeting were to set up a conference call to further discuss the pre-proposal process and to consider the merits of a multi-year grant program that involves multiple rounds of grantmaking? The next meeting date of 5/2/2013 was confirmed as were the purposes of that meeting including discussing: refinements to the GA work plan based on State and CAP comments and questions; developing in more detail community outreach process, and important calendar dates.

CAP Comment/Question: One NFWF recommendation made at the 3/21/2013 meeting was that the final approval of project funding be made by the NYS Office of the Attorney General and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (the State) after a technical review of proposals by subject matter experts and key stakeholders, and consultation with the CAP. Heretofore, the Program has envisioned that community preferences would figure into the final selection of grants. The NFWF recommendation if embraced by the CAP would require sufficient outreach to the community to make them aware of the change and the reasons for it.

NFWF Response: The decision-making process about how projects are selected for funding is a critical one for all parties. While there have been some differences of opinion on this issue, a fundamental principal of the Greenpoint decision-making process is the importance of consistent community outreach and involvement. The GA team is recommending a process that engages the community frequently and solicits their input, guidance and participation in all aspects of the grantmaking process. This includes the community's participation in the development of the request for proposal (RFP), in educational forums where the grant opportunities are presented and explained, in educational materials that are distributed to the community, in community workshops where technical assistance is provided to aid the community in applying for grant funding and in CAP public meetings where progress on the program and next steps are shared and discussed.

The initial design of the Program envisioned that a slate of projects for potential funding would result from the independent review process and be provided to the community for relative ranking. NFWF is confident, based on its experience, that even under a multiple round funding scenario the dollar value of "fundable" projects resulting from the independent review process will not exceed a reasonable allocation of first-year Program funding (i.e., the Program can "afford" to fund the full slate of projects). Therefore, NFWF does not believe a community ranking of projects will be necessary. However, to ensure the community is involved in this critical stage, NFWF proposes that the grant slate be shared with to the community once it has gone through a thorough independent review process and prior to NFWF making final project funding recommendations to the State. (Note: for grants not deemed sufficiently "fundable" by the independent review process, instead of declining those grants, NFWF would offer the applicant further assistance in order to prepare the proposal to be to be successful in future rounds. This approach will eliminate the need, at least the first few grant rounds, of outright declining grant proposals that do not fare well in the independent review process).

The above process allows the Program to broadly reflect community preferences about the type of projects that may be funded and to build knowledge, engagement and support for projects within the community early-on. This issue and the entire grantmaking process will be presented and discussed at the next CAP meeting.

CAP Comment/Question: The Program is in need of outreach documents that describe the EBP purpose, actions to date and next steps as soon as possible. At the last CAP meeting, members discussed the value of targeted outreach to residents living on the plume. It would be helpful to have a summary document to go out to these residents and others to inform community members about the program and how residents can get engaged. We need a fact sheet that summarizes actions to date and informs residents that the Program is now moving forward.

NFWF Response: Building communication tools is an important element of the Program moving forward. NFWF proposed having a draft fact sheet about 'where we are and where we are going' for CAP review at the 5/2/2013 meeting with the understanding that this document is a work in progress until certain decisions are made about elements of the grantmaking process by the CAP.

### **Engaging CAP decision-making moving forward?**

NFWF stated that there are important decisions about the grantmaking process that lie ahead. NFWF wants to be certain that there is a process by which decisions are made at the CAP so that progress on the EBP can be made and that support for taking action is there.

CAP Discussion: The "Greenpoint Environmental Benefit Projects, Community Advisory Panel, Internal Protocols" document was created in an earlier phase of the CAP process to address some governance issues. There was a commitment by the CAP in that document to seek consensus when making decisions. In cases where consensus could not be reached, members would take a vote on an issue -- voting it up or down -- by a show of hands. It was hoped that the CAP would continue to operate based upon consensus.

Does the CAP need to have quorum in order to make decisions and what constitutes a quorum? The CAP members discussed the merits of establishing a quorum using either a specific number of members or a percentage of members. All seven of the voting CAP members represented on the call agreed to use 60 percent as the CAP quorum. Because the current voting CAP membership is a figure of eleven, it was agreed that this vote represented a quorum and the measure passed.

**CAP Decision: 60 percent of CAP membership is required to achieve quorum and for decisions to be finalized; however, the CAP would continue to seek consensus on all decisions and only when necessary will the CAP vote on issues.**

### **Critical Decisions in the Pre-Proposal Process: Mandatory pre-proposals?**

NFWF presented information about the pre-proposal format including:

- Application is short.
- Does not require preparation of a full budget.
- Does not require performance metrics.
- Does not require maps and other documents traditionally requested in a full proposal.

The pre-proposal process would involve:

- Workshops and direct assistance to guide applicants through the development of pre-proposals.
- Once pre-proposals are submitted they would be reviewed by NFWF. The goal of the pre-proposal review is not to decline applications, but to give as much assistance as needed to help applicants develop successful proposals. The pre-proposal stage allows the GA to provide assistance to applicants who need help. It gives the CAP and State an idea about how much money will be needed to support projects in this and future grant rounds. NFWF noted that it is their intention to have multiple grant rounds, therefore there would be funding available for grants in years two and three of the Program. Finally, it provides

the GA with the opportunity to link applicants to technical assistance providers in the full proposal round and link applicants who have similar ideas or interests.

- The review would result in the assignment of pre-proposals into four buckets prior to full proposal resubmission.
  - First bucket: the proposal is already technically strong. It has other important project elements in place and as a result is ready to go to full proposal.
  - Second bucket: the proposal is a good idea, but needs additional assistance to refine elements of it. Applicants in the second bucket would be the most likely candidates to receive enhanced technical assistance. For example, they might receive more assistance in the areas of: design, permitting or budget development.
  - Third bucket: the proposal needs significant additional refinement in one or more elements of it or does not align well with the Program goals. Rather than decline the proposal, NFWF would meet with applicants and discuss how to refine the project to improve it and/or align it better to address the environmental benefit requirements of the Program. The message to the applicant would not be a decline, but rather to encourage the applicant to reshape their proposal idea to be consistent with Program goals and to provide the applicant with tools to help them be more successful in future grant rounds.
  - A fourth bucket possibility would be to add a small grants category for discrete projects that could be funded and implemented immediately.

Applicants in all buckets would be asked to refine their proposals prior to submission of a full proposal to address whatever shortcomings existed.

CAP Comments/Discussion: The mandatory pre-proposal was supported by CAP members during the call. Applicants receive comments that help build a stronger proposal. It also allows people to reapply if they did not get it right the first time. It allows the CAP to serve as a sounding board on an ongoing basis as the Program is implemented.

**CAP Decision: The CAP was asked by the State whether any members opposed the Program implementing a mandatory pre-proposal format. No opposition was expressed. Therefore, it is the decision of the CAP to support the mandatory pre-proposal format as proposed by NFWF.**

CAP Question: What if one proposal comes in that takes up a large chunk of the available funds?

NFWF Response: NFWF is recommending that the program offer multiple grant rounds to be implemented over several years. The workplan will be designed to provide for flexibility in the process of grantmaking to allow for different levels of distribution of funds in grants. It has been NFWF's experience that for proposals to succeed at that level (i.e., request a large portion of the available funds), they require strong planning, and significant technical, budgetary and other details be defined. The program is open to distributing large amounts of the total available funds as long as the proposal is strong enough.

The pre-proposal process and multi-year grantmaking allows for more community members to participate in the program, which is a positive outcome of this type of process. Furthermore, they are both responsive to the State's commitment to a process that ensures the Program addresses the environmental improvement needs and priorities of Greenpoint community. This process is built on the goal of developing projects "from the bottom up," i.e., having the community bring forth project ideas, and "champion" these ideas into viable proposals and, ultimately, projects. A pre-proposal, multi-year grant approach is critical to such a process and the State's commitment.

### **Critical Decisions in the Pre-Proposal Process: Small Grants?**

NFWF is recommending that a small grants program be implemented for projects ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 to support, for example, community-based stewardship or environmental education activities. Proposals identified through the pre-proposal process as appropriate for small grants (i.e., the fourth bucket) could seek funding through an application process that would be simpler than the standard full proposal format. Small grants would provide for an immediate use of Program funds. The projects will be quickly visible throughout the community. An additional benefit of a small grants program is that it may also allow smaller-scale pre-proposals submitted through the pre-proposal process to be shifted to the small grants program and funded through this initiative. NFWF noted it will discuss this issue in more detail at the 5/2/2012 meeting but asked the CAP for reactions during this call.

*CAP Question:* How much of the small grants will be funded from the total Program budget?

*NFWF Response:* NFWF recommended an initial commitment of \$200,000 towards small grants, but if there is strong demand for funds we could simply adjust the budget to accommodate for more investments through this mechanism.

*CAP Question:* What would be the criteria and process for selecting small grants?

*NFWF Response:* NFWF would establish draft criteria to be used to evaluate small grant proposals, which would be reviewed and approval by the CAP and State. NFWF would use final criteria to evaluate small grant proposals and make recommendations on awards for State approval in consultation with the CAP and State.

*Outreach Consultant Question:* How will applications for design and planning projects fit into the Program? Would such proposals be funded by small grants?

*NFWF Response:* The purpose of the small grants program is to support discrete, ready to go community involvement and community stewardship projects. Planning and design as well as implementation grants are generally larger, technical and require more information in a proposal to allow for evaluation and if funded implementation. For this reason, while there will flexibility in the process to direct eligible design and planning projects to the small grants program, it is assumed that most of these projects will be directed to the larger grant category of applications (i.e., buckets one through three).

NFWF noted that discussion about these critical issues will continue at the next face-to-face meeting with a goal of confirming CAP guidance and recommendations for moving forward associated with these issues to the General Administrator and State from the CAP.

**Appendix 1: Participants in the 4/18/2013 conference call**

Leah Archibald	EWVIDCO
Christine Holowacz	Newtown Creek Monitoring Committee (NCCM)
Dewey Thompson	Greenpoint Waterfront Association for Parks and Planning (GWAPP)
Kate Zidar	Newtown Creek Alliance
Katie Denny	Open Space Alliance Community Committee
Kurt Cavanaugh	Open Space Alliance
Phillip Musegaas	Riverkeeper
Ryan Kuonen	Brooklyn Community Board 1
Robert Young	Council member Stephen Levin's office
Emily Mijatovic	Assembly member Joe Lentol's office
Heath Heimroth	State Senator Martin Dilan's office
Belinda Cape	State Senator Daniel Squadron's office
Michelle Moore	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Peter Washburn	NYS Office of the Attorney General (OAG)
Joe Haas	NYSOAG
David O'Neill	General Administrator (GA)/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
Lynn Dwyer	GA/NFWF
	GA/NFWF
Rich Mazur	GA/North Brooklyn Development Corporation (NBDC)
Margaret Kostecki	GA/NBDC
Laura Treciokas	GA/NBDC
Laura Truettner	Outreach Consultant (OC) Enviro-Sciences Engineering/ARC Engineering & Construction, P.C. (ESE)