****Long Island Sound Study Citizens Advisory Committee

Thursday, September 14, 2023

Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center, 200 Southfield Ave, Stamford, CT and Zoom Online

**Meeting Summary**

**Welcome**

* **Nancy Seligson** (NY CAC co-chair, Town of Mamaroneck) called the meeting to order and gave the floor to **Leigh Shemitz**, the President of SoundWaters, to welcome everyone to the Cohen Harbor Center, and speak about the organization’s new facility and upcoming projects.
* Nancy, **Holly Drinkuth** (CT CAC co-chair, The Nature Conservancy), **Penny Vlahos** (CT STAC co-chair, UConn), and **Kamazima Lwiza** (NY STAC co-chair, Stony Brook University) then welcomed everyone to what was the first joint CAC and STAC meeting in person since 2017!
* Final attendance: 22 CAC members, 19 STAC members, approximately 82 total attendees (both online and in person).
* Nancy requested a motion to approve the June 9, 2023, CAC meeting summary; **Adrienne Esposito** (Citizens Campaign for the Environment)moved to approve, and **David Miller** (NY League of Conservation Voters)seconded. Motion carried.
* **Mickey Weiss** (Project Oceanology) announced that the CAC CT co-chair position was up for re-election in December. The nominating committee will circulate a request for nominations. One nomination has already been submitted for Holly Drinkuth to continue as chair. The committee will send out a recommendation 30 days before the next meeting for consideration, and the CAC will vote at the December meeting.
* Penny invited attendees to consider the ideal frequency they’d like to see for joint CAC/STAC meetings. Kamazima announced the next STAC meeting is scheduled for December 1st and will feature a discussion on how to move forward the LIS Fellowships.

**Setting the Stage for CCMP Revision**

Nikki Tachiki, EPA Region 2

* LISS Office has been assessing the 2020-2024 implementation actions (IAs) and lessons learned from the CCMP’s ecosystem targets in preparation for the CCMP Revision. Nikki presented the tracked progress of each theme’s IAs.
* LISS EPA Office also held 3 meetings (one per CCMP theme except Sound Science and Inclusive Management) with LISS staff to discuss ecosystem target considerations. The results will be presented at the October Management Committee meeting. Key points included having clearly defined ways to track progress for each target and defined way to acquire said tracking data.
* LISS is working with consultants CoastWise Partners Rich Batiuk and Holly Greening to support the CCMP Revision process.

**CAC Policy Subcommittee Update**

Adrienne Esposito, Citizens Campaign for the Environment; and Bill Lucey, Save the Sound

* Mark your calendars: the CAC is visiting Washington DC on October 25th. The first meeting will be at 9AM. Attendees are invited to travel to DC the day before. Funding to assist with travel and lodging is available. Both CAC and STAC are invited to join.
* The Policy Subcommittee has met with Congressman LaLota, Congressman Garbarino, Congressman D’Esposito, and Congressman Courtney, several congressional reps, and staff from Senator Gillibrand, Senator Blumenthal, and Senator Murphy offices to encourage the reauthorization of the LIS Restoration and Stewardship Act, which expired in September 2023. Gillibrand’s office staff drafted and introduced language for reauthorization with the same language as the previous bill.

**LIS Moving Forward the Next Decade: STAC and CAC**

Penny Vlahos and Kamazima Lwiza, Nancy Seligson and Holly Drinkuth

To assist in the CCMP Revision discussion, Penny and Kamazima presented the STAC’s science priorities for the next decade, and Holly and Nancy presented the priorities of the CAC. The STAC’s priorities included eutrophication, contaminant monitoring, collaborative research, sediment and groundwater dynamics, harmful algal blooms, and biodiversity and species conservation, among others. The CAC’s priorities included elevating the visibility of LISS progress, strengthening organization systems within LISS, and revising the CCMP to expand its focus to the watershed and emerging issues, aligning cross-cutting principles of environmental justice, sustainability, and climate change. For a more complete lists of these priorities, see the attached presentations.

**Break Out Discussions**

Attendees split into break out groups to participate in high-level, direction-focused discussions about improvements and changes to the CCMP. The groups focused on answering three questions:

* *In your opinion, what would improve the structure of the CCMP?*
* *In your opinion, what would improve the content of the CCMP?*
* *What changes to the CCMP do you think could help improve operations to achieve LIS results and outcomes in the next 10 years?*

Breakout group participants were also asked to vote on their top 3 priorities under each question, which were then shared with the larger group. Priorities for structure included collapsing and simplifying the CCMP’s structure and reducing the number of goals and IAs. Priorities for content included considering community well-being, personal health and welfare, and using more public-friendly language in the CCMP. For a more complete list of recommendations and ideas, see the break out group summary document attached.

**Announcements**

* Connecticut Sea Grant has hired a new LISS Outreach Coordinator, **Maggie Cozens**, who will work with **Jimena Perez-Viscasillas** (NYSG) to support the CAC.
* **Jim Ammerman** (LISS Science Coordinator, NEIWPCC) encouraged people to participate in an ongoing survey that seeks input on the special data resources and needs in Long Island Sound. The survey will inform products developed through the LIS Seafloor Habitat Mapping Initiative. [Survey is available HERE](https://uconn.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8B8u7xa7t3c8ULQ?Q_DL=67dEdQSEdP9P3Xj_8B8u7xa7t3c8ULQ_CGC_MYEqv85wQmERkPp&Q_CHL=email)

The CAC and STAC co-chairs and **Mark Tedesco** (LISS EPA Office Director) thanked everyone who participated in the CCMP Revision discussion both online and in-person, reflecting on the participatory process and the thoughtful ideas provided by participants.

The meeting adjourned at 4PM, with some attendees joining the afternoon sail on SoundWaters’ schooner. The next CAC meeting is scheduled to take place online on December 14, 2023.