

Calumet Collaborative State Agency Task Force
Meeting Minutes for October 19, 2017, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

LOCATION

James R. Thompson Center, 100 W Randolph Street, Room 2027 (2nd Floor), Chicago, IL

PRESENT

SATF representatives

Governor's Office: *representative currently unassigned*

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR): Suellen Burns, Ania Bayers, Annie Turek, Rachel Leibowitz

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT): Brian Carlson

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA): Emily Clamp

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO): Michael Dropka, Eric Wagner

Special guests

The Field Museum: Mark Bouman

Illinois International Port District: Clayton Harris

Calumet Collaborative: Sarah Coulter

Public attendees

Calumet Collaborative: Nichole DeMario, Emily Prisuta

The Field Museum: Madeleine Tudor

Active Transportation Alliance: Jim Merrell

Welcome & introductions

Suellen Burns (IDNR) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Two new representatives joined the Task Force – Rachel Leibowitz from IDNR's Historic Preservation (HP) division and Eric Wagner from DCEO's Illinois Office of Tourism. Rachel participated in place of Heidi Brown-McCreery, who recently moved on from her position as HP director. Rachel and Eric will take part in Task Force meetings as relevant to their areas of expertise. Ania Bayers (IDNR) participated in place of Diane Tecic, who was out-of-town. Mark Bouman from The Field Museum and Clayton Harris from the Illinois International Port District (IIPD) attended as speakers. With many new attendees and members of the public present, everyone in the room introduced themselves.

Meeting minutes approval

The Task Force reviewed draft minutes from the July 2017 meeting. Members requested two edits. Emily Clamp (IEPA) proposed a motion to approve the minutes, pending the edits. Suellen seconded. The minutes were approved. Annie Turek (IDNR) will post the finalized minutes at <http://www.calumetcollaborative.org/public-meetings.html>. All Task Force meeting information can be found at this webpage.

Agency Pullman commitment updates

In April 2017, each Task Force agency committed to one defined, time-bound project or activity under the theme of Pullman connectivity. (Please see April meeting minutes.) Task Force members reported on the status of these commitments.

Eric shared that the spring issue of the semi-annual *Travel Illinois* magazine will include a feature story on Pullman. The draft is almost complete. Eric can share a proof of the finished article. Suellen noted that the National Park Service's Pullman site superintendent is thrilled. The Illinois Office of Tourism and IDNR are also developing a blog post on the Calumet region for the [Enjoy Illinois](#) website. This piece features three Calumet sites, one of which is Pullman National Monument. Illinois Office of Tourism will post the piece in the next few weeks.

Brian Carlson (IDOT) shared information on the Illinois General Assembly budget process and how it will impact agency projects. The General Assembly moved \$308 million from IDOT general revenue to its road fund. IDOT now has \$308 million less for program projects. For IDOT Region 1, \$115 million less will be available for construction. This decision occurred several months into fiscal year 2017, which required IDOT to shift planned projects to adapt to the smaller budget. If similar budget changes are passed in the future, IDOT could lose \$1 billion in funding for road improvement projects. It is too early to determine how these changes will impact the agency. IDOT's focus will continue to be on maintenance, operation, pedestrian ramp compliance with the American Disabilities Act, and the Complete Streets Law. For IDOT's Pullman commitment, Brian expects the resurfacing projects on 95th Street and 111th Street to move forward, but the timing may change. (Please see April meeting minutes for project details.) He will let the Task Force know of any changes to project schedules.

Emily noted that IEPA committed to a targeted social media campaign for Pullman with its new Twitter account. This campaign will be managed by a new agency community relations position. IEPA posted the position, but it has not yet been filled due to a lack of qualified candidates who are fluent in Spanish. IEPA is posting the position again. Emily asked that the Task Force members share the information with qualified candidates in their networks. Suellen offered to share the job posting on LinkedIn, if that is allowed for state positions. Clayton mentioned that he can share the job description as well.

Suellen summarized IDNR's two Pullman commitments. IDNR Coastal Management Program (Coastal) made a grant to the Pullman Porter Museum for a project that integrates African American history and outdoor recreation. The grantee will be submitting its first quarterly progress report later this month, and its project manager talks regularly with Coastal. The second commitment focused on a policy change to the coastal area boundaries to include Pullman. This would enable Coastal to expand its Pullman funding opportunities. Suellen discovered that the Pullman Transportation Plan includes community-driven needs. This will help her make a stronger case to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that both the state and communities want this change. (The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration funds the state coastal program.) When Diane Tecic last spoke with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration staff, they were receptive. Suellen will focus on this initiative in December.

Other updates

In July, Emily shared that the former DCEO Office of Energy moved to IEPA. Emily's role focuses more on energy efficiency with this change. Emily is working on two long-term projects: 1) improving the energy storage and resiliency of an infrastructure facility and 2) implementing energy infrastructure upgrades at a waste water treatment facility. One of these projects could be in the Calumet region. Sarah Coulter recommended Thorn Creek Basin Sanitary District for the waste water treatment facility project. Clayton Harris suggested that IIPD could serve as a pilot project for energy storage, if it aligns with IEPA project goals. IIPD is planning to install solar panels on all of its transit sheds and will consider wind turbine energy over the longer-term. Emily explained the potential timeline for these IEPA projects. The waste water plant upgrades project would most likely be completed first. Then, a renewable energy project

would be established about a year later. She clarified that IEPA will start its two energy initiatives with a pilot project, and then conduct a feasibility study with an eye toward implementing similar projects on a broader scale.

Suellen shared several general updates on behalf of IDNR. The Governor's Office Task Force representative is no longer in his position. Suellen explored having Jim Clark serve as a replacement, but he is also no longer with the state. She would like someone with a connection to the Calumet region. If anyone from the Task Force has an idea of a Governor's Office representative, please let Suellen know. We will revisit this next quarter.

In July, the Task Force discussed HP's transition from state agency to being a division within IDNR. After talking with IDNR's chief of staff, Suellen plans to strategically involve HP, as relevant. We will do the same with the Illinois Office of Tourism.

Suellen shared a new collaboration between IDNR, Calumet Collaborative, and the Office of Tourism. As previously mentioned, they worked on a blog piece featuring interesting places in the Calumet and introducing the Collaborative. Pullman, Wolf Lake, and Big Marsh are highlighted in the piece. Suellen thanked Nichole DeMario from the Collaborative for the initial draft of the post, and Mike Dropka (DCEO) and Annie for moving the project forward. Suellen mentioned that this blog post will become one of a quarterly series. The next post in January or February will focus on African American heritage sites on Chicago's south side. Additional blog posts will include interesting sites along Lake Michigan and information about the Lake Michigan water trail. As a part of this collaboration, Nichole is also reviewing the [Enjoy Illinois](#) website to identify key sites within the Calumet Collaborative geography that could be added.

Calumet National Heritage Area

Suellen introduced Mark Bouman from The Field Museum. Mark was a special guest to discuss the Calumet National Heritage Area initiative. Mark's presentation will serve as a starting point for the Task Force to determine roles its members might play in this effort.

Mark highlighted that the National Park Service's heritage area designation is another tool for interagency and interstate collaboration. The Calumet National Heritage Area is bookmarked by Pullman National Monument and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Heritage areas are lived-in landscapes, each unique and often created in a different way. [Note: The Calumet region of Illinois and Indiana does not yet have an official "National Heritage Area" designation from the federal government, but its advocates and key stakeholders are referring to it as such.] They are designated by the U.S. Congress, so there needs to be a compelling national case for the area's story. There are 49 national heritage areas to date. In Illinois, there is the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Area and the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area. National Park Service involvement ensures important branding and attention. For the Calumet, the national heritage area story has deep roots in the past, but is also forward-looking.

In 1998, an initial feasibility study was completed. The Calumet Heritage Partnership, coordinating entity for the Calumet National Heritage Area, reinvigorated this effort in 2013, and it grew through support from Millennium Reserve (now Calumet Collaborative). For the Calumet, the National Park Service is a critical part of the national heritage area designation effort. In 2014- 2017, the Calumet Heritage Partnership developed a feasibility study, which the National Park Service reviewed in summer 2017. The Park Service was very positive about the proposal and sees a unique place for the Calumet in the broader National Heritage Area system. Calumet Collaborative will provide administrative and other

types of “backbone” support (for example, communications) for the Calumet Heritage Partnership; the Heritage Partnership is focusing on programming (for example, interpretation, events). Mark suggested Ken Schoon’s book, *Calumet Beginnings*, for helpful background on the region’s history.

Mark emphasized that the feasibility study story can shape wayfinding efforts. (Please see July minutes for a detailed description of “wayfinding.”) The story focuses on environment, industry, and community. The Calumet National Heritage Area creates the framework to activate resources in the region for tourism, restoration, and education. You can learn more about it at calumetheritage.org.

This effort is moving rapidly, but it is also in need of state agency support. The Calumet Heritage Partnership needs state agencies to sign on to the feasibility study revisions and offer letters of support, if possible. There is also an opportunity to ensure that important heritage sites have not been missed, such as ecological restoration areas that may not be on the national register (e.g., Powderhorn Prairie, located along the Illinois-Indiana border). Another example is Acme coke plant. Its industrial history includes many important artifacts, but its story has not yet been shared with the public. These artifacts are at the Pullman state historic site. The Field Museum is very interested in building a broader network and a cohesive regional narrative. It plans a special exhibit in 2021 that will combine local museum collections with its own in.

Next steps in this initiative will include specific programming around wayfinding. This creates an opportunity to weave together state agency work to tell a Calumet story that leans into the future (e.g., brownfields revitalization). The Ruhr valley in Germany provides an excellent model for this type of framework. Mark provided his contact information to the Task Force, and would appreciate any suggestions.

Suellen thanked Mark for introducing this concept. She asked if the group had any questions as it thinks about ways its agencies might be able to support a national heritage area. Rachel asked Mark if the Calumet National Heritage Area site inventory includes eligible sites as well as designated ones. The inventory has both eligible and designated national, state, and local places. These sites were incorporated after conversations with communities throughout the region. Many HP sites are also locally significant. A challenge is elevating very local history into a broader narrative (e.g., Steve’s Lounge). Mark shared that on October 28, 2017, the Calumet National Heritage Partnership is hosting the 18th Calumet National Heritage Area Conference, this time on the Illinois side of the border in Chicago’s Hegewisch neighborhood.

Suellen asked Task Force members if this initiative resonates with everyone’s work. The group agreed. The Task Force members will let Suellen know if they have any questions about the Calumet National Heritage Area for the January meeting.

Illinois International Port District

In July 2017, Task Force members discussed ways that each agency could support IIPD revitalization. The October meeting allowed Clayton to provide the Task Force with IIPD updates and to answer questions in person. Clayton thanked IDNR for its strong partnership, enabling him to build opportunities for IIPD. IIPD received three grants recently: 1) a \$300,000 Invest in Cook planning project for road repairs at its Lake Calumet site; 2) a \$2 million IDOT project focused on multimodal transportation opportunities on Butler Drive (leverages the Invest in Cook grant); and 3) a Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Local Technical Assistance project that will serve as the first step in determining priority IIPD projects. The study would consider the feasibility and regional economic impact of activities like a hotel, marina,

and “greening” IIPD. It will inform the IIPD five-year master plan. The grants allow IIPD to leverage existing funds to apply for additional federal funds. IIPD can help reduce road congestion through rail or boat, a priority for the city, county, and state.

Suellen noted the intersection with the Illinois Office of Tourism, as the hotel could serve Pullman visitors and fill a need for the region. Development ideas started from local advocacy for a bike path connecting Pullman and Lake Calumet through IIPD. Partnerships emerged to create tourism and recreation opportunities that enhance the entire area. This is of particular benefit to Pullman because it would connect visitors to other nearby sites of interest.

As mentioned earlier, IIPD is also installing solar panels on the transit sheds. Two companies are bidding on this project. The storage from this project may supply power to nearby neighborhoods like Altgeld Gardens, Hegewisch, and Pullman. IIPD may also consider wind turbine energy in the future.

Clayton provided an update on Illinois House Bill 1797, which would provide \$15 million in state loan forgiveness for IIPD. The debt was forgiven by Illinois many years ago. The bill takes the debt off the books so that IIPD can leverage finances. House Bill 1797 was passed by the Illinois House and Senate, but vetoed by Governor Rauner. Clayton is working to override the veto and, despite the veto, now has support within the Governor’s office to do so. It would be helpful if Task Force members could provide letters of support for the veto override. Clayton will send Suellen the contact information for where to send the letters.

Suellen asked Task Force members if they had any questions for Clayton about tangible actions their agencies could take for IIPD revitalization.

Emily asked Clayton about steps to “green” IIPD. Solar panel installation will begin in early 2018. IIPD is looking for investors for the project. It opted for solar panels instead of wind turbines – at least initially – because of subsidy benefits and energy (volume) generation. IIPD is also considering permeable pavement to improve water quality. As far as Clayton is aware, IIPD would be one of the first ports to take this step. Clayton is looking at beneficial use of dredged material, an idea he observed at Panama ports. He asked Emily to share any examples of green ports that could provide additional ideas. Clayton had considered reuse of grain elevators for composting and asked Emily if IEPA would have a role in that project. Emily will look into IEPA regulations and permitting. She may also be able to include IIPD in the energy storage feasibility study. Suellen noted that IDNR and Illinois Sustainable Technology Center have a new partnership with a shared staff position. She proposed a meeting with IDNR, Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, Clayton, and Emily to discuss energy efficiency.

Rachel noted that if any of IIPD’s buildings are historically or culturally significant, HP should review solar panel installation.

Brian asked Clayton if the potential bike path would cross the Bishop Ford. He would like to be aware of preliminary plans to coordinate, when needed, for IDOT projects. There is a lot of community support for the bike path and IIPD is interested in finding additional funding. Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program funds are a key opportunity, particularly with Task Force support and collaboration. The next grant round is open, with proposals due December 1, 2017. Jim Merrell from Active Transportation Alliance is working with Clayton and community groups to advance the bike path. They will keep Brian updated. Brian also advocated for the 95th Street and Stony Island project, which has vertical clearance and pedestrian safety concerns. IDOT has conducted a preliminary project study

and submitted proposals to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant and U.S. Congress' Infrastructure Improvement Program. Clayton highlighted that improved IIPD roadway signage would be helpful. He will send Brian the locations and sign wording. Brian will forward the information to the appropriate IDOT staff.

Mike shared potentially relevant DCEO programs and points of contact with Suellen. He suggested that Clayton review the information and contact the most useful DCEO offices. Mike felt that employment training might have the best resources for IIPD. All of DCEO grant programs are housed within particular offices. As far as Mike is aware, there are no DCEO grant funds for road construction. There is residential weatherization funding available, but this may not cover IIPD needs. There was once an Office of Tourism infrastructure grant, but the program was cut. As a municipality, IIPD could be eligible for DCEO funds. Mike, Suellen, and Annie will revisit the Master List of agency programs and activities to determine relevant DCEO support opportunities. (Please see the October 2016 minutes for more detail on the Master List.)

Suellen noted that IDNR could fund IIPD staff capacity. If so, IDNR would offer funding to underwrite a new staff position in the first year or two then phase out that support over the subsequent two to three years as IIPD capacity grows. The position would include fundraising responsibilities and the objective of IIPD working towards making it self-sustaining by the time IDNR support ends. One option is for a well-established and experienced nonprofit to be the funding recipient, provide the staff capacity, and manage the IDNR grant on IIPD's behalf. There are at least two organizations interested. Metropolitan Planning Council is organizing and facilitating a meeting with several funders and other key partners to discuss aligning their IIPD funding interests. Suellen will ask Metropolitan Planning Council to invite IDOT to attend that meeting. IDNR may also be able to provide financial support for trail planning. Clayton noted that IIPD's top priority would be staff capacity. With the additional capacity, IIPD can pursue trail planning funds and other grant opportunities. If IDNR does not have the budget for both projects through a directed grant, IIPD and its partners could apply for trail planning funding through Coastal's competitive grant process.

IIPD aims to work with Martin and Associates on an all-encompassing market analysis that demonstrates the economic and community benefits of proposed IIPD activities. This project is complementary to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Local Technical Assistance grant. The Local Technical Assistance grant may cover about 80% of the market study scope. IIPD has a more general indirect benefit analysis from 2011, but the new market study would be more comprehensive.

Suellen and Clayton will consider these three projects, and in the next six to eight weeks IDNR will commit to fund at least one in 2018.

Calumet Collaborative report

In April, Sarah shared Calumet Collaborative's four initiatives: 1) wayfinding, 2) Calumet National Heritage Area, 3) Illinois-Indiana conservation strategies, and 4) brownfield redevelopment. (Please see April minutes for more detail.)

Sarah reported on initiative progress relevant to the Task Force. The wayfinding working group will focus on an identity and brand for the region that will be the foundation for a marketing and advertising campaign. This is relevant to Illinois Office of Tourism. The working group could have initial products to share in early 2018.

The Collaborative received a \$50,000 grant from Chicago Community Trust to assemble brownfields Geographic Information System data. The information will be used to prioritize brownfields for reuse and redevelopment. Sarah asked Emily to join conversations about data layers and other resources that could support the analysis. The project aims to identify cluster areas that are ripe for redevelopment. Emily highlighted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's environmental justice tool. IEPA also developed an internal Geographic Information System. Emily will explore available data. Mark mentioned that Craig Colton from Illinois Sustainable Technology Center created a Calumet hazardous sites database in the mid-1980's. He has seen the report, but the data itself would be useful. Annie's position is connected to the University of Illinois' Prairie Research Institute (which is home to Illinois Sustainable Technology Center). She will try to find the raw data and will follow up with Mark.

Public comments

There were no public comments.

Wrap up and next steps

- Annie will finalize the July 2017 meeting minutes with the approved edits and ask Calumet Collaborative Communications Manager Nichole DeMario to post these on the Collaborative's website.
- Annie will finalize the 2018 meeting schedule, send out calendar invitations to Task Force representatives, and ask Nichole to post those times and locations on the Collaborative's website.
- Annie will draft the October meeting minutes and send to Task Force representatives for review.
- Suellen will follow up with Clayton about key points the Illinois International Port District would like our agencies to include in a letter of support for the House Bill 1797 veto override and forward that information to Task Force members.
- If possible, Task Force agencies will write and submit a letter of support for overriding the veto on House Bill 1797.
- By the end of this calendar year, Task Force agencies will make firm commitments for helping advance the Port District's immediate/priority goals. At least one of the commitments each agency makes will be tangible, time-bound, and measurable.
- In order to help DCEO better hone in on how it can support the Port District, Mike, Suellen, and Annie will revisit the master list of Task Force agencies' work that aligns with Millennium Reserve/Calumet Collaborative goals as well the DCEO division descriptions recently compiled by Mike.
- Clayton and Emily will hold November 3 at 9:30 am for a tentative meeting with IDNR and Illinois Sustainable Technology Center about potential collaborative projects. Suellen will confirm the meeting as soon as she knows it has been set.
- Emily will explore IEPA brownfields data for Sarah.
- Annie will follow up with the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center on Craig Colton's data for Mark Bouman.
- Metropolitan Planning Council will coordinate and facilitate a meeting with Clayton, Diane, Suellen, Justine Sydello from IDOT, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago Community Trust, and a few other key partners to discuss how to best align each agency's potential support for IIPD to complement rather than duplicate efforts.
- If you have ideas for topics to be included on the January 2018 Task Force meeting agenda, please let Suellen and Annie know.

- Suellen and Annie will coordinate with Rachel and Eric on future meetings that will be most in line with their work.