

This meeting summary was produced by City Bureau Documenters, in accordance with our editorial independence policy, with financial support from the city of Chicago. If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email City Bureau at documenters@citybureau.org with "Correction Request" in the subject line.

Environment, Climate + Energy Meeting #8

January 11, 2022, 6:00PM | 2 hours

Documented by: Ahmad Sayles

ATTENDEES

- Mike Tomas
- Alaina Harkness
- Naomi Davis
- Matthew Zemanick
- Lesley Roth
- Kyra Woods
- Tomas de'Medici
- Anne Nicklin
- David Yocca
- Tomi Moore
- Kalindi Parikh
- Iyana Simba
- Frank Zhu
- Brian Daly
- Arlinda Bajrami
- Kuldip Kumar
- Robert Weinstock
- Shannon Madden
- Adam Glueckert
- Bradley Roback
- Bob Megquier
- Angela Tovar
- Anthony Tidall
- Jo Gayle
- Adam Glueckert
- Sean Wiedel
- Melissa Tate
- Melissa Strassel



MEETING GOAL

Establish policy, reflect on previous policy, and attach metrics.

WHERE WE ARE



Step 1

We Are*Setting the Stage*

Step 2

We Have and Need*Develop A Policy Toolkit*

Step 3

We Will*Set Policy Framework*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

The pillar leaders are using metrics to help craft their policy proposals in hopes of creating measurable impact.

2

The pillar leaders want to pursue innovative policy directions, particularly on water policy.

3

Pillar leaders are examining the cross-pillar topics shared with other research groups. The group wants to make independent policies but also create policies that complement the other pillars.

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

“It’s incredibly frustrating to watch a city with multi-millions of dollars not take care of folks and communities having to take care of each other. And that’s what gives me hope.”

Matthew Zemanick | Southeast Environmental Task Force, Community Chaplain

“Our residents depend on public transportation, need public transportation, and use it.”

Mike Tomas | Garfield Park Community Council, Executive Director

“It is important as an institution to be tied into what development can be in Chicago. For us, it’s our sustainable square-mile work and we’re not going to be shy about promoting that paradigm.”

Naomi Davis | Blacks in Green, Founder

NOTES

Overview

Mike Tomas mentioned in his update on the Garfield Park Community Council that transportation came up a lot in the most recent meeting. He said that a [recent study](#) showed that the stops at Pulaski (Blue Line) and Conservatory (Green Line) maintained the highest ridership during the pandemic.

Matthew Zemanick gave an update on the Southeast Environmental Task Force, voicing the community's frustration with the city postponing the health impact assessment. He says that the assessment has been delayed five times in two weeks.

Kalindi Parikh delivered a presentation on behalf of the nonprofit Current Water. Executive Director Alaina Harkness also spoke in favor of the city cleaning the river and lake and the blue economy and blue jobs initiative ("blue" meaning water-related).

Mentimeter Exercise - Marissa Strassel introduced the Menti poll, a series of questions that allows you to rank options in order to help policy become more measurable.

- Question #1: "While prioritizing efforts in vulnerable areas, how do all communities and neighborhoods achieve climate resilience through public/private sectors?"
 1. Change in precipitation
 2. Land surface temperature
 3. Greenhouse gas emissions by census community area
 4. Floodplain and flood insurance claims by census tract or community area
- Question #2: "How do we incorporate environmental justice/resource distribution to reverse historic disinvestment and degradation in underserved communities?"
 1. Reduce amount of a harmful pollutant (fine particulate matter) in the air
 2. Decrease nitrogen dioxide pollution
 3. Greenhouse gas reduction

Feedback

- Matthew Zemanick commented that the question is too broad and that different communities may be dealing with different pollution concerns.
 - Frank Zhu said he felt like the exercise was pointless because pillar leaders weren't allowed to choose the metrics used in the poll.
 - Shannon Madden said, "There's not great alignment between the answer choices and the questions."
-
- Question #3: "How do we foster public/private partnership to implement circularity elements in our regional food/water/energy/materials flows to be a leader?"
 1. Green index (land access)
 2. Food access
 3. Neighborhood power projects
 4. Community solar farms
 5. Curbside and containerized waste diversion

6. Manage waste and water sustainably reduction targets
 - Question #4: “How do we maintain and expand green space, natural resources, and conservation efforts for the benefit of all Chicagoans?”
 1. Park quality
 2. Greencorps job training program
 3. Average walking distance to a park
 - Question #5: “How do we mitigate and then eliminate sources of carbon emissions in alignment with national and global climate goals?”
 1. Reduce vehicle miles traveled
 2. Increase ozone concentration
 3. Heat Vulnerability Index
 4. Decarbonized transit
 5. Decarbonized energy sources
 6. Amount of harmful pollutants (fine particulate matter) in the air
 - Question #6: “How will this plan leverage available state and federal resources to tackle climate?”
 1. The plan should align with federal/state grant requirements.
 2. Lead to policies that support and facilitate funding
 3. Miles of train track laid; the number of charging stations or electric vehicles installed
 4. Jobs created by implementing resilience strategies

Breakout Room Discussion

Meeting participants were distributed into breakout rooms, and each group was given a policy to analyze and refine. New York City’s OneNYC 2050 strategy and climate policy from Edmonton, Alberta, were referenced as examples.

Adjournment

RESOURCES

URBAN INSTITUTE RIDERSHIP RESEARCH

[Transit Ridership](#)

THE SUSTAINABLE SQUARE MILE HANDBOOK

[A guide by Blacks in Green and the National Resources Defense Council](#)

CURRENT WATER

[A local organization that reviews water management best practices and new technology](#)

ONE NYC 2050

[New York City's sustainability strategy](#)

NEXT STEPS

At the next meeting, the pillar members will:

- Identify performance metrics
- Further outline policy frameworks and craft policies
- Likely review more community feedback