

Environmental Justice Discussion

Dec. 3, 2020

- Welcome + introductions
 - In attendance: Scott Tess, Morgan White, Ximing Cai, Sharva Hampton-Campbell, Kaamilyah Abdullah-Span, Ruby Mendenhall, Meredith Moore
- iCAP 2020 overview – objective 8.3
 - Environmental justice and social equity aspect is incredibly for our campus and community
 - This objective addresses the human component of climate resilience
 - Identify existing programs within our local communities
 - Topics include food security, cooling centers, educational components
- Discussion
 - Environmental justice has some key principles
 - Environmental justice zones which are evaluated by the county – our scope is urbanized areas
 - Illinois Solar for All also created these zones
 - Community Development Target Areas (Urbana, low income and racial minority – excluding student populations)
 - One particular issue is white enrollment, among faculty, staff, students. We have made a lot of progress to get more people involved but we still need larger involvement.
 - Engagement SWATeam is designed to help promote these efforts
 - We need widespread support and help promoting these efforts to get more people involved and for more people to realize its importance
 - Important to set levels of priority and levels/interaction of community
 - CDT – Community Development Target areas – take census data (race and income) and make decisions, grant action, and target these areas
 - Urbana has hired a community liaison officer – geared toward policing issues
 - Sustainability Advisory Commission added justice equity, diversity, inclusion in commission bylaws
 - Continuing conversation about the key principles
 - City has been awarded a grant to study inequities in street tree plantings (presence or absence of tree plantings, inequitably distributed based on income and race)
 - Are the streets being maintained better in more affluent communities?
 - Big opportunity in Urbana stormwater master plan
 - Clear direction from chancellor to have stronger relationship with community
 - Resilience Commitment signed in 2016
 - How can we support our local community? How can we be better listeners and work with our local community and provide our expertise?
 - Reverend Underwood asked for support on environmental issues
 - Dr. Ellis neighborhood

- Urban and Regional Planning involved
 - Oral history work – Edith Chan
 - College of Medicine Make-a-Thon, could involve
- Fifth and Hill
- We should identify larger issues but this plan could specifically identify specific issues (phase 1)
- School of Social Work has been focusing on poverty within Champaign – Urbana area and student body
 - Trying to educate general public and student body about poverty
 - Poverty simulation – annual Martin Luther King event and at an annual summit
- Case studies to look at fruit trees and the overlap of community gardens (maintenance, benefit)
- Urbana is building a low-income qualifying community solar array
- Need for a grocery store on the north side of Urbana
 - Bradley and Lincoln area – area of land coming available
- Agroforestry
 - <https://sustainability.illinois.edu/research/secsustainable-agriculture/agroforestry-for-food-project/>
- Enhance environmental justice in education and sustainability trainings
 - Real-life experiences for students
- Green space – should be accessible to all within a 15-minute walk
 - Difficult because of highly fragmented govt.
 - <https://www.tpl.org/city/urbana-illinois>
 - Dr. Ming Kuo – all of the benefits with green space
 - Link to green space and covid19
- We need to have community leadership and input
 - Citizen science – geospatial analyses – vulnerability assessments
 - Ruby has a student/research fellow, help with Jupiter notebook
- [Smart Energy Design Center](#) – may be able to contribute to this group
- Student involvement
 - 4H clubs, Boys and Girls clubs
- Evaluating frameworks for addressing environmental justice (Scott will summarize at the next meeting)
 - Do other cities/organizations have EJ plans?