

Environmental Justice Committee Meeting (April 1st, 2021)

Members in Attendance: Meredith Moore (Staff), Ken Edgar Salo (Faculty), Ruby Mendenhall (Faculty), Scott Tess (Urbana), Genevieve Zilmer (Student), Kimmy Chuang (Resilience Clerk)

1. Introductions

- a. Ken Edgar Salo teaches courses on race and social justice in Urban Planning. He received an invitation from Scott from working on unused lands and does work in community food garden.
- b. Meredith Moore is Sustainability Coordinator at iSEE. She gave an overview of the iCAP and how the EJ Plan is an objective of the Resilience team.
- c. Kimmy Chuang
- d. Ruby Mendenhall is an associate professor in Sociology, African American Studies. She is working on the [Nobel Project](#) to engage young people with farm-bots to pique their interest in computer science.

2. Seeking Public Input

- a. Meredith has drafted [a document](#) and survey to seek ideas, feedback, or input from the public. She has reached out to Foreign Language Department and they will be able to translate the document into many languages (Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese, etc.)
- b. Scott: Mobile Recreation Program at the Urbana Park District could help. They require that you have an activity if you're using their program.
- c. Ken: We should also have a roadmap of where this outreach is going and be aware of principles of democratic of participation. This could happen by designing backwards and understand why should people get involved so that we can explain that to the public. We should also be clear of the differences between environmental justice and other
- d. Warren: Champaign Urbana Public Health uses a perennial focus group approach. There could be benefit of convening people or having one-on-one discussion. Could occur at Francis Health Clinic, food shelter, and other places. People from the communities could help formulate the questions so we are asking about the right threats and concerns.
- e. Meredith: Past discussions have focused on listening to the community, so engaging different constituencies (public health, students, land and water conservancies)
- f. Ken: First step could be delineate all the campus and community constituencies. We need to know answers to an important social question: "for whom, and so what."
- g. Ruby: College of Medicine is planning to have townhalls and could see these same questions coming up. There could be a page about Environmental Justice using [Google Jamboard](#).
- h. Scott: This process could be iterative. We don't have to be perfect the first time because public engagement is really difficult. It's hard to know we are asking the right people or the right questions.
- i. Genevieve: Who would be implementing this plan we're planning?

- j. Scott: In the plan you can call out whose domain this would be and by inviting them in, you hope that they incorporate the initiatives into their practices.
- k. Meredith: In the iCAP, there is an accountable unit listed. Meredith and others picked up the phone and called people. For example, they called the Career Center to get more sustainability-oriented opportunities in job fairs. We need to work with the accountable units now as the plan is being made so they are incentivized to take up our plans. At least they know these are our goals.
- l. Ken: Process is more important than the actual resulting plan. The process where people participate is the buy-in. Most of these plans are still-born and likely will end up in the graveyard without the appropriate process. Sustainability cannot really be legislated, it's a cultural practice.
- m. Meredith: This is why we're starting now even though the deadline is technically FY24. Listening appropriately and justly is going to take a long time.
- n. Ken: Interdisciplinary process is what will make this more democratic. We should also value international perspectives.
- o. Kimmy: Will contact Mallory and SSC EJ Working Group who are hosting a talk with Warren on EJ and try to institute the Google Jamboard and collect student input that way.

- p. Scott: Is there a specific roadmap with milestones or specific dates when the plan should be published by FY24?
- q. Meredith: Not that I'm aware of.
- r. Scott: Will start a document with bullet points that backdates from July 1st, 2024.