

Copenhagen and New York Discuss Community Engagement for Cloudburst Collaboration

As part of Copenhagen and New York City's three-year official city-to-city collaboration on Cloudburst and Climate Adaptation, Danish Cleantech Hub hosted an intimate workshop with community stakeholders and public agencies. Participants from NYC Parks, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) met with local workforce development organization, Green City Force, to explore what successful community engagement looks like in New York City and Copenhagen.

As the Copenhagen-New York City collaboration enters its third year, feasibility studies and preliminary designs are about to move from planning phase and into the realm of reality in South Jamaica Houses, Queens. With the attention shifting to implementation, local educational and social-economic benefits for communities, in general, was the focus of this workshop. The collective input will help inform the next steps in the Copenhagen-New York City collaboration. As a non-profit working actively with NYCHA, Green City Force specializes in community engagement and workforce development. Comparing Copenhagen's community engagement model with Green City Force's own model, Student residents from their Urban Farm Corps discussed how to make stormwater management meaningful and valuable to residents, both from an environmental, professional, and individual resident perspective.

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LEFT: Alan Cohn from DEP presenting. RIGHT: Workshop with local residents.

Participants from both sides agreed that New York City is well equipped to engage local residents in training and workforce development, thanks to strong local non-profits, whereas Copenhagen successfully involves residents in the planning phases of large projects. Getting buy-in from local communities is essential in projects of this scale, and vital in realizing the potential for co-benefits that is central to Climate Neighborhoods. This rich exchange on community engagement between the two cities, and actual residents, underscore the value of transatlantic city-to-city knowledge sharing.



Local residents from the Green City Force workforce development program presenting.