

Flushing Climate Meeting: Preparing Communities for Future Flooding

Recent storms have devastated Flushing, a coastal community in Queens. In September 2021, a deadly storm took the lives of three residents found in a flooded basement apartment. Thousands of other community members experienced damage to their homes and properties. Many residents have not been equipped to receive emergency notifications and did not have evacuation plans.

In 2022, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) joined community members, elected officials, scientists, and emergency management personnel at a Flushing Climate Meeting to share information on the science of climate change and where and how to prepare for flooding emergencies. Columbia University scientists shared climate change information; agencies shared resources for the community; and elected officials answered questions from community members.

Nearly 50 community residents attended the meeting to learn about local flood predictions, emergency shelters, and participatory science opportunities. Meeting materials and information were translated to Mandarin for attendees from our new partner organizations: the Chinese Planning Council, the Flushing Food Collaborative, and the Free Synagogue of Flushing. Participants received information packets, joined email lists, asked questions, and expressed gratitude for the presentations on preparing for flooding and other climate emergencies and the emergency preparedness kits that were distributed. During the Town Hall meeting, a few weeks later, the City of New York announced that it would be taking steps to further address and understand the flooding impacts and risks in the neighborhood. Those attending the meetings included New York State Senator John Liu, and representatives of U.S. Representative Grace Meng and New York City Council Member Sandra Ung.

NYSG's community outreach and science-based education in collaboration with diverse partners is helping communities that have experienced tragic losses to flooding to be better equipped to tackle climate change challenges.



The Chinese Planning Council hosted a Flushing Climate Meeting on how to prepare for future threats, including coastal and storm flooding. Photo: Lillit Genovesi/NYSG

NYSG Coastal Resiliency Resources

<https://www.nyseagrant.org/coastalresiliency>

Partners (Funders*): *Long Island Sound Study • Chinese Planning Council • *Columbia University Earth Institute's Center for Climate Systems Research • *New York City Emergency Management • New York City Department of Environmental Protection • Queens Botanical Garden • Kissena Synergy • Flushing Free Synagogue • Flushing Food Collaborative.

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is Resilient New York Communities and Economies.

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.
Contact: New York Sea Grant Extension, 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; www.nyseagrant.org.

Project summary was written by NYSG Long Island Sound Study Outreach Coordinator Lillit Genovesi, 718-595-3954, lg543@cornell.edu.