

Environmental exposures across urban and rural communities in the Deep South

August 11, 2016
10-11am Central

Attendees: Molly Bernhard, Keisha Brown, Mary Evans, Julia Gohlke, Ethel Johnson, Claudiu Lungu, Sheila Tyson, Steve Woods, and Conner Wu

The agenda was adopted.

Announcements: There were no new announcements from the CAB.

No New Grants: The supplement application that was submitted earlier this year will not be funded. This refers to the supplement to expand the existing grant funding to include projects relating to Type II Diabetes and urban planning/ built environment (as described in the meeting minutes from the February 25th conference call: file name is Draft meeting minutes for conf. call meeting_2_25_16.pdf. We will proceed with the existing projects.

APHA Meeting: There will be a special session on personal heat exposure at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting in Denver CO. Our session will be on Nov 2nd from 8:30 to 10 am. There will be a 20 minute presentation by our group in this session. Sheila will attend and is already registered. Ethel is unavailable. JG will email Sheryl to see if she is interested.

Update on Summer 2016 Monitor Project: The temperature/humidity monitors were placed in May. They were checked and data was downloaded in July. We plan on downloading and removing them in September. A map showing the locations of the monitors placed is on Basecamp site (Map of thermometers put out last week week) and can be found at this link <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=11AT8ilafVo6goA5La8tVcreJO7o> In addition, volatile organic compound (VOC) samplers were placed in 2 locations each in Birmingham and Camden on July 7th and collected after 24 hrs. Michael Milazzo is analyzing VOC samplers at Virginia Tech. Ozone monitors were also placed in the same location and left for approximately 1 week. They were collected and sent for analysis. Results indicate there were higher concentrations of ozone in Birmingham than Camden, which is consistent with what we hypothesized; however we are not able to detect differences between locations within Birmingham and Camden.

Focus Group Logistics:

September 19th Harrison Park Recreation Center (1615 McMillon Ave SW, Birmingham, AL 35211) from 10-2pm

September 22nd 8:00 breakfast, 8:30 start at Lena Mahen Powell Convention Center (211 Claiborne St, Camden, AL 36726) to be followed by the Black Belt Institute

Focus Group Formatting: There will be 5-6 focus groups, with approximately 8-10 participants each, 1 facilitator each, and 1 notetaker each. Several people volunteered to be facilitators: Keisha, Sheila, and Ethel may be willing although Ethel feels she may be busy coordinating that day. Ethel suggested asking if Sheryl or Aundretta may be interested. Sheryl has facilitated in the past. Other facilitators may be Molly, Mary, Anna, and Julia.

Keisha suggested to have one member of each focus group tell the larger group a brief 5 minute summary of what the discussion was at the end. This way the other groups can compare amongst themselves what they were talking about. Others agreed this would be a good summary. We need to reserve approximately 30 minutes at the end to allow for this.

Focus Group Ideas for Discussion:

Concerns in Camden:

In Camden, the first three concerns brought up were drinking water, air, and zika (mosquitos). They are concerned about drinking water: taste, color, look, changes during a specific season? They are concerned it may be affecting their health. Are they testing it and how? What further can be done? Camden is on municipal water, but there is an area in Wilcox where water is trucked in. Access to clean water is a concern.

In 2012, the focus groups focused on 3 main areas: What you like about your community, things to change, and environmental priorities. They lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. The following year, focus groups were more targeted to ranking issues within communities in survey form and discussing a couple of focused issues in greater depth. It was suggested to ask what solutions are to the issues they bring up.

In Birmingham, water and air were suggested. The city is replacing the water pipes. There is concern that testing showed lead in the water. CL says the pipes are cast iron so lead would be from another source. Zika is also a concern in Birmingham.

It would be good to have some sort of questionnaire to ask what they would be interested in discussing. Mary (and Molly) will look to the survey from the end of the Black Belt Institute from 2015. There is an open-ended question that may give insight, although it is often not filled in by participants.

It was suggested to discuss the difference in priorities between the phone survey of residents versus the environmental professionals. For example, there was a difference in concern for food safety. Why might that be?

Another suggestion was asking about family members moving away. Ask participants who moves in and out of community and why. Is the community transient (lots of people moving in and out) or stable (not so many moving in or out)? This might contribute to the greater discussion about urban and rural differences.

Building off the earlier discussions, we could focus on benefits/challenges of community engaged research. For example, do partnerships between researchers and communities work? Are they

mutually beneficial?

Ethel mentioned any of these could be brought up. It will depend on who makes up the group and where the discussion leads. Based on previous focus groups, it would be good to have at least 3 discussion prompts so that if there isn't much response to a particular prompt, then can move on to next subject.

In-person CAB meetings: Community Advisory Board (CAB) meetings will directly follow the focus groups in Birmingham and will occur after the Black Belt Institute in Camden. They will be at the same locations as the focus groups.

Next step: We will draft a script for the focus groups and circulate prior to the next conference call set for Thursday August 25th at 10 am Central time).