

BoRit Asbestos Superfund Site Community Action Group Meeting

Ambler/Upper Dublin/Whitpain Pennsylvania

Date: Thursday, September 4, 2014

Location: Upper Dublin Township Bldg- 801 Loch Alsh Ave- Fort Washington PA 19002

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Order by Diane Morgan at 6:38pm. Meeting minutes for June were approved and Diane Morgan opened the floor to changes to the agenda. No changes noted.

Reservoir Status and Next Steps/Soil Sample Results

Jill Lowe gave the group a presentation on Reservoir Findings and Sediment Sampling and then opened up the floor to questions and comments.

Gordon Chase: Has any backing up of water been observed now that the pipe is plugged?

Dave Froehlich commented that there was water around the pipe even though it has been plugged.

Jill Lowe noted that this is a reason the sampling was conducted and that a temporary cap had been put in place.

Bob Adams: How much sediment is above the bedrock?

Joe McDowell: It is fairly shallow.

Gordon Chase: Did the clay observed during sampling appear man made or natural?

Joe McDowell: My speculation is that it was placed there.

Jill Lowe: Both red and grey clays were found.

Dave Froehlich noted that he observed what appeared to be roads being built that will be used to access the berm.

Jill Lowe confirmed these were the roads being built by OSC Eduardo Rivera and also explained some of the future actions that will be undertaken at the berm.

Gordon Chase thanked EPA on behalf of the RR&M group for taking the time and effort to conduct the sampling.

Gordon Chase: Did EPA find the sampling worthwhile?

Jill Lowe: Yes, it was advantageous for EPA to do this sampling as it helped close any potential data gaps and will be beneficial for the BoRit Site as a whole.

Gordon Chase asked for clarification of the bankruptcy of EPA contractor WRS Compass.

Jill Lowe: The contractor has declared bankruptcy. There was a delay to work on the BoRit Site for approximately one week as subcontractors stopped working due to the bankruptcy. Many issues have since been resolved and work at the Site is moving forward. There should be no further issues.

Joe McDowell: The contractor's particular contract with EPA is healthy but from what we can gather, their other contracts are causing issues. Apart from the one week pause in work, everything is on track.

Peter Amento: Does EPA have a rough estimate of how much water will be going back into the reservoir?

Jill Lowe: I estimate more than half.

Joe McDowell: The exact amount has not been calculated as the Army Corps' designs continue to evolve.

Gordon Chase: Where will this water come from?

Jill Lowe: From the Wissahickon River.

Sharon McCormick: How does EPA know where the contamination in the reservoir is originating?

Jill Lowe: This is one thing we hope to explain when the current sampling results are received.

Sharon McCormick: Does EPA feel the sediment itself was contaminated?

Jill Lowe: Initial levels were below MCLs, but we know that sediment sampling is an evolving science and that is why the new sediment sampling methods were developed for this round of sampling.

Diane Morgan: When the reservoir is refilled will the water be tested again or is the assumption that it is safe?

Jill Lowe: Joe McDowell and I are currently discussing how to rewater the reservoir. The Wissahickon River was tested in August and we are awaiting those results.

Diane Morgan: Is the water filtered as it is being put back into the reservoir?

Joe McDowell: Yes, but not as intensely as when it was dewatered.

Gordon Chase: Did we lie to rest the mystery of "The Seep" or is it still seeping?

Joe McDowell: From an engineering perspective, they think the seep is due to the amount of ACM present, almost as if a sponge was ringing out. But no spring or other water source has been found in that area.

Gordon Chase: Is it still currently seeping?

Joe McDowell: I will have to take a look.

Sharon McDowell noted that water tables are very low right now.

Dave Froehlich: It is very dry right now and we may see the seep return again when the reservoir is refilled.

Dave Froehlich also noted that PennDot was recently conducting surveys for a dam removal they have to conduct and asked EPA if they know their timetable. He also wondered if maybe the remains of the dam shouldn't be left in place until EPA's work is completed.

Jill Lowe noted that she would discuss this OSC Eduardo Rivera.

CAG discussion of Bast/Frumin Tract Proposed Developments

Sharon McCormick discussed the Bast Parcel and her concerns that development of a four-story apartment building had been approved by PADEP for the parcel. According to past assessments, the grounds of this parcel are polluted. Attempts to contact PADEP regarding this matter have gone unanswered.

A discussion then followed on the nature of friable asbestos. Sharon McCormick noted that her research indicated there was 21 feet of 50% friable asbestos. Joe McDowell noted that he was present at the Site when the ACM was originally dug up and the consistency is of a cream cheese/toothpaste nature which is not friable.

Joe McDowell: As far as approval of digging on that parcel, NESHAPS requires notification be provided to both PADEP and EPA within 45 days of advance of any digging on the parcel. EPA can be involved and continue to assist the state but ultimately the approval is delegated to the state.

Peter Lowry: Is the asbestos that was described as cream cheese like in texture pre-friable? If it was laid in the sun for a year, would it dry out and become friable?

Joe McDowell: The ACM is mostly mixed with a magnesium base, which helps to hold the water. It would not dry out.

Sharon McCormick: The Langden report does describe the waste as 50% friable.

Joe McDowell: Then I would describe that assessment as incorrect.

Lora Werner: The data collected by Jack Kelly is not applicable to what EPA is doing now.

Sharon McCormick: That is why I am requesting EPA do something further about it.

Gordon Chase: Section 11E of Jack Kelly's report states that a removal action by EPA is not needed provided the drums at the boiler house are addressed or any disturbance of soils and wastes does not occur or is closely monitored. We know that soils have been disturbed and I feel at this point it should become an EPA issue.

Committee Reports

Gordon Chase gave the group a summary of the most recent RR&M meeting. He noted that they discussed the Gessner Products water extraction. The committee would like sampling on water both when extracted and when put back in but seems to have hit a brick wall between EPA and PADEP and is requested further understanding of the issue.

Jill Lowe: We have reached out to my counterpart at PADEP to share our information about MW-7 with them. We have not received a response. Who is the group you are attempting to contact that is not responding?

Diane Morgan noted that she was not sure but will forward the name to EPA so they can attempt to make reach out as well.

The other item discussed was visible asbestos on Wissahickon creek. EPA was to inspect the creek in August. This is pending. Bob Adams noted that Eduardo Rivera said he would do a visual inspection in August but does not believe this has occurred.

Next Steps & Old/New Business

There was discussion amongst the group of the possibility of utilizing TASC/TAG resources to hire an aerosol expert before the Proposed Plan is finalized to help the CAG in making recommendations to EPA.

Carrie Deitzel: As I understand it, Diane is requesting assistance to develop recommendations and that is not really what those programs are designed for. They are mainly designed to help communities understand and follow EPA's work and the language used to describe that work not to develop cleanup proposals to present to the agency. TASC could help to develop comments and recommendations in the future when EPA proposes an action.

Diane Morgan: The idea is that we only have 30 days once EPA submits a Proposed Plan to offer comments so it would be helpful to have an expert beforehand.

Jill Lowe explained that the Proposed Plan would be discussed with the group prior to its release and they would have a clear idea of when it would be coming. This would be when an expert would come into play.

Diane Morgan: Will EPA have someone ready when the report is finalized?

Carrie Deitzel: The benefit of TASC is that getting an expert onboard is a much briefer process than TAG, so we could have someone available to review the proposal, but at this point there is nothing for an expert to review. Comment periods can also be extended an additional 30 days if needed.

Gordon Chase – The University of Pennsylvania is supposedly getting a new expert in this area.

Dr. Ted Emmett: – There is a new head of the environmental department coming to UPenn and this appears to be his field. Once he is on the ground and has assessed the date he may be of help in this area. It's less of an aerosol expert needed but more someone who is an expert on sampling strategy.

Diane Morgan: This item will be kept on the agenda until it is addressed so that it is not forgotten.

Aneeza Agha gave the group updates on the Penn Superfund Research Program. EPA is requesting a presentation which should occur in October.

New Business

Gordon Chase: What is the schedule for refilling the reservoir?

Jill Lowe: I am not sure of the OSC's timetable.

Sharon McCormick stated that she has had 3 citizens approach her regarding a fairly strong chemical odor coming from the Gessner plant. She was hoping that PADEP could look into it. No citizens have reported health problems; it is currently just a nuisance.

Lora Werner: It may help for the citizens to contact PADEP directly regarding the matter as well.

Adjourn

Diane Morgan adjourned the meeting at 8:22pm.