

November 2008 BoRit CAG Meeting Notes (These are a basic transcription of Beth Pilling's handwritten notes. These should be merged with additional notes that I believe were jotted down by others.) BP

Fred Connor open the meeting, and the CAG members indicated consensus on the minutes from the previous meeting and the proposed agenda for the November meeting.

A letter containing the text of the letter re NLT listing submitted prior to November 3 was distributed. There was almost unanimous consensus on this letter, with one member abstaining and the agency members also abstaining. The letter was signed by CAG members later in the meeting.

Helen Dutot, as regional community involvement and outreach person for superfund Philadelphia (get accurate title) thanked the CAG for helping EPA make better decisions. She announced that Larry Johnson would move on to other responsibilities. Vance Evans and Francisco Cruz will become the new primary contacts.

Fred reminded the group of the upcoming Friday telephone conference, ongoing since August.

Stacey Peterson, proposed Remedial Program Manager for the BoRit site addressed the group with an overview on the difference between removal (the immediate action) and remedial (the long-term action). The site was proposed for NPL listing on September 3. The public comment period closed November 3; it is uncertain when EPA's final decision will be made. About 25 comments, generally positive, were received and will be reviewed by EPA headquarters. Funding availability will not play a role in EPA's decision. In this region, 11 sites were proposed, with all but two scoring 50 or above.

The group posed a number of questions:

?How is the money actually assigned to the site, and are there costs associated with each option?

?Isn't the remedial method an important factor in selecting the contractor? A=All the contractors are experienced; as part of the design, the scope and specifications will be put out to bid. The design contractor will oversee the work contractor.

?Isn't EPA required to select the most cost-effective method that will do the job?

?Will the Risk Assessment also assess all suspected toxins? A= A full sweep would likely be done to evaluate the potential for different waste streams; it may be possible to narrow down.

?Will the volume of waste be estimated? A= it will need to be done in order to determine the remedy and costs.

?Will potential for off-site contamination be considered – this has been found in various neighborhood yards? A= Eduardo commented that residents need to come forward – there is no threat if material is not friable – will send out a fact sheet – residents should keep any visible patches covered.

?Since the Future Plans group is coming up with recommendations, what's the time frame for getting this plan in for consideration? A=This could be up to 2 to 3 years but also could be less. 12 to 18 months is a reasonable time period.

?Will core samples be done on the mounds to determine the volume of materials – this might have been a quarry but don't know the depth? A=The fill area will be identified before its composition can be identified. Then core borings will be done down to virgin soil.

The Gilmore report has lots of cross-sectional information.

?What's the zoning of Whitpain's park? A= park and recreation

?Will different options be identified for each different parcel? A=Sometimes sites are set up in various operable units which could have separate RODs – that way each could proceed into design without slowing the process.

?Is there a way to give input to contractors and review assumptions – local knowledge could be very valuable? A=Would need to structure this so the process is not complicated.

?Will there be interim reports or just one at the end? A=typically just a final report – there are not usually a lot of deliverables.

?Group would like weekly reports to know what's happening? A=Eduardo can arrange to establish a framework for dialogue.

?Will the site assessment also determine what's under the reservoir? A= there will be a surface water assessment and sediment assessment.

?Will EPA be willing to hear input from outside companies? A= if there is something of interest, should send it along.

?What if a cost-effective remedy is good short-term but has long-term problems while a more expensive remedy has no long-term problems?

?Is there any kind of sonar technology for underwater use? A= perhaps something similar to ground penetrating radar.

Historical investigation of possible contamination sources may provide local knowledge
A=will look at the background; investigators may gather information in order to build a story.

?Will information from the White Mountains be looked at? A=depositions from the site file can be pulled.

Would like to make sure that cost doesn't override the best solution.

There was a discussion of longevity of the remedy and its effect on cost. A=are looking at present and future values of alternative – will have to look at costs over time.

Re CAG's expectations vis-à-vis the 9 criteria, how does the community preference fit in? A=want to make sure CAG doesn't expect more than can be realistically achieved.

Helen stated that community acceptance influences the choice of remedy – this is not the only time can have input into the process – there will be an ongoing dialogue with formal opportunity under law to submit comment.

ASTDR will continue to do a health assessment; this would not be done through EPA.

?Can CAG has a list of approved methods? A=it's too early in the process; EPA doesn't know what it will find – there is no real list of approved technologies – the first step is to look at every feasible – can then start a dialogue with the EPA research labs..

?What is the eco-risk assessment? A=this is local

?Is the Northridge site a similar model? A=this may have been a removal not a remedial action.

10-minute break

Presentation by David Froehlich on Wissahickon Waterfowl Preserve (Fred commented that ownership of this parcel is very important – WVWA is not the owner.)

The site is 15 acres of which 10 is the reservoir. The land crosses the Wiss Creek. It is a wonderful waterfowl habitat not found elsewhere in the watershed – is designated as an Important Bird Area; central to a larger conservation area in the Ambler area. The BoRit site is 38 acres but relates to additional land across the creek.

Was purchased in 2006 by the separate non-profit corporation with goal of:

- Clean up and beautify area along Maple Avenue

- Create bird watching deck and little park along street

- Maintain the reservoir as a nature preserve

- Make this part of a bigger Ambler conservation area with hope to reopen

Whitpain Park

- Cooperate with the Bo-Rit cleanup

The design is in the conceptual stage – working with Land Concepts – improve the look and give people opportunity to enjoy the unique natural area – will probably have plans within several months

?Will there be a trail around the water? A=No – it's an asbestos site – also need to protect the birds.

?How to prevent people from encroaching, and how about parking?

?Will there be lighting on observation deck? A=Has not been discussed.

?What about security?

?What about airborne asbestos coming from the reservoir? A=are in contact with Stacy and Eduardo

?Should the Waterfowl Preserve owned be represented on the CAG? A=needs to be addressed prior to the annual reorganization meeting – owners of the parcels should be part of the CAG – rules committee needs to make a recommendation.

?How about topography and a pipe on the fill site? A=in the description of the dam and sump pit – was used for filling the reservoir – another pipe took process water across Butler Pike.

Rules committee will bring a recommendation on the above to the December meeting.

Work group highlights:

Dr. Naps: HRS groups (1) desire to ask more scientific questions of the national group – get a broader idea of policy decisions on a national level – get recommendations for science people – not sure whether CAG wants to hear this more detailed info – people can join the teleconference or HRS can make a presentation. And (2) want to figure out where we fit in with environmental justice – how to get this concept to run through everything – will meet November 19 with Flo and the West Ambler community at the Civic Association – the Montco Health Dept will participate.

Joanne Walter – Removal and remediation oversight – there have been emails re implementation of the health and safety plan at the site, with questions raised – Eduardo and Larry have different observations and will meet at the office to discuss the concerns. Joanne will ask Eric to set up that meeting. There needs to be a better and faster method of conveying concerns to EPA if the expectation is for immediate action – if residents or the technical group see something of concern, it should be sent along to the group.

Sal Bocutti – Bud Wahl is working on a regional meeting of municipalities to discuss potential uses. Don't know yet how many municipalities will be involved. Dave Caddick talked with ARI in Seattle re their asbestos processing technique – it works well but takes a long time and is expensive. Michell Benchouk described additional methods. Michael discussed developing a plan and vision to present to EPA.

Diane Morgan was not present so there was no information available about community awareness. Michael discussed the work order to assistance on a website and newsletter – this was sent out today – should have an interview process soon to determine preferences – there is a cost associated with distribution of information – the content may be spearheaded by the community awareness group. A group along the Hudson River has a website that would be a good model.

Joanne Walter re Rules Committee: The committee is working on proposed changes to present at the December meeting – these will be sent in advance with a cover letter. Remember to manage the flow of emails – send through Fred and Bob so everyone sees the information – remember an email is a record that can be forwarded anywhere. One of Larry Johnson's contact replacements will be asked to join this group. Future discussions include the reorganization, limits on and staggering of chairs; want to avoid delay – will try to address these issues by January or February.

A follow up discussion on environmental justice was held off until another time – we need to find way to take steps to incorporate into our process.

?Is there a unified list of meeting times for the working groups? Would be good to put that on the website when up and running.

Future Plans group will meet at 5:30 immediately before each monthly CAG meeting – if there won't be a meeting, Sal will send an email.

For the December agenda

Extended discussion on rules and charter

UDublin needs a request form for this space for 2009 – the 1st Wednesday of each month – Diane will likely list this in the Ambler Gazette

Laura – would like time on the agenda for the cancer report

Eileen wants to reserve January for the annual meeting

Lynn – in December or January wants to discuss the site concerns and how to address the repeating issues.

Larry – EPA has set up a concern hotline for which a log is kept so concerns can be investigated immediately – if concerns aren't called in, EPA can't address them.