

## **Borit CAG minutes April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2013**

Meeting called to order at 18.35hrs by Bob Adams Co-Chair

The February CAG minutes were only received by members for comments and corrections on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and as such the final version of the minutes were not ready for approval at this (April) CAG meeting. It was agreed that approval of the final February CAG minutes would be postponed to the June CAG meeting.

Ms. Jill Lowe was introduced to the CAG as the new EPA project manager for the BoRit site, taking over from Kris Matzko. Ms Lowe gave a summary of her history with EPA since 1998 and her previous employment with the US Navy (from 1990), citing her chemical engineering and environmental engineering qualifications.

Ms Lisa Jacobs from the University of Pennsylvania made a presentation entitled "Resources for education and action for community health in Ambler," which details a new 5 year project funded for approximately \$1 million by the National Institute of Health. The presentation can be viewed on the BoRit web site at <http://www.boritcag.org/about/presentations.html> where the goals, time line and contact details are laid out. The project will result in a physical and online exhibit at the Chemical Heritage foundation in Philadelphia, cataloguing the Ambler asbestos story as an education tool for present and future generations.

A discussion followed which raised the issues of how and from whom data would be collected in the first year of the study. Comments from Ted Emmet, Diana Morgan, Andrew Salvadore and others focused on the need to be all inclusive in the data gathering process such that a well rounded picture be formed from all socio economic groups, ages and genders in the Ambler, Whitpain and Upper Dublin segments of the community that comprise the Ambler asbestos historic legacy. An attempt should also be made to gather data, where possible, from residents who have since moved away from the area. Ms Jacobs envisaged that approximately 60 interviews would be necessary to collect sufficient data for the study, encompassing both local lay and professional stakeholders. Statistics on health related issues such as mesothelioma would also be included in the study project.

Beth Pilling suggested that the town of Ambler was more than just a superfund site and that the exhibit needed to reflect a multi-dimensional approach to reflect this reality. Diana Morgan suggested that Earth Day at Temple University Ambler campus would be a good venue to bring the exhibit out of Philadelphia to the local area and this suggestion was well received.

### **7.15pm EPA BoRit site manager Eduardo Rovira report.**

Eduardo confirmed that the excavation by the alley along the park parcel had been finished. The excavation was backfilled with 2RC stone to form the new curb and that the area behind this would be covered with a geotextile fabric, 2 feet of clean fill and then hydro-seeded. The net result is that the alley road way will be a little wider than before by about 1ft.

The previous plan of planting trees along the edge of the new curb has been abandoned and instead the plantings will consist only of shrubs.

Eduardo revealed to the CAG that the Corps of Engineers had been asked to undertake an hydrological study of the reservoir area of the site as a result of the concerns expressed previously by the RR&M committee and CAG members at large, of the unremediated reservoir berms where the remaining trees had prevented EPA from removing exposed asbestos. This study by the Corps of Engineers, which will commence mid April, will include (amongst many aspects) an appraisal of the stability of the berms

themselves and the intermittent seep that emanates from berm on the creek side of the reservoir and discharges into the Wissahickon creek.

As a result of this new work by the Corps of Engineers the completion of the Park parcel will be significantly delayed from the initial schedule of summer 2013, perhaps as far back as 2015. As a further result, the original plan to withdraw the fence at the park parcel has been dropped and this area will remain fenced off to the public. EPA will only be able to finish covering approx 20-25% of the park site this summer as a result of the expected works to the reservoir. Eduardo also revealed that a new staging area will be required to accommodate works at the reservoir and part of the reservoir may be in-filled to accommodate this. This coincides with the idea the reservoir owners (WWP) had for a viewing platform at the reservoir.

CAG Co Chair David Froehlich advised that this new development be reviewed by the RR&M committee. Gordon Chase (RR&M Chair) requested that EPA provide a copy of the remit given to the Corps of Engineers so that the RR&M committee can be fully informed. Mr Chase also noted that care had to be taken not to put Mr Froehlich in an undue position of conflict of interest, being as he is, President of the WWP (owner of the reservoir) and CAG Co Chair. In this regard it was noted that many of the RR&M committee members were unaware of the discussions that had obviously been ongoing since the last CAG and RR&M meetings.

It was confirmed that the Corps of Engineers will undertake the study only and that EPA will undertake any physical works.

Beth Pilling pointed out that there will be nothing natural left of the original BoRit site and the wildlife habitat (prior to EPA works, much of the BoRit site was forested) will be much diminished. Jill Lowe of EPA appreciated this and will be looking to see how EPA can improve the final habitat setting. Both Co Chairs confirmed they and the EPA will work to strike a reasonable balance between public health and safety and desired bird habitat for the reservoir in particular and the site in general.

Peter Lowry questioned as to whether there was any current knowledge of dead, dying and diseased trees surrounding the reservoir. David Froehlich confirmed that no precise study of the remaining trees has been undertaken. Mr Lowry also questioned whether there was anything in writing between the reservoir owners (WWP) and the Corps of Engineers. David Froehlich advised there was not.

Mr Chase noted that the park and piles portions of the site would provide an ideal opportunity to reseed the area with native wild flowers which would assist with the bird habitat issue.

### **Work group reports**

RR&M: Gordon Chase advised that minutes of the March 6<sup>th</sup> RR&M meeting can be found on the BoRit web site (<http://www.boritag.org/pdf/RR&M%20minutes%20March%206th%202013.pdf>).

Many of the issues raised at that meeting had been subsequently superseded by Eduardo Rovira's report above, namely the tree and fence issues. A clarification regarding air testing dates was expected from Sharon McCormick, but Sharon was not in attendance at the CAG to report. The remaining issue of concern raised at the RR&M meeting was the response from EPA declining the request for pump tests to determine if there is any linkage between the contaminated BoRit ground water and the nearby Ambler Borough public drinking water wells. The RR&M concluded that the response from EPA was unsatisfactory and wished to take this subject up again with the new project manager Ms Jill Lowe. (See post meeting note below).\*

Communications committee did not meet.

HERS: No formal meeting was convened but an outreach event did take place. HERS are waiting for the public health assessment report expected by summer 2013. There is an HERS focus group meeting

scheduled for April 26th on how to improve ATSDR documents.

The Rules Committee did not meet, however it was reported that there is still no Mercer Village constituent on the CAG to replace Lynn Hoffman. As such there are 19 non agency voting seats filled out of a total of 20. As such the quorum required for votes is currently reduced to 10 from 11 (50%+1).

Meeting adjourned 8.07pm

\*Post meeting note:

Ms Lowe was subsequently invited to propose a convenient date before the end of April such that the RR&M could meet with her to debate more fully the need the RR&M perceives for these tests (suggested by the Wiswall report) to be carried out. Ms Lowe confirmed she would respond with a proposed date.