

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Minutes for Dec. 6, 2010

Present: Nels Bohn, Maria Coles, Ken Deschere, Regina Deschere, Jennifer Dotson, Michele Palmer, Valerie Pavan, Leia Raphaelidis, Eric Rosario, Kathy Woodcock

Excused: Peter Fortunato, whose house is being tested during this meeting

Guest: John Graves, President of the South Hill Civic Association

Minutes from the November 1, 2010 CAG meeting were approved with a wording change to “at Clinton West Laundromat”. Eric’s documentation about Clinton West correspondence should be posted with the October minutes.

CAG Sept. and Oct. Minutes have been posted on the City of Ithaca website. (Kathy will send draft minutes to Ken and Ken will send the CAG approved minutes to Alice Vargo at City Hall.)

UPDATES ABOUT SITES:

Ken Deschere tried to get Karen Cahill (in Ithaca for home testing) to attend this meeting but she had family obligations this evening. Ken relayed his conversation with Karen to CAG members.

Nels Bohn and city officials met with Emerson about a list of potential developers. Re-use and cleanup may require re-zoning. This may involve both the City of Ithaca and the Town of Ithaca to work in cooperation. A review and environmental remediation plan may be necessary.

Emerson is still responsible for industrial pollution even if the property is sold, so they have an incentive to clean up. Thus far, Emerson has spent approximately 10 million in surrounding neighborhoods to resolve contamination issues.

John Graves shared his book called REUSE Creating community-based brownfield redevelopment strategies that recommends a *Community Vision* be developed for presentation to a developer. He feels community input about future development is a necessary aspect for finding a desirable solution to enhance our city. It could be used as a selling promotion. (But Nels was concerned that it might discourage a future developer who might have his own vision. This idea should be presented to the Planning and Development Committee for its focus.) John feels the sale of one hundred acres in our city needs critical assessment about the possibilities.

PROJECT UPDATES:

- A. **Morse/Emerson On-Site** – Caulking and sealing floors/ceilings and mitigation has shown cleaner results. Remediation per the June 2009 Amended Record of Decision was to pump and treat groundwater using dual phase extraction to gain acceptable standards (5,600 parts). Uphill from the fire water reservoir, one well reading was 28,000 parts compared to 47,000 parts at another well. Due to horizontal bedding planes and waste disposal into the sewer systems, the top of Cayuga St., W. Spencer and Wood Streets are considered hot spots for run-off contamination.
The 100 acre property is for sale and it may be divided into separate sites to make it easier to sell. There is a cesspool of chemicals on the city side compared to the area above the plant. A developer would have to clean up the city portion in order to gain building approval.
- B. **Morse/Emerson Off-Site** – The ROD for the downhill neighborhood (Operable Unit 3) was released in October 2010. It proposes replacement of about 300 feet of sewer along East

Spencer Street, installation of a vapor venting system, and monitoring of the discharge from the system, but NO further testing in the affected neighborhoods.

- C. **Former Axiohm Off-Site** –At Axiohm, the Certificate of Compliance has been issued. The sub slab depressurization systems and mitigation efforts to create positive air flow have been effective. There is less pollution and no leaks have been found after mitigation and follow-up air quality testing. However some wells continue to test high.
- D. **Therm = Off-site Former Axiohm** – DEC began indoor air testing of homes along Therm’s sewer system beginning 11/29/2010. Michele Palmer reported that the 24 hr test sample from her basement was picked up the following day but results will not be known for 60 days.

Some residents declined home testing so Karen Cahill will make personal visits to give them more information and reassurance. Test results will determine whether Therm is responsible for industrial pollution. While funding sources for testing are limited, if test results are high, the state will find the money to remedy the situation.

Strategy for Maximizing CAG Effectiveness: Due to lack of time at this meeting, Leia suggested that CAG members present their ideas about CAG effectiveness (Topics A-D below) to Ken Deschere. Jennifer Dotson feels sharing information and digesting this information is helpful.

- A. Site selection criteria for CAG Focus
- B. Outside Expertise: Cornell, IC, TC3
- C. Selection of Initial Site(s) for CAG Focus
- D. Communications with DEC/DOH

Assignments:

All CAG Committee Members – E-mail your ideas about CAG effectiveness (see Topics A-D above) to Ken Deschere on the Ithaca CAG Google group website for committee members only.

Ken Deschere – Advocate that DEC hold a Public Meeting for sharing Therm test results.

Future Meeting Topics:

Invite an Environmental Economist to explain possible long term financial fall-out, e.g., property values.

Next Meeting Schedule:

Monday, January 3, 2010 at City Hall, 2nd floor Conference Room, 6-7:30 p.m.