

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Minutes for August 1, 2011

UNAPPROVED

Present: Nels Bohn, Cynthia Brock, Ken Deschere, Regina Deschere, Jennifer Dotson, John Graves, Michele Palmer

Guests: Hilary Lambert, George McGonigal, Mayor Carolyn Peterson

Minutes from the July 11, 2011 CAG meeting were approved with no revisions.

Agenda Additions and/or Deletions

Cayuga Lake Watershed Network:

C. Brock introduced Hilary Lambert, who has served for the past two years as steward of the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, a 501c3 organization based in Aurora.

<http://www.cayugalake.org/>

“Mission: The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network identifies key threats to Cayuga Lake and its watershed, and it advocates for solutions that support a healthy environment and vibrant communities.”

H. Lambert said the organization, now in its 12th year, publishes a quarterly newsletter and has 600 on its listserv. On August 5, the Cayuga Watershed Network and Level Green Institute are co-sponsoring a year-long celebration called “A Year in the Life of Six Mile Creek.” The kick-off event on the 5th takes place from 5-8 p.m. on the downtown Creek Walk, behind the Tompkins County Library.

Six Mile Creek is the City’s water source, and it must be protected and improved. H. Lambert said dialogue must happen up and down the stream’s watershed, including Caroline, Danby, Dryden, and Ithaca in the conversation. There is also a Friends of Six Mile Creek. Perhaps the Cayuga Lake Watershed could be a future grant application partner.

Emerson Easement for E. Spencer St Remedial Sewer Venting System: A considerable amount of the meeting was devoted to this discussion.

In their reading of last Wednesday’s BPW and Administration Committee resolution, K. Deschere said the DEC took issue with the need for soil (vapor) testing and testing beyond the stack output, considering both unnecessary for Emerson to perform.

The sole remedial “remedy” for Emerson Off-Site is the excavation/replacement of approximately 300 feet of E. Spencer St. sewer line, the area with the highest concentrations of off-site TCE. Neighbors, however, are concerned about stack particulate discharge entering their open windows, and think the state should require Emerson to schedule periodic testing beyond construction to allay their concerns and demonstrate the remedy’s worth. The Pump-&-Treat “remedy” at the On-Site Fire Water Reservoir was a resounding failure for decades. This sewer vent remedy, characterized as “experimental” by the DEC, should be tested over time to ensure the health and safety of

residents. Affected neighbors are very skeptical, submitted a petition with over 80 signatures to the BPW, and want proof this stack will actually make things better.

K. Deschere said TCE, heavier than water, volatilizes in air, and in theory should mean no worries, yet in 2007, ambient air TCE test results showed increases especially down on E. Spencer St. J. Dotson asked about the replacement time for air to move about. Weather conditions play a role. G. McGonigal said cold air rolls downhill. K. Deschere to ask A. Hay about volatilization. M. Palmer said ambient air testing would be a benefit to all. Considering the area is the hottest for TCE, could new pathways be opened by the construction process??

Mayor Peterson visited the meeting briefly to report receiving a phone call on Friday, 7/29 from DEC's Harry Warner requesting specificity in the easement language and she requested CAG's input ASAP. Emerson's consultant, WSP, was also talking with the City Attorney about the easement.

Per the WSP "Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP)" document, there will be two monitoring locations upwind and downwind during the installation. It was felt the number should be doubled to four locations upwind and downwind. Will the site be encapsulated? (This was NYSEG's clean-up practice at the site near GIAC.) M. Palmer suggested a testing area of 500 feet with sampling every 100 feet. . . Air sampling in front yards approximately every 50 feet – 12 test canisters on both sides of the street.

K. Deschere said he would continue to distill points discussed about the easement language, forward to the CAG, and then submit recommendations to the Mayor as the matter would be before Common Council on 8/3.

Cornell DesignConnect Project Application: M. Palmer said she did not know if CAG's application was accepted. If CAG's project is accepted, a contract will be written and 3-4 CAG members will be needed to periodically meet with the students as their Client Committee. M. Palmer can serve as a faculty mentor, and Prof. Spaulding, an environmental mapping/GIS academic.

*What would be the mapping boundaries?

*Goals would need to be written.

*A CAG member would acquaint them with the library repository.

*NYSDEC could assist with digitized documents.

* \$400 fee.

NYSDEC Environmental Justice Grants: These look for applications to respond to needs most felt by NYS residents due to poverty status, and thus, are not really a fit for CAG. J. Graves said the EPA has grants available on topics such as Brownfield Sites, district energy, and perhaps such a grant could one day fund an Emerson feasibility study.

PROJECT UPDATES:

Clinton West: S. Harrington forwarded the schedule for the site from the project manager and it has been forwarded to the CAG. This schedule is appended to these Minutes.

Clinton West RA fieldwork is expected to begin in October 2011.

Fieldwork is underway at Court St. Former MGP OU2 (Area 1 - **Esty and North Plain Streets**) to support the Pre-Design Investigation.

Mayor Peterson said her office received a call that digging was scheduled to begin at the Meadow St. Dry cleaning Site (Campagnolo?) August 8-9.

Stephanie Harrington confirmed this with an e-mail sent just after our meeting:

315 N. Meadow Street

In July additional soil sampling was conducted to aid in the design of the contaminated soil removal. Soil removal activities will be conducted in August. The anticipated start date for the soil removal is August 9th; the estimated time of completion is approximately 2 weeks. The soil removal is part of the selected remedy documented in the Record of Decision for this site.

Future Meeting Topics: DesignConnect, Therm neighborhood mapping, Emerson, project updates.

Next Meeting: PLEASE NOTE DIFFERENT DATE AND ROOM:

Monday, September 12, 2011 at City Hall, 3rd floor Common Council Chambers, 6-7:30 p.m.

