

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
BROOKLYN-QUEENS AQUIFER FEASIBILITY STUDY

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING: September 8, 2005

MINUTES

The 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer (BQA) Feasibility Study Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was held on Thursday, September 8, 2005 at the Hillside Manor Comprehensive Care Center. (See Attachment A for Attendance List.)

Helen Neuhaus, Helen Neuhaus & Associates (HNA), opened the meeting by asking for comments on Minutes of the June 2<sup>nd</sup> CAC meeting. There were no comments, and the Minutes were adopted unanimously.

Ms. Neuhaus continued the meeting with a number of announcements:

- The latest issue of the BQA newsletter is “hot off the press.” Ms. Neuhaus indicated that copies of the newsletter were mailed to everyone on the project mailing list earlier today and are available tonight at the sign-in table.
- Ms. Neuhaus asked the group to join her in wishing Anita Wright, HNA, a happy birthday. She indicated that to celebrate the event, refreshments would be served following the meeting.
- Linda Hazel has been appointed to a Working Group of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council on the Public Education Requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule. Ms. Neuhaus indicated that Ms. Hazel will be serving a one-year term on the Committee, which is being sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to communicate the risks of lead and copper in drinking water to the public. This prestigious group includes representatives from drinking water industries, stakeholder groups, state and local elected officials, public health officials, environmental organizations and risk communication experts.
- Manny Caughman has been appointed to a seven-member Advisory Committee for the Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan. Ms. Neuhaus explained that this Committee was established as part of a new local law signed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in July to protect, preserve and restore wetlands in and around Jamaica Bay. She added that Mr. Caughman is one of four mayoral appointees and the only local resident selected to serve on the Committee.

The group celebrated the announcements with a round of applause.

Ms. Neuhaus also addressed follow-up items from the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. She indicated that in response to earlier questions, additional information about methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE) remediation projects in the area was included in the Minutes of the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. David Chiusano, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), provided a brief update on the sites and announced that DEC’s regional contact for issues related to these and other spills in the area will be Kerry Foley. Mr. Chiusano encouraged the CAC to contact Ms. Foley directly (718-482-4977) with any further questions. In a related comment, he noted that although there are approximately 15,000 spill sites in the New York City area, there are only a

few regional engineers to handle the cases. DEC's main office in Albany will therefore be assisting with the work. Mr. Chiusano also noted the following:

- Additional investigations were conducted at the Atlas Gas Station in August. Data indicates that the Atlas site does not appear to be a primary contributor to MTBE contamination at Station 6.
- The community may notice drilling and sampling activities at the Citgo Gas Station next month as additional groundwater and soil investigations are performed. If the Citgo site is not found to be the source of the MTBE contamination, the next closest gas station will be investigated.
- The Atlas and Citgo sites are being given special consideration due to their proximity to the Station 6 groundwater wells.
- Don Cohen, Malcolm Pirnie, reported that Mark Tibbe, DEC, contacted him to discuss rising groundwater levels and the effect on remediation work at the bus depot. Mr. Tibbe asked if the Station 6 wells could be turned on sooner to try to lower the groundwater table in the area, which would facilitate removal of diesel fuel from the soil. In response to Peter Richards' question concerning this request, Mr. Cohen indicated that it would not be feasible to start pumping until the new Station 6 plant is constructed. Mr. Cohen also noted that while MTBE was detected at the Amoco Gas Station and has migrated to the bus depot groundwater remediation system, the bus depot itself was not a source of MTBE.
- Irving Hicks noted that the Amoco Gas Station has been torn down and that construction is underway at the site. Mr. Chiusano assured the group that the remediation work is continuing and indicated that the property owner will be required to install a vapor mitigation system for the new building if soil vapors are present at the site. He added that an environmental lien is typically placed on a property once it is designated as a hazardous waste or spill site.

## Project Update

### WSC Site Clean-Up

Mr. Chiusano announced that virtually all intrusive work at the site has been completed. He reported that no air quality issues have arisen at the fence line or outside the WSC property. Although some volatile organic compounds (VOCs) were sporadically detected within the work zone, all VOCs dissipated within minutes and none were ever recorded at the fence line.

Mr. Chiusano also provided the following information:

- Electrical work, including installation of 22 utility poles, is in progress.
- The last roll-off container will be removed from the site on Monday. In all, 30 cubic yards of hazardous soil and 350 cubic yards of non-hazardous soil were removed. Some additional non-hazardous soil may be removed in connection with completion of installation of the Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) system.
- DEC continues to coordinate with DEP regarding new sewer connections at the site.
- Start-up of the Electrical Resistance Heating (ERH) system is currently scheduled for early October, with the system expected to be fully operational by the beginning of November.
- All subsurface equipment for the SVE system has been installed; the remaining equipment is scheduled to be delivered within two weeks.

- It is anticipated that the WSC site tour and presentation for the CAC and other interested members of the community will be scheduled in mid-late November. A technical tour is also being planned for agency representatives.
- In order to obtain updated information on migration of the plume, additional groundwater samples will be collected prior to start-up of the ERH system.

Ms. Neuhaus announced that the next WSC progress meeting will be held on September 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. Following discussion among CAC members, it was decided that Mr. Richards will attend the meeting. In response to a comment from Mr. Richards, Ms. Neuhaus indicated that CAC representation at the progress meetings has been on a rotating basis.

The following issues were raised during this discussion:

- In response to a question from Mr. Richards regarding the difference between SVE and perimeter monitoring, Mr. Chiusano explained the following: 1) SVE is part of the overall treatment system to remediate contamination at the WSC site. It is a vacuum-type technique that is designed to treat smaller areas of contamination. 2) Perimeter monitoring is not a treatment technique but a system to ensure that the remediation process includes safeguards to protect the community; and 3) The soil gas investigation that was undertaken this Spring is an off-site activity that is separate from the remediation work at WSC.
- Ms. Reddick inquired if DEC funding is now available for the clean-up. Mr. Chiusano explained that the state Superfund program has been replenished and its monies will be used for WSC clean-up.

#### Station 24

Mr. Chiusano reported that DEC is working with Malcolm Pirnie and DEP to resolve minor comments on the final design documents for the treatment system at Station 24. It is anticipated that DEP will advertise the Station 24 project for bid next year and that construction will begin in Spring/Summer 2006. Mr. Chiusano indicated that DEC will be assuming all financial responsibility for construction (estimated at \$6-7 million) and operation and maintenance (approximately \$15 million) of the system. He added that DEC anticipates retaining Malcolm Pirnie to manage operation and maintenance of the treatment system. Similarly, DEC is looking to retain HNA to provide community outreach assistance in connection with WSC and Station 24 issues.

#### Station 6

Mr. Cohen announced that the response document to the Value Engineering (VE) report will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) shortly. This will be followed by a reconciliation meeting with the VE team, after which work can continue on design of the plant. Mr. Cohen noted that the project schedule has been updated (see Attachment B) and although there have been some delays, phasing of the WSC and Station 6 projects continue to be on track. He indicated that there will be at least three years of remediation at the WSC site before pumping begins at the new Station 6 plant.

#### Station 6 Art Subcommittee

Ms. Neuhaus turned the meeting over to Tracey Bowes for a report on the Art Subcommittee meeting held earlier this evening. Ms. Bowes discussed plans for the Workshop to be held to

introduce local artists to the Station 6 project and assist artists in completing the Percent for Art slide registry application. She summarized the Subcommittee's plans for the event:

- The Workshop is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. at the Roy Wilkins Family Center.
- The tentative Workshop agenda includes welcoming remarks (Mr. Richards); an introduction to the Station 6 project (Deputy Commissioner Doug Greeley); a description of the Station 6 Plant, including display of the model (Malcolm Pirnie); a description of the Percent for Art process (Charlotte Cohen, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs - Percent for Art Program); and hands-on assistance to artists in completing the Percent for Art slide registry application.
- A flyer will be prepared to invite artists to the Workshop. Flyers will be distributed by Subcommittee members, disseminated to local colleges and the media, and placed on the project website.

The CAC concurred with the Subcommittee's recommendations.

In response to questions from Mr. Richards regarding the overall project schedule, Mr. Cohen explained that even though the Station 6 plant is three years down the road, it is not too early to begin to coordinate plans for artwork with design of the plant.

#### New Business

##### State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) Permit

Mr. Cohen reported that DEP is applying to DEC for a SPDES permit to allow intermittent discharges to the storm sewer system from approximately 20 groundwater wells in southeast Queens. This SPDES permit would only cover groundwater wells discharging to storm sewers and eventually Jamaica Bay. The discharges covered by the permit would occur very infrequently -- not on a daily basis and not during times of heavy rainfall.

Mr. Cohen indicated that, as part of the permitting application process, DEP must solicit public comments and provide a community outreach component. Although the SPDES permit would cover all groundwater wells in southeast Queens that discharge to storm sewers, not only the Station 6 wells, Mr. Cohen asked the CAC if it could be used as the forum for discussing the permit application. A motion was proposed to approve use of the CAC as the community outreach mechanism for the SPDES application process. The motion was adopted unanimously.

In response to a number of questions and concerns about potential effects on homeowners, Mr. Cohen assured the group that this action would not create any problems for residents unless there are faulty sewer connections in the area.

##### Soil Vapor Intrusion Study

Mr. Chiusano introduced Bill Wertz, DEC, and Nicole Murry, DEC, who will be working on the Soil Vapor Intrusion Study. Mr. Wertz indicated that he has been involved in soil vapor intrusion work for a number of years and reiterated that the work being done at the WSC site is part of a statewide New York State Department of Health (DOH) initiative to ensure that all sites are properly remediated. He briefly explained that soil vapor intrusion generally refers to the small amounts of discharges to the air that occur when chemical compounds leak into the ground. However, he noted that chemical concentrations can be higher if a structure is situated

over the soil. In these cases, the State may install a mitigation system to prevent the soil vapors from entering the structure.

Mr. Wertz reminded the CAC that earlier this year, outdoor samples were collected at 30 homes as part of Phase 1 of the Soil Vapor Intrusion Study. He emphasized that, at this point, it is not known if problems exist in any of the homes that were tested. However, based on the results of the initial sampling, another round of sampling will be done. This will involve collecting samples in the yards, as well as in the basements, of homes. The work is expected to be done in October and will probably be followed by an additional round of indoor air sampling during the winter heating season.

Mr. Wertz reiterated that DOH has not established threshold limits for outdoor soil vapors. However, DOH has established a value of 100 micrograms of perchloroethylene (PCE) per cubic liter for indoor air. He further explained that DOH uses a matrix to assess the results of indoor air samples, in conjunction with soil sample levels, to determine if a remediation system is warranted. To be fully protective of public health, a mitigation system may be recommended if soil levels are high, even if indoor air levels are below the 100 microgram level.

Following a lengthy discussion regarding community outreach and information in connection with the soil vapor study, the CAC agreed that initially letters should be sent to all homeowners who participated in the first phase of sampling. This should be followed by individual telephone contacts and one-on-one discussions with the homeowners, prior to presentation of the results to the CAC or community at large. Mr. Wertz indicated that letters outlining DEC's plan for the next phase of sampling and requesting permission for additional testing in homes will be distributed next week.

Other comments are summarized below:

- Ms. Hazel expressed concern about past exposure levels and questioned what dissipation may have occurred over the years. Mr. Wertz acknowledged the concern but indicated it was not possible to assume historic levels based on current readings.
- Ms. Reddick stressed the need for clear, understandable communications with the community and noted the presence of non-English-speaking residents in the area.
- The CAC agreed that the Scientific Review Panel (SRP) should be asked to participate in this effort.
- It was suggested that any meetings on this issue be held at the Station 24 facility, which is convenient for homeowners.

The next CAC meeting will be held on **Thursday, October 6, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Hillside Manor Comprehensive Care Center, 188-11 Hillside Avenue, Jamaica Estates.

#### Follow-up Items

1. Coordinate CAC representation at September 13<sup>th</sup> (Peter Richards) and future WSC progress meetings. Responsibility: HNA.
2. Schedule presentation and site visit at WSC site once clean-up is underway. Responsibility: DEP, DEC, Malcolm Pirnie, HNA, Irving Hicks, Thermal Remediation Services.

3. Coordinate plans for Station 6 Art Subcommittee Workshop. Responsibility: Art Subcommittee, DEP, Malcolm Pirnie, HNA.
4. Notify participating homeowners of results of Phase 1 of Vapor Intrusion Study. Responsibility: DEC, DOH.
5. Provide Final Report, with general results of Phase 1 of Vapor Intrusion Study, to CAC and SRP. Responsibility: DOH, DEC, HNA.
6. Enlist SRP participation in connection with Vapor Intrusion Study. Review composition of SRP to ensure that appropriate disciplines are represented. Responsibility: DEC, DOH, DEP, CAC, Malcolm Pirnie, HNA.
7. Define roles and responsibilities of project team and CAC in facilitating outreach and information-sharing during Vapor Intrusion Study. Responsibility: DEC, DOH, DEP, Malcolm Pirnie, HNA.

Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer Feasibility Study  
Citizens Advisory Committee  
Thursday, September 8, 2005

Attendance List

CAC Members/Alternates

Tracey Bowes  
Community Board #12

Manuel Caughman  
Community Board #12/Office of  
New York State Assemblyman  
William Scarborough

Linda Caleb Hazel  
A Better Day Inc./St. Benedict The Moor/  
St. Bonaventure

Richard Hellenbrecht  
Community Board #13

Irving Hicks  
Brinkerhoff Action Association

Sarah Hicks  
Brinkerhoff Action Association

Yvonne Reddick  
Community Board #12

Peter Richards  
Community Board #13

Fred Simmons  
Residential People for Improvement

Guests

Andy Rousseau  
Resident/New York City Department of  
Environmental Protection

Project Team

Dave Chiusano  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation

Don Cohen  
Malcolm Pirnie, Inc.

Nicole Murry  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation

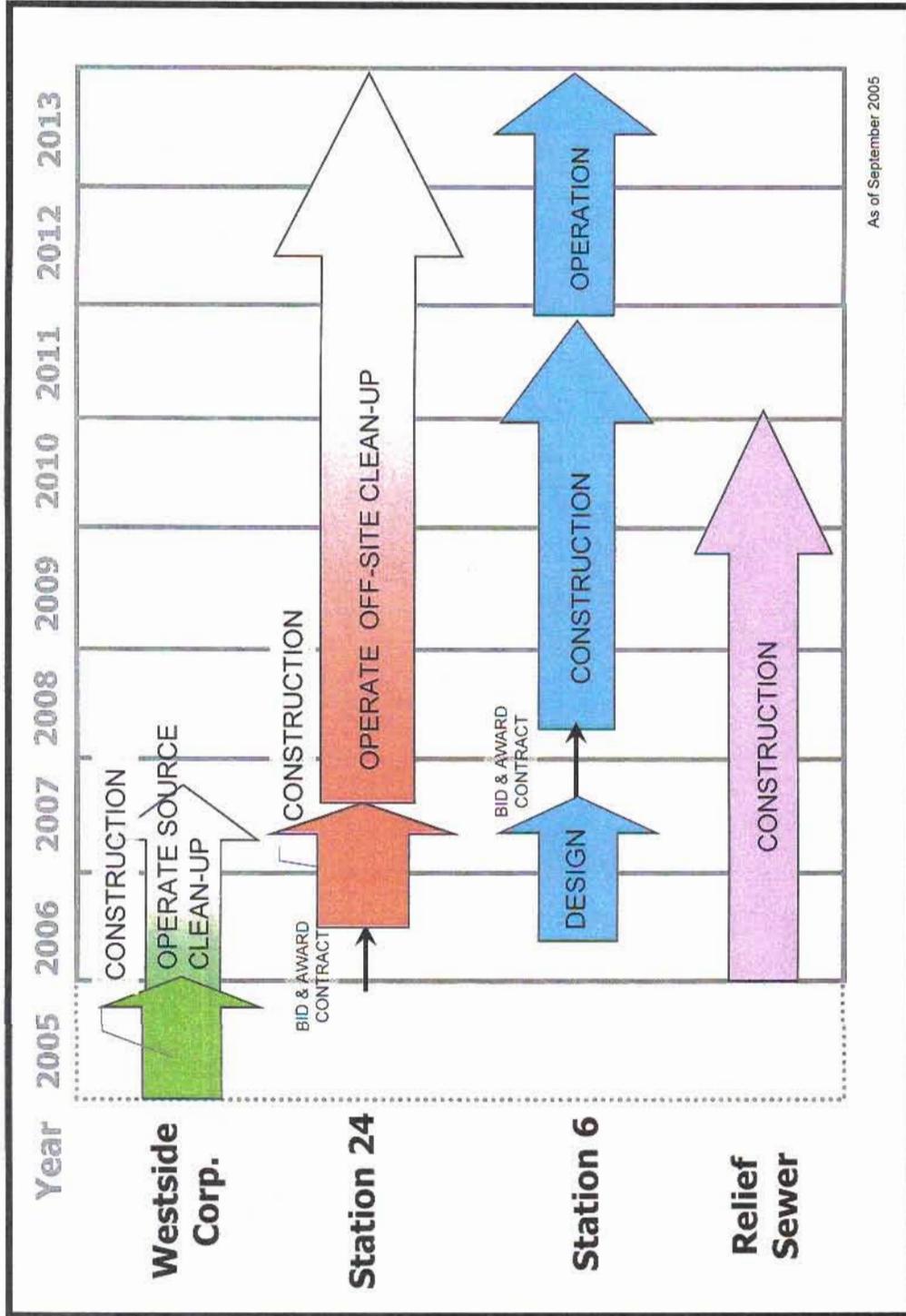
Helen Neuhaus  
Helen Neuhaus & Associates Inc.

Bill Wertz  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation

Anita Wright  
Helen Neuhaus & Associates Inc.

Bill Yulinsky  
New York City Department of  
Environmental Protection

Station 6 /Station 24/ Westside Project Schedule



As of September 2005

# BQA Project Schedule Near Term Projection

