

Below is an update that Manhattan Community Board 1 received on May 17, 2022 from Lawra Dodge, President of Excel Environmental Resources and Independent Community Monitor for the 250 Water Street Brownfield Cleanup Program project.

Contact CB1 via Diana Switaj at dswitaj@cb.nyc.gov with any questions or comments for Lawra Dodge.

May 17, 2022

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The following is a brief update from our onsite inspection today:

1. Our Project Scientist, Brian Ehalt, conducted an air quality screening around all four sides of the Site this morning between 10:30 and 11:30 AM using a Jerome J 405 (the equipment rental company did not have a J 505 despite telling us yesterday afternoon that they did), a PID for Volatile Organic Vapors (VOCs), and a dust meter. He screened at an adult breathing level (approx. 5-6 feet above ground), mid-level to mirror a child (approx. 3 feet above ground), and a few inches off the ground.
2. All PID readings were same as background (0.016 ppm), there no dust measured and all J 405 readings were zero other than one reading of 0.56 ug/m³ at adult breathing level at Water St and Beekman and one reading of 0.64 ug/m³ at the ground level on the sidewalk in front of the construction entrance on Pearl Street (not on the Southbridge Towers side). As noted below, all other measurements made during the day around the exterior of the fence and across the street on all four sides, at all three heights (a few inches off the ground, 3 ft and 5 ft) were zero or consistent with background.
3. Note that Brian screened all four streets around the Site, including Water Street, Beekman and Pearl Street, along the fence side and across the streets on the opposite side but only the corners on the Peck Slip opposite side of the street because there were children playing/having recess in front of the Peck Slip. Note that Brian also screened air quality at the ground based air intake at the Southbridge Towers at ground level, 3 and 5 feet above grade and all readings were zero or consistent with background for the J405, PID and dust meter.
4. Brian conducted the full perimeter air quality screening twice more during the day, again from 1 to 1:30 PM and a third round from 2:15 to 2:45 PM and all readings on the J 405, PID and dust meter were all zero---this screening was along the outside of the fence, across the street on all four sides and at the Southbridge Towers air intakes at all 3 height levels (a few inches off the ground, 3 ft and 5 ft) and all readings were zero or consistent with background.

5. Langan had 3 technicians with hand held air quality monitoring equipment onsite today, all 3 were using the Jerome J505 mercury vapor analyzer, PID and dust meter to provide “back up “ screening of air quality at the site in the event that there were any issues with any of the perimeter CAMP units----Brian Ehalt is not aware of any issues with the CAMPS today and we will check with Langan in the morning once they have downloaded their data to confirm there were no issues.
6. I spoke to Paul McMahon this morning about ensuring that their air quality subcontractor, Emilcott, does a much better job at trouble shooting the instruments BEFORE they bring them onto the site and BEFORE they initiate the CAMP monitoring for the day----the frequency and types of issues that they have been having are unacceptable and have significantly eroded the community’s trust in the CAMP program and they have to do a better job.
 1. Paul said they fully recognize this and the community’s concerns which is why they had 3 technicians with hand held instruments, including the J 505, onsite today and that they will do what they need to do to correct the issues----I reiterated that this is an absolute must and he agreed and said they will have “back ups to their back ups”.
 2. We will be following up until they do.
7. Although residents said they were removing asphalt by banging it with the excavator again this morning, when Brian arrived at the Site, there was no excavator activity with respect to asphalt and no noise issue with respect to the Site. The banging heard the past few days was likely a combination of the excavator breaking up the asphalt for removal but also using it to create a “depression” in the asphalt to construct the stone tracking and decontamination pad in front of the site entrance on Pearl Street.
 1. I spoke to Paul McMahon today and we exchanged emails discussing the fact that using the excavator in this manner was not consistent with noise mitigation efforts and, going forward, there needs to be much more thought and consideration put into noise mitigation methods. He said he will definitely relay this to HHC but Langan is not directly involved in the decisions regarding the means and methods for the construction related aspects of the work, just the environmental although Langan recognizes the community’s concerns and are already working on how they can be more cognizant of these concerns going forward.
 2. I asked Paul if HHC’s contractor will be using any quiet pile driving techniques when they do the pile driving tomorrow and he is looking into it and will hopefully get back to me tonight---I will let you know if I get a response.
8. They completed the soil excavation to the 10 feet depth around the 4 pile cluster installed in the 401a excavation and 6 trucks were loaded directly from the excavation for offsite disposal. Excavated soil was not staged on the ground. Per the RAWP, all trucks were tarped as they left

the site. The tarps are mechanical and come over the truck as it pulls out. Paul said that one truck arrived without a mechanical tarp earlier this morning and was turned away.

9. Per the RAWP there is a stone soil tracking and decontamination pad at the entrance to the site at Pearl Street----it was constructed by first creating a slight "depression" in the asphalt in front of the gate (likely the banging with the excavator that caused the noise last week), a geotextile fabric was laid down, and clean stone was placed on top of the fabric. A trench that runs perpendicular from the pad and is lined with plastic drains wash waters off the pad to a sump. From the sump, the wash waters are pumped into an onsite steel closed top storage tank in the corner of the site at Water and Beekman Streets. The soil/sediment falls out of the water in the tank and the water is pumped through the onsite treatment system to the City sewer under a Discharge Permit. Groundwater generated during dewatering needed for the deeper soil excavation will be pumped to the storage tank and treated and discharged the same way.
10. I confirmed with Langan, and Brian observed while he was onsite, that, per the RAWP, the tires of each truck coming onto the site today were washed on the stone tracking/decontamination pad before they left the Site. Brian did not see the first truck that left because he was along Water street doing air monitoring but Paul McMahan of Langan stated that all truck tires were cleaned before they left the site. This will continue throughout the project. Brian confirmed that there was no sign of any soil/sediment or dust tracked off the Site at the gate area or anywhere on Pearl Street and his dust/particulate readings were zero or consistent with background.
11. The work tomorrow should included installation of the driven sheet piles from inside the 10 foot deep 401a excavation to a depth of another 10 feet below grade. As I indicated at the EPC meeting last night, Paul McMahan stated should take a half day to a day, depending on how smoothly the work goes. As I noted above, I have asked Langan if quiet driving techniques are being used or if noise mitigation measures of any kind and he will hopefully get back to me later tonight.
12. After the sheet piles are driven to the necessary depth around the 4 pile cluster, the contractor will start constructing the forms for the concrete pile cap. Langan indicated that this work will continue through the end of the week and they expect that the concrete will be poured next week.
13. In response to a concern that was raised regarding the roll off containers that were being used by the driller who installed the 4 piles, both were open top and should have been tarped and apparently were not----this was not in accordance with what we anticipated and the driller did empty the water and soil cuttings in the containers onto the exposed soil area to facilitate excavation of this material and loading into the first truck that arrived at the Site this morning. The water was hydrant water that was used in the drilling of the piles to 80-85 feet and, after the soil was offloaded, the containers were removed from the site along with the drill rig. I relayed to Langan that the approach taken by the driller needs to be re-evaluated going forward because

this aspect of the work is not detailed in the RAWP and it has raised concerns from the community which I agree with. We will follow up with Langan before any future pile drilling is conducted to ensure the community's concerns are addressed.

14. At the end of the day today, the contractor covered the 401a excavation area where asphalt has been removed and soil is exposed using plastic sheeting but we think the plastic should have been extended across all areas of exposed soil and weighted down more effectively. Albeit small, there was an area on the Water Street side where soil was still visible. We relayed same to Langan and have asked them to be sure that all areas of exposed soil are more effectively covered going forward---we will follow up with Langan on this point again tomorrow.

We will review the Daily Field Reports and Air Quality Monitoring Reports from today's field activities once they are posted tomorrow.

Best regards,

Lawra

Lawra J. Dodge, P.G., LSRP
President
Excel Environmental Resources, Inc.