

To: Citizen Task Force
From: Melinda Holland, Clean Sites
Subject: Summary of July 15, 1997, Meeting
Date: July 31, 1997

Next Meeting:

The next Citizen Task Force (CTF) meeting will be on:

Date: Wednesday, August 6, 1997
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Location: Ashford Office Complex
9030 Route 219, West Valley, NY

If you have questions or comments regarding the upcoming meeting or about this summary, please contact Melinda Holland at (864) 457-4202, or Tom Attridge at (716) 942-2453.

CTF Attendees:

Attending were: Pete Scherer, Joe Patti, Ray Vaughan, Nevella McNeil, John Pfeffer, Elaine Belt, Paul Piciulo, Barbara Mazurowski (for Tom Rowland), Bill King, Blake Reeves, Tim Siepel, Warren Schmidt, Lana Rosler, Larry Smith, Pete Cooney, and Paul Kranz (for Rich Tobe).

Not attending were: Dick Timm, Eric Wohlers.

Agency Attendees:

Patty Bubar - U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Headquarters
Jack Krajewski and Kent Johnson - NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

Attending via video conference were:

Jack Parrott and Tim Johnson - U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)

July 15th Meeting Summary:

Tom Attridge began the meeting by addressing administrative issues. Melinda Holland reviewed the agenda with the CTF and requested comments on the meeting summary.



DOE Waste Management Programmatic EIS and Accelerating Plans

At the last CTF meeting there was insufficient time to answer questions on DOE's Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) and the Accelerating Plans, thus time was made available at this meeting. A summary of the discussion follows.

The PEIS establishes a national strategy for managing radioactive waste generated by past and future nuclear defense and research activities at DOE sites nationally. The PEIS focuses only on waste management wastes (wastes produced during active operations such as vitrification) at DOE facilities nationwide. The PEIS will not affect the decisions to be made on how to clean up and close the remaining facilities at West Valley. The only facilities at West Valley included in the PEIS are the Drum Cell and most of the wastes stored in WMA 5.

The Accelerating Plans prepared by DOE- Headquarters and the DOE Ohio Field Office are analogous to a business plan developed to drive the budget process. Those plans do not dictate that all work at West Valley or other sites must be complete in ten years but reflect an effort to determine how much can be accomplished in ten years and structure the budget to support that work.

Discussion on Schedule

Paul Piciulo, NYSERDA, stated that the site will make a presentation on the remaining technical issues and waste management areas once a month starting on August 6th with WMA #3. He suggested that the second meeting of the month following technical presentations be used for CTF discussion and questions on the presentation from the prior meeting. During the ensuing discussion on the schedule some CTF members expressed frustration that the CTF process is not moving quickly enough, and others felt that the pace has been good. Site representatives agreed to prepare a draft revised meeting schedule for the CTF which attempts to balance the concerns of all parties.

Next, Melinda Holland asked the CTF members which of the prioritized list of issues of concern from the March 18th meeting still needed to be addressed as separate meeting topics and which have been adequately covered in past meetings. The CTF members agreed that the following topics have been addressed at prior meetings: erosion/geology, NYSERDA & DOE roles and responsibilities, out-of-state disposal, and waste classification. However, some issues, for example erosion, still need specific proposals on how to deal with the problem in each waste management area. The CTF members did not feel that special issues meetings were needed to address the remaining issues which include: transportation, modeling and EIS assumptions; future employment; site re-use options and data issues. The CTF members favored having issues of concern be incorporated into the remaining technical meetings. Some members suggested that the issues be reviewed following WMA presentations. CTF members also mentioned other issues of concern such as their interest in speaking with members of Congress, and the importance of funding and cost.

Some CTF members requested that DOE and NYSERDA prepare a "strawman" (example) preferred alternative for the site as soon as possible and allow the CTF to react to that. Melinda Holland and Paul Piciulo requested that the CTF hold off on this request until after the site has completed its technical presentations and the CTF has completed prioritizing its values. NYSERDA indicated their willingness to have a "strawman" prepared for the CTF, but wants more specific information on the values of the CTF. NYSERDA feels it is too early in the process for a "strawman" to be prepared. DOE reiterated that a "strawman" could be prepared for the CTF, when they are ready. NYSERDA expressed their concern that they do not have the resources at this time to prepare technical presentations on the waste management areas and, at the same time, create a "strawman" preferred alternative.

North Plateau Groundwater Contamination Issues

The CTF members agreed that the last presentation on the North Plateau groundwater contamination issues answered many of their questions and agreed to move on to the remaining waste management areas and revisit the North Plateau when making their overall site recommendations.

Addition and Replacement of CTF Members

A CTF member made a recommendation that they should decide, once and for all, on adding the League of Women Voters to the CTF. This suggestion resulted in a lengthy discussion on the issue of adding new members or replacing members who have resigned. Many members commended the League on its dedication to the CTF process and to the issue of radioactive waste management nationwide. Some members were very concerned that adding one member would open the door for other membership requests which could result in difficulties such as bringing new members up to speed on all the information presented to date, spending excessive amounts of CTF time debating requests for membership, and having the CTF become too large to effectively discuss issues and reach consensus. It was suggested that the League continue to provide its input through existing members of the CTF.

Melinda Holland reminded the CTF that it would have to add a ground rule on how to add or replace a member before they can take official action. The current ground rules provide for changes to ground rules only with the consensus of the members present at the meeting. Ms. Holland shared that a good working definition of consensus is that each member votes in favor of a proposal and, even though it may not be their favorite outcome, they choose to accept it. A motion was made and seconded that a ground rule be adopted which would allow a new member to be added by the consensus of the members present at the meeting. Some members suggested that the ground rule provide for consensus of all CTF members, regardless of whether or not they are present. There was also discussion of how to replace Dick Timm, who has resigned from the CTF. Seeing a lack of consensus on the issues, Ms. Holland offered to propose an approach to resolving the issue before the next meeting.

Observer Comments

A representative from the League of Women Voters thanked the CTF members who supported the League. She stated that the League has not requested to be added to the CTF since their first letter, but that they do feel that the CTF process should be an open process and allow all members of the public to participate.

Next Steps

- ◆ Provide revised schedule at August 6th meeting
- ◆ Develop process to resolve issue of adding or replacing resigned CTF members