

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force  
From: Melinda Holland  
Subject: Summary of December 10, 2001, Future Site Use Work Group Meeting  
Date: December 28, 2001

### **Next Work Group Meeting**

The next Future Site Use Work Group meeting is scheduled as follows:

**Date:** Tuesday, January 22, 2002  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Ashford Office Complex  
9030 Route 219, West Valley, NY

### **Next Task Force Meeting**

The next full Citizen Task Force (CTF) meeting is scheduled as follows:

**Date:** Tuesday, January 8, 2002  
**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 meetings or about this summary, please contact Melinda Holland at (864) 457-4202, or Tom Attridge at (716) 942-2453.

### **Work Group Attendees**

*Task Force Members Attending Were:* Nevella McNeil, John Pfeffer, Paul Piciulo, Pete Scherer, Mark Mitskovski, Ray Vaughan, Elizabeth Lowes (for Alice Williams), Joe Patti, and Eric Wohlers.

Tom Livak and Deborah Maroney, Cattaraugus County Economic Development, Planning & Tourism; Tom Barnes, Southern Tier West; Ken Swanecamp, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning; Chris Gerwitz, Ron Palmer, Paul Bembia.

### **Meeting Highlights**

- ▶ Presentation on Possible Future Site Use Workgroup Strategy - Tom Barnes, Southern Tier West, reviewed his outline for a "West Valley Redevelopment Strategy Proposal"
- ▶ Update on local University/College partnership opportunities
- ▶ Explanation of the Hall Amendment applicability to West Valley
- ▶ Discussion of Site Assets which might be suitable for reuse
- ▶ Scope of Work for a Redevelopment Study

### **Meeting Summary**

Tom Attridge opened the meeting by briefly describing the written materials that were disseminated at the meeting. Melinda Holland then reviewed the agenda.

*Presentation on Possible Future Site Use Workgroup Strategy* - Tom Barnes, Southern Tier West, reviewed his outline for a “West Valley Redevelopment Strategy Proposal” (see attached outline). His key recommendations included:

1. Promote agreement between NYSERDA and DOE.
2. Promote a decision by NYSERDA on which land will be available for what types of redevelopment and at which dates.
3. Promote creation of a redevelopment strategy for West Valley.

Mr. Barnes recommended that a redevelopment study and strategy should involve Cattaraugus County, Erie County, Ashford and Springville. A non-profit Local Development Corporation (LDC) could be formed by these local governments as the vehicle for the study and related fund-raising efforts. Unlike the Task Force, the LDC would have the legal ability to enter into contracts, own/lease land and equipment, etc. As a nonprofit corporation, the LDC could solicit and receive grants. Other state and federal agencies could be involved as well. The LDC charter could spell out the tasks and responsibilities of the corporation. Each community could appoint members or directors of the LDC who would then direct and oversee the study and future activities. The issue of what vehicle should be used to plan, fund, and supervise a redevelopment study should be to be revisited at a future meeting.

Mr. Barnes suggested that the redevelopment effort look beyond the West Valley site to include the surrounding region. This proposal stimulated discussion among work group members, some who favored a wide reaching redevelopment study, others who felt the work group should stick to the Task Force charter of providing advice about issues related to the West Valley site. The work group concluded the discussion with a focus on the future re-use of the site and exploration of ways to ameliorate the local/regional economic and social impacts which will result from closure of the site. The issue of a regional redevelopment study was not resolved and may be discussed at a future meeting.

After discussion, the work group agreed that obtaining copies of reuse studies and requests for proposals (RFPs) for studies from other jurisdictions is a necessary initial step. This information will be sought through the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA) and other redevelopment authorities near DOE sites. Southern Tier West, Cattaraugus and Erie County Development Agency officials agreed to research and obtain samples of RFPs and studies from other local governments near DOE facilities. Obtaining GIS map data for the site and region was also recommended as an early task.

Work group members noted that there is no shortage of vacant land or buildings in the West Valley area. Thus, it was felt that the more desirable assets of the West Valley site are the skilled workforce, and the infrastructure (such as the sewage treatment plant, high speed phone lines, equipment, machine shops, the rail line, etc). Work group members agreed on the need for an inventory of the assets (human and physical) suitable for development or reuse in both communities and the site. A work group member suggested coordinating this with the work done for the Highway 219 corridor study. If a new interchange for 219 is located on the side of Cattaraugus Creek closest to the site, that could stimulate development in the area.

How to fund a redevelopment study was another topic of discussion. Suggested sources of funding included the Erie and Cattaraugus Counties, NYSERDA, DOE, WVNS, EPA & NYSDEC’s brownfields programs, Small Cities Community Block grant program, New York State Empire State Development, Economic Development Administration (EDA). Asking the legislative delegation to propose member items (discretionary funds) for West Valley redevelopment could be another way to create funding. A redevelopment authority participant suggested that to successfully raise funds an alliance of local governments is needed as well as non-dedicated seed money to start the process.

Erie and Cattaraugus County representatives expressed support for a cooperative venture between the counties and towns. The Cattaraugus County Department of Development, Planning and Tourism and Southern Tier West offered to take the lead on next steps.

*University partnership opportunities* - Ron Palmer reported that he had not yet received a response to the work groups' letter to Dr. Gresham at the University of Buffalo. Mark Mitskovski and Ron Palmer agreed to continue to work with their contacts at UB to set up a meeting between work group members and university officials to explore partnership opportunities. Dr. Palmer also mentioned that professors from Alfred University were coming to the site to explore using the site's mini-melter for research. Dr. Palmer said he would acquaint the Alfred University professors to the work group's activities and the concept of reuse of the site as a center for waste management education and research.

*Explanation of the Hall Amendment applicability to West Valley* - Elizabeth Lowes, DOE-West Valley, explained the results of her research on the Hall Amendment, per the request of the work group at their last meeting (see attached talking points/summary). She explained that the Hall amendment authorizes the Secretary of Energy to lease excess DOE property for a period up to 10 years, under certain conditions. She indicated that the legislation was primarily intended to address the Mound facility in Miamisburg, and due to the specific conditions of the legislation its practical applicability to the WVDP is unclear. Another section of the Atomic Energy Act (AEA) may have greater potential usefulness to the CTF - Section 7259 (b), which authorizes the Secretary of Energy, under certain conditions, to permit the use of facilities under the custody of the Secretary, if deemed to be in the public interest. She indicated that if the CTF identified a particular use of facilities that would fall under this section of the AEA, DOE could consider whether to permit such use, but it would likely be something that would require approval of senior DOE management, possibly at the Secretarial level. She also noted that, when considering such potential use, DOE would be looking at whether the use was in the public's interest, whether the arrangement had any potential impact to DOE's mission at the Project, whether there would be any cost (direct or indirect) to DOE, and whether there were any potential safety or security issues. In addition, since the site is owned by New York State, NYSERDA would also obviously need to be involved.

A work group member asked if there was a similar state law allowing the lease/transfer of state owned assets. A NYSERDA representative offered to research this and get back to the work group. DOE has authority to transfer "excess", unneeded equipment to schools or other non-profit organizations. A work group member suggested that to avoid security issues the agencies could allow excess equipment to be temporarily moved off site for reuse until site cleanup is complete when the equipment could be returned to the site for use there.

*Discussion of Site Assets* - The work group requested more specific information on the composition of the current site work force, including skills/education or range of capabilities for new work. This information can be used by redevelopment agencies when new businesses contact them looking for certain types of skilled workforce candidates. Site representatives offered to do the best they can on this but noted that some of this data would be very difficult to develop. A work group member suggested creating a program to allow site employees to take a 2 -3 month leave of absence each year to work on non-site projects as a way of retaining the existing site workforce over a longer period of time and making their skills available to new business ventures. Another suggested a job sharing or job shop concept where site employees work part time on site and are available part time for new businesses. The county redevelopment agencies could help place these people in part time jobs in new businesses in the region. If these people remained WVNS employees working as contractors to new businesses, this could also provide WVNS a means to diversify into new business arenas. A work group member suggested that the Energy Communities Alliance be asked for information on the extent to which other communities have tried to retain the skilled workforce associated with other closing DOE facilities.

The workgroup also discussed physical site assets such as the mini melter, the infrastructure, and other site facilities. It was noted that the early materials provided to the Task Force contained descriptions of

site facilities, an initial list of those assets is found as Attachment A at the end of this summary. The work group also requested a copy of DOE's list of excess equipment.

*Scope of Work for a Redevelopment Study* - Work group members agreed to gather sample scopes of work and studies from ECA and other local governments. Those samples will be used as a starting place for development of a draft RFP.

*Local Government Membership in the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA)* - County representatives agreed to talk with ECA to obtain more information on benefits of membership and to obtain additional information to help with redevelopment efforts at West Valley. Local government representatives will have a conference call to discuss costs and benefits of joining ECA.

### **Next Steps**

- ▶ Southern Tier West, Cattaraugus and Erie County Development Agency officials agreed to research and obtain samples of RFPs and studies from ECA and other local governments near DOE facilities. Also, ask Energy Communities Alliance for information on the extent to which other communities have tried to retain the skilled workforce associated with other closing DOE facilities.
- ▶ NYSERDA to research the existence of state law allowing the lease/transfer of state owned assets
- ▶ WVNS to provide more specific information on the composition of the current site work force
- ▶ Provide a copy of DOE's list of excess equipment
- ▶ DOE/NYSERDA check on the availability of GIS maps and data for the site and surrounding region and on security issues regarding sharing this data.

### **Observer Comments**

There were no observer comments.

## Attachment A - Initial List of Physical Site Assets

Administrative Offices

Main Plant

- ▶ Process cells
- ▶ Fuel Receiving and Storage facility (pool)
- ▶ Analytical Lab
- ▶ Laundry
- ▶ Utility Room

Vitrification Facility

HLW Storage Tanks

Chemical Process Cell Waste Storage Area

Remote-Handled Waste Facility (under construction)

LLW storage facilities

Construction and Demolition Land Debris (underground)

Central Project and Rail Spur

Warehouses (2)

Low-level Waste Treatment Facility

Lagoons

Maintenance Shop

Drum Cell

SDA

NDA

Misc Facilities

- ▶ North Plateau Groundwater Plume
- ▶ Several hardstands used for outdoor storage of equipment
- ▶ Bulk Storage Warehouse
- ▶ School House