

To: West Valley Citizen Task Force
From: Nancy Raca, Highland Planning
Date: October 30, 2023
Subject: **Summary of October 25, 2023, Meeting**

Next Meeting

Date & Time: Wednesday, January 24, 2024

Location: Ashford Office Complex and Zoom (register at

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MYfTQpv5RgqRin7aHqQ2sA).

CTF Members and Alternates Attending (in person or via Zoom)

Members

Charlie Davis, John Eberth, Anthony Memmo, Joe Patti, John Pfeffer, Ray Raffel, Robert Ring, Pat Townsend, Ray Vaughan

Alternates

Kevin Boyle, Anna Carr, John Hood, Shannon Seneca

Facilitator and Notetakers: Nancy Raca, Tanya Zwahlen

Agency Participants and Observers

Department of Energy (DOE): Bryan Bower, Steve Bousquet, Jeff D’Agostino, Josh Desmarais

New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA): Paul Bembia, Janice Dean, Brad Frank, Lee Gordon, Andrea Mellon, Pete Vlad

CH2M HILL BWXT West Valley, LLC (CHBWV): David Blevins, Darren Boone, Jason Casper, Elizabeth Lowes, Joe Pillittere, John Rendall, Kelly Wooley, Misa Yasumiishi

New York State Department of Health: Cynthia Costello, David O’Hehir

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation: Patrick Concannon, Lynn Winterberger

Observers: Wayne Barber, Danielle Brazille, Ashley Clines, Diane D’Arrigo, Joanne Hameister, Sean McCandless, Thomas Mooney, Alison Steiner, Barbara Warren

Welcome, Announcements, Administrative Business

CTF Facilitator Nancy Raca welcomed all present, conducted a roll call, and reviewed the meeting agenda.¹

¹ Each meeting material is listed at the end of this summary and may be found at www.westvalleyctf.org

CHBWV West Valley Demonstration Project Update

Kelly Wooley of CHBWV presented a project update.

Safety: The Total Recordable Case Rate is at 0.59 and Days Away Restricted or Transferred (DART) is 0.29. The last recordable injury was in June 2023.

Main Plant Process Building Deconstruction: Mr. Wooley showed photos from the deconstruction of the Main Plant Process Building (MPPB) and noted that work is approaching the halfway point. Mr. Wooley showed photos from the deconstruction of the Chemical Process Cell (CPC) east and north walls as well as the Chemical Component Test Stand and Inductively Coupled Plasma Lab. The Sample Storage Cell and Shield Window have also been removed, as have the Hot Cell and Shield Door. Mr. Wooley also showed a picture of the 8-foot and 4-foot blades being used in the quarry saw functional test. Testing is going well and this saw will ultimately be used in deconstruction of the off-gas cell. Overall, deconstruction is going well but was slowed this summer by incidence of naturally occurring radon, which masks the ability to identify actual plant-related radiation issues. The site had 31 level 3, take-cover events in the last year, none of which were due to plant-related radiation. CHBWV is diligent about making sure that site workers do not become complacent with regard to alarms. All alarms are treated as real events.

Mr. Wooley noted that 22.2 million pounds of debris have been shipped and that deconstruction of the MPPB has found the layout of the building to be consistent with modeling results.

Presentation: Air Sampling, Alarms, and Emergency Response

Ray Raffel, CTF Member and Senior Radiological Control Technician at CHBWV (IAMAQ Local #2401) and Kevin Boyle, CTF Alternate Member and Senior Radiological Control Technician at CHBWV (IAMAQ Local #2401) gave a presentation on the Environmental Continuous Air Monitoring System (ECAMS), Fixed Air Sampler Monitoring (FAS), and the Mirion Horizon Monitoring System.

Ray showed a photo of the demolition control room, which is a real-time video feed of the demolition site where technicians can observe dust suppression and deconstruction. The control room also shows real-time read outs from 14 ECAMs. Here wind monitoring also logged. All samples run through the control room.

The Horizon system provides real-time monitoring of radiation Counts per Minute (CPM). Displays show real-time alpha and beta gamma levels as well as alarm set points (10, 14, and 21 CPM for alpha; 200, 300, and 400 CPM for beta gamma).

Ray presented a photo that shows where 23 fixed air samplers are located around the site and explained how they are monitored several times per shift. He also explained how continuous air monitors collect particulate on a filter that is continuously checked by a radiation detector. There have been a multitude of level 1 and 2 alarms over the summer due to factors such as naturally occurring radon and the Canadian wildfires.

Kevin Boyle explained ECAM notification levels. A Level 1 notification is 10 CPM alpha or 200 CPM beta, which would result in a dose of 3.5 mrem per hour. A Level 2 alerts is 14 CPM alpha/300 CPM beta/Dose of 5 mrem. A Level 3 alarm is 21 CPM alpha/400 CPM beta/Dose of 7.5 mrem.

In the case of a Level 1 notification, a control technician immediately notifies the demolition supervisor, who pauses all demolition activities. A return to work can only be authorized by the Radiation Safety Manager

A Level 2 alert has a similar response. Demolition personnel exit the area based on Radiation Control direction.

A Level 3 alarm triggers site-wide sheltering. After the event has stabilized, a technician suits up, with respirator, and proceeds to the alarming ECAM to switch out the filter and take the removed filter for analysis.

Ray Raffel continued by discussing FAS Monitoring. Three times a shift, FAS monitoring stations are checked, including taking a smear from a deposition monitoring pad.

More than 35,000 air/deposition samples have been collected and analyzed since the start of demolition activities. The level of monitoring and number of monitors is greater today than it was when the plant was operational.

The site team is aware of the risk of complacency around alarms, but the team works hard to train everyone continuously about the need to take alarms seriously. The team debriefs after every Level 3 alarm.

No site worker been flagged for exceeding radiation limits.

CTF Discussion

Proposed Updates to CTF Ground Rules. Lee Gordon distributed copies of the CTF ground rules, including a markup with edits. Five revisions are proposed:

1. Section 2-B: To clarify the role of DOE and NYSERDA “Representatives” to the CTF
2. Section 3-B: To add specificity to the process and function of the CTF Work Groups
3. Section 3-C: To note how CTF recommendations pertain to the NEPA and SEQRA processes
4. Section 4-G: To clarify the role of the CTF Facilitator
5. Section 5-C: To clarify the private sidebar (previously called “caucus”) function

Members of the CTF had previously noted the need to discuss changes to section 3-C further.

In the original 1997 ground rules, the CTF was to assist in development of a preferred alternative. That was changed over several years. In 2011, the language was changed to indicate that the CTF would provide advice on the preferred alternative. Ray Vaughan pointed

out that the understanding has always been that this advice is in addition to the SEQRA/NEPA process. The proposed revisions to C-3 change this and therefore are unacceptable; Mr. Vaughan indicated that the existing language should remain.

NYSERDA and DOE representatives said that a “super-stakeholder” role for the CTF is not consistent with SEQRA and NEPA, which do not allow for prioritization of any voice.

After some discussion among CTF members, NYSERDA, and DOE, it was decided that the CTF will convene a work group to bring these parties and outside SEQRA and NEPA experts together to discuss the language for section C-3. Ray Vaughan and Joe Patti offered to be on the work group.

December CTF meeting. The CTF decided not to meet in December 2023.

Observer Comments

In response to a question about gamma radiation, Ray Raffel and Kevin Boyle noted that when they refer to “beta” radiation it is actually beta gamma.

In response to a question about whether the monitoring program is different from what was done for earlier work in taking down the main plant, it was noted that the system was the same but there are more monitors now.

In response to a question about a Community Industry Day for the new procurement, Steve Bousquet noted that this was held in mid-September and attended by 70 people from industry were there. A report of that is available at www.EMCBC.doe.gov.

Next Steps

A Quarterly Public Meeting will take place on November 15, 2023.
The next CTF meeting will be on January 24, 2024.

Meeting Documents Available on the CTF Website

Description	Generated by; Date
Meeting Agenda	Raca; 10/25/23
CHBWV Project Update	CHBWV; 10/25/23
Radiation Monitoring Presentation	CHBWV; 10/25/23
Summary of Ground Rules Section 3-C Proposed Revisions	NYSERDA; 10/25/23