Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2004
6 to 9 p.m.
College Hill Library, Room L268
Front Range Community College, Westminster

Victor Holm, the Board's chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Jerry DePoorter, Joe Downey, Earl Gunia, Erin Hamby, Victor Holm, Bill Kossack, Mary Mattson, Mike Maus, Bill McNeill, Sean Rea, Andrew Ross, Phil Tomlinson / Joe Legare (DOE - RFPO), Steve Gunderson (CDPHE), Scott Surovchak (DOE-LM), Dean Rundle (USFWS)

BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Suzanne Allen, Vanessa Safonovs / Mark Aguilar (EPA), John Rampe (DOE)

PUBLIC / OBSERVERS PRESENT: Alan Trenary (Westminster resident), Rob Henneke (EPA), Ralph Stephens (Denver), James Horan (Denver), Mark Sattelberg (USFWS), Dave Delvecchio (DOE), Karen Lutz (DOE), Gary Morgan (DOE), Vic Pizutto (Kaiser-Hill), Terry Vaughn (Kaiser-Hill), Dyan Foss (Kaiser-Hill), Carl Spreng (CDPHE), Ted Auker (CLTC) / Ken Korkia (RFCAB staff), Patricia Rice (RFCAB staff)

PUBLIC COMMENT / NEW BUSINESS:

There was no public comment.

New Business:

Board member Erin Hamby asked for an update on the water quality exceedances that were recently reported. Joe Legare with DOE reported that the exceedances were at points of evaluation (POE) in the north industrial area. One exceedance was at monitoring station SW093, upstream of the A-series ponds, and the other was at GS10, upstream of the B-series ponds. Both exceedances were above the reporting standard of 0.15 picocuries per liter for both plutonium and americium. Joe confirmed that the exceedances were for 30-day averages, and that they are still waiting for lab results to determine if the exceedances are still continuing. As to cause, Joe stated that they believe the exceedances result from soil disturbances, but they cannot pinpoint an exact area. They have seen this type of exceedance in the past in the same general area. The site will work on improving erosion controls, especially in areas of building demolition. Joe also noted that pre-discharge samples taken at the Ponds A-5 and B-4 showed no elevated contamination levels, so there has been no water quality impact at the ponds or for water that is released offsite.

Other new business items were resolved as follows:

- Bill Kossack was elected as secretary to fill the remaining months of Anne Fenerty's term.

- The Board selected August 28 as its retreat date. Members not able to attend that date and who will be excused include Joe Downey, Mary Mattson (half-day), Mike Maus, and Phil Tomlinson.

- The Board will meet only once in October, on October 21. The semi-annual Site Specific Advisory Board chairs meeting will be held on October 6 – 8, which will conflict with the Board's previously scheduled meeting date on October 7.

Finally, the Board considered a draft letter to DOE Manager Frazer Lockhart, indicating its support for recommendations made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding demarcation of DOE-retained lands at the future Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge. Fish and Wildlife managers are recommending a four-strand barbed wire stock fence, along with signs, markers and other means to distinguish the boundary for DOE-retained lands at the refuge. The Board approved the letter by unanimous consent.

UPDATE ON SITE BUILDING DECONTAMINATION AND DEM0LITION ACTIVITIES:

Dyan Foss of Kaiser-Hill gave an overview of building Decontamination and Demolition activities.

- B371/374. Dyan began her presentation with Building 371/374, which will likely be the last building demolished. The 315,000-square-foot structure is made of reinforced concrete. The Central Storage Vault, which is being decontaminated, is the size of a football field, Dyan said. Decommissioning of the building began in October 2001. The decontamination of the building is about 5 percent complete. A large challenge in decommissioning of the building is the decontamination of the ground floor canyon areas and the Central Storage Vault. Demolition of Building 374 is scheduled for the end of this year. Building demolition on B371 is scheduled for June 2005. The building will be brought three feet below grade. The method by which the building will be demolished will depend on how much decontamination can be accomplished. Dyan said more characterization data will be needed when decontamination is complete to determine how to take the building down. Any portion of the building where explosives will be used will have to be decontaminated to the free-release standard of 100 disintegrations per minute per 100 centimeters squared (100 dpm/100cm^2).

- B 444. Building 444 was used for making non-nuclear weapons components from a variety of materials, including beryllium and depleted uranium. Built in 1952, B444 was made of concrete, sheet metal, and asbestos and covers about 162,000 square feet of floor area. Decommissioning of the building began in 2003. Decontamination is about 49 percent complete and component removal is about 65 percent complete. The challenges in the building are to remove beryllium throughout the building and uranium contamination in the cracks of the floor.

- B559. Building 559, the plutonium analytical laboratory, began operations in 1968. Made of concrete, it is a single-story structure with 32,980 square feet. All gloveboxes and hoods have been removed from

the building. Decontamination is 70 percent complete. Demolition is scheduled for next February.

- B707. Built in the early 1970s, B707 was used for casting and fabricating finished plutonium parts and pits. The two-story structure is about 180,000 square feet of floor space. Decommissioning began in 2000. Decontamination is 70 percent complete and component removal is about 85 percent. The challenge in the building is to decontaminate a former plutonium building to free-release criteria. Other challenges include removing asbestos through the entire building. Demolition is scheduled for October 12, 2004.

- B771. Built in 1952 and measuring 151,000 square feet of floor space, Building 771 was used for plutonium operations. Dyan said there is not much of the building that is left. Decommissioning began in 1998. Decontamination of the building is 90 percent complete. All of the components have been removed. The infinity room, smokestack, B774, and the annex have been taken down. The second floor of the building will be decontaminated to free release standards, and the first floor will be decontaminated as much as possible. Demolition is expected to begin July 15. Portions of the building will be left three feet or more underground.

- B881. Building 881 housed both uranium and plutonium operations, which made it a unique challenge to decontaminate. The 245,000 square-foot building has been decontaminated to free-release levels. It is expected to be brought down the week of July 13 (this week) using explosives.

- B883. Built in 1957, Building 883 was used for uranium operations. The building is made of steel I-beam construction and corrugated asbestos cement exterior panels. Dyan said basically the whole outside is asbestos. Beryllium contamination is being removed by washing the building. Decommissioning of the 76,500-square-foot building began in 2003. Decontamination has not begun. Challenges in the building will be to decontaminate and dismantle the rolling mills and presses. Dyan said it would be hard to remove the equipment without taking the building apart.

In answer to a question, Dyan said the only buildings where explosives will be used are Building 881 and possibly in Building 371, although the demolition plan for B371 has not yet been decided upon. She said they will leave portions of B771, B371, and B881 underground. Portions of basements in Buildings 444, 559, 883, 991, and 779 will also remain. Some contamination will be left behind in the remains of Buildings 771, 371, and 779. Dyan also reported that maps depicting areas where contamination will be left behind will be generated.

UPDATE ON BUILDING 776 DECONTAMINATION AND DEMOLITION PLANNING:

Victor Pizzuto, Kaiser-Hill Project Manager for the Building 707 and Building 776/777 closure projects, gave an update on the D&D progress for B776/777. B776/777 is a 224,000 square-foot complex with 10 support facilities. Inside the buildings are 279 gloveboxes, 244 tanks, 57 miles of process waste lines, and nearly a mile of ductwork. A 1969 fire spread contamination throughout the building, complicating the demolition. In addition, in the reconstruction after the fire, a second roof was built inside the first to contain any contamination.

Vic said there is no way the building can be contaminated to free-release criteria before it is demolished. The Building 776/777 Decommissioning Operations Plan (DOP) was approved in November 1999 with a

major modification approved in July 2003. The plan called for an “ALARA-based” cleanup, which attempts to balance worker health and safety risks with environmental risk during demolition. ALARA is an acronym for “as low as reasonably achievable.” The DOP makes a commitment to keep air emissions to less than 1 percent of the regulatory standard of 10 millirems (10 mrems). The DOP also mandates the building be taken to three feet below grade. All portions of the building that do not meet free-release criteria will be removed.

In preparation for the decommissioning of the building, Vic said project managers have divided the building into seven areas on the first floor, with the entire second floor comprising its own area. Within those 8 total areas are 42 survey units. The site and the State have developed a process to prepare each unit for final survey and encapsulation. Weekly meetings are held with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the Department of Energy (DOE) to discuss the progress. In slide after slide, Vic showed the extensive work that needed to be done in each unit. The building contained extensive ductwork and piping and numerous gloveboxes. Because of potential hazards to workers, the decontamination and removal of equipment is slow-going, arduous, and time-consuming. Vic said he would not put worker safety at risk to speed the project along.

Vic said that to ensure they were using the latest techniques in decontamination in an open-air environment, they traveled to the DOE Hanford site in Washington State and the Mound in Miamisburg, Ohio, to find the best techniques.

To prepare the building for demolition, they are using a shaver to shear the contamination of the floors, floor scraping, and hydrolasing, and removing block walls, remediating cracks, encapsulating, and removing the false roof. They are removing exterior asbestos panels, conducting radiological surveys, and removing beryllium, PCBs and chemicals. Scientists from Oak Ridge have done an independent evaluation of their analyses and procedures.

Showing a slide of workers on a 3-story scaffold, Vic said the industrial construction risk in the building is high. In some places workers are taking walls down brick by brick. In other places, contaminated walls will remain in place because of a determination that it is in the best interests of worker health and safety. Vic showed slides of the concrete shaving machine, which takes off about an eighth of an inch with each pass. It sucks up the contamination into a “vacuum cleaner” attached to the machine.

Controls on the demolition include air sampling, deposition pans (from which swipes are made to determine if contamination is present), fog cannons, point source water spray, waste pile management, water management, wind evaluation, special wall handling, erosion controls, and worker protection gear, such as respirators. In addition, highly contaminated areas are being painted orange to tell workers that they must be careful when demolishing those areas. Cleaner areas are being painted white.

To control surface water during demolition, controls will be put in place to direct upgradient water around the project area. All water used in dust control will be controlled and captured before leaving the area. Runoff will be directed into an impoundment, sampled, and dispositioned according to sample results.

Vic presented a timetable for demolition of the building, but, in answer to a question, said he would not put workers at risk to catch up if the project fell behind schedule. Vic said

they have nearly decided to put a rail spur to Building 776 so that trains could be used to ship waste from the building. An alternative plan is to use intermodal truck transport.

DISCUSSIONION ON REMEDIATION PLANS FOR THE ORIGINAL LANDFILL:

Steve Gunderson and Carl Spreng, both with CDPHE, and Joe Legare, with DOE, participated in the discussion. Steve reported that both the Site and the regulators are currently focusing on the Present Landfill. Most of the same people work on both landfills, so not as much attention has been paid to the Original Landfill as of late. Although part of the Buffer Zone, Steve stated that the Health Department has been delegated lead regulatory authority for the Original Landfill.

Currently, there is an extensive geotechnical evaluation underway at the Original Landfill. The major concern is the stability of the landfill. The site has hired an outside expert to review the geotechnical data. It is likely that an earthen buttress will be used at the "toe" of the landfill to enhance stability. A groundwater slurry wall also may be installed. The state recently gave approval for the site to start uranium hot spot removal, with the provision that the entire extent of contamination be removed. Removal will begin in late summer when there is less soil moisture.

Joe Legare reported that final approval of the remediation plan for the Present Landfill would occur later this month. He predicts the final plan for the Original Landfill will be done later in the fall. The Board asked that results of the geotechnical evaluation be transmitted as soon as they are available.

Board member questioned the adequacy of the landfill characterization. The site relies on historical information that provides insight into what was placed in the landfill, as well as groundwater characterization data. Steve Gunderson reported that the state uses three criteria in evaluating landfills: whether they produce gas, whether they are leaking, and whether they are stable. He stated that stability is the greatest concern for this landfill, and that it does not produce gas and does not leak. Joe Legare also reported that during the time the Original Landfill was operated, the site used other areas for disposal of nuclear materials, volatile organic liquids, and other such contaminants.

In response to another question, it was reported that the final slope angle for the landfill, once the soil cover has been placed, would be no more than 18%. The site will not use a synthetic cover. Also, there is no consideration being given to removing the 170,000 cubic yards of buried waste at the landfill. The main reason is the cost for removal and disposal elsewhere, as well as the fact that the transportation risks would exceed the benefit derived from removal. A question also arose about the groundwater uranium contamination. The site and regulators believe it results from the uranium hotspots, and that it should be taken care of when the hot spots are removed. They speculate that the uranium contamination was introduced when the sampling well was drilled.

PLANNING FOR UPCOMING MEETINGS:

At its July Committee Night, the Board will review and develop comments on the Draft Public Involvement Plan for Rocky Flats. A working draft was distributed to the members. Karen Lutz with DOE confirmed that another draft would be available by July 16. Members also will discuss action items that might need to be taken based on the discussions at the June 26 Community Workshop on Future Public Participation at Rocky Flats.

For the August 5 Board meeting, the members will consider and approve any recommendations on the Rocky Flats Public Involvement Plan. They also will hear an update on environmental restoration activities. Topics to be included in the update include remediation planning for the Present Landfill, geotechnical studies at the Original Landfill, plans for addressing the carbon tetrachloride plume, and remediation progress at the 903 Pad Lip Area.

NEXT MEETING:

Date: *August 5, 6 to 9:00 p.m.*
Location: *College Hill Library, Room L268, Front Range Community College*
Agenda:
- *Update on site environmental restoration activities*
- *Approval of recommendation on the Draft Rocky Flats Public Involvement Plan*

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:00 p.m. *

(* Taped transcript of full meeting is available in the RFCAB office.)

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Bill Kossack, Secretary
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

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