

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for Soil Study **Wednesday, December 19th 2018 Meeting Notes**

In attendance: Dr. Joe Gardella (JG-UB), Dr. Tammy Milillo (TM-UB), Dr. Mike Milligan (MM-SUNY Fredonia), Katie Little (KL-UB), Rich Mpelezos (RM-Buffalo Resident), Anne Bazinet (AB-ToT Resident), SallyJo Robins (SR-ToT Resident)

Absent: Jackie James-Creedon (JJC-CSCR, Kenmore Resident), Jay Farqueson (JF-Grand Island resident), Jeanine Justen (JJ, Grand Island Resident), Sue Mazur (SM-ToT Resident), Dave Gardner (DG-ToT Resident)

Update on Phase 2 Sampling

(KL) KL and students are working on getting permissions to sample, sampling, processing data from ALS, creating reports, delivering reports, and following up with participants.

- # Samples sent to ALS - 135
- # Reports delivered - 135
- # Secondary permissions – 40

Participants are encouraged to come to a Talks with Tammy event to have an in-person consultation about their data, may have a phone call with JG to discuss data, and are also encouraged to call KL with any questions.

(JG) Sampling has been done at City of Tonawanda (CoT) and Grand Island (GI) Schools. The CoT schools are all clean; there are no results of concern. The CoT community has historically been concerned about soil quality in their neighborhood due to a neighboring landfill and Spaulding Fiber site. They have had testing previously. The CoT schools are considering consolidating their elementary schools to just the Fletcher campus, which is across the street from the Middle/High School.

The results of samples taken at the GI schools were presented at a school board meeting. There were two samples with elevated arsenic and one sample with elevated PAHs. Samples at Kaegebein Elementary showed elevated arsenic and PAHs near the road. Samples at Charlotte-Sidway Elementary showed elevated levels of arsenic near the playground. There are woodchips on that playground and historically they used railroad ties to denote the boundary of the playground.

The GI schools are already raising money to renovate the playground. They hired a consultant toxicologist, who studies metal exposure, and also presented at the board meeting. The consultant doesn't see the soil as an exposure problem due to a lack of exposure pathway. Additionally, the wood chips are refreshed every 2 years.

The GI schools also have identified a consultant who specializes in cleanups at schools in order to remediate the soil around the playground. We tested the wood chips currently on the playground and arsenic was not detected.

The Department of Health and DEC are aware of our results and the situations and are helping at GI and CoT schools.

(MM) How much different is the EPA vs. the DEC values for evaluating PAHs?

(TM) The values for PAHs are very different. DEC has a standard for each individual PAH. They focus on the 8 most toxic.

(JG) You can argue that the BaP equivalent method that the EPA uses isn't the best option, but we prefer to use it over the DEC method. EPA has separate emergency clean up levels.

(TM) the EPA method is more comprehensive and realistic in terms of representing what actually occurs naturally.

(JG) Cleanup standards are somewhat subjective.

Reviewing Maps

(JG) The Region of Interest (ROI) in the City of Tonawanda was identified due to higher levels of PCBs and lead. We are not seeing a general distribution of these chemicals, they seem to be localized to residences near the Spaulding Fiber site.

(TM) The DEC wanted the addresses for the highest hits so that they can follow up with more testing to see if the contaminants from the Spaulding Fiber site are spreading. After more testing has been done the DEC intends to deal with the issues they identify.

(RM) It is good to have stories where action has been taken. Issues have been identified and are being handled.

(JG) Many of the maps are clean slates; we have identified areas that are clean. Identifying clean areas was one main goal of Phase 1.

(TM) The GI ROI was identified based on its location – being directly west of Tonawanda Coke. Additionally, there were also a few slightly elevated samples in the ROI relative to the surrounding samples on Grand Island.

(JG) Showed two maps that illustrate the difference made with including vs. excluding the samples taken on Town of Tonawanda properties. The maps without the Town data generally show darker colors, indicating higher concentrations of contaminants, and have fuzzier, less distinct boundaries for regions of interest. We collected DEC data from DEC sampling that had been done on industrial sites and made versions of maps that included that data. The high values of the industrial sites skewed the map interpolations and made the maps look black, so we excluded those points from the analysis.

At the community meeting we will distribute handouts of the maps. We will also have them available for download on the UB site. There will be 7-8 maps selected for distribution at the January community meeting. Samples will be taken in the spring to clarify the ROIs.

(TM) The data from Phase 2 will be used to improve and more accurately delineate the ROIs identified from Phase 1. Some mapping will be done, but we won't need to make an additional 3,000 maps as we did for Phase 1.

Air Sampling

(AB) Have the air samples been sent to the lab?

(MM) The air samples are still in the freezer at Fredonia. The filter media for the community samples will be delivered soon and we will be able to collect samples in January. The Fredonia semester starts around 1/23/19 and we can set up multiple samples in a row to maximize efficiency.

Showed benzene map from DEC. There has been a reduction in the amount of benzene in the community. The map shows that the benzene levels were greatly decreased after TCC shut down. All of the levels shown on the graph are within DEC standards for benzene emissions.

(JG) The DEC increased their sampling frequency after the question of opacity was raised.

Community meeting and other notes

(JG) currently the January community meeting on 1/16/19 is tentative. We are waiting on insurance paperwork from Albany to secure the meeting location (at the CoT High school Auditorium)

(AB) Who is the superintendent at the CoT schools?

(JG) Timothy Oldenburg is the superintendent. Jeff Hatten, director of facilities, is also good to work with and is very on top of things.

So far we have had good outcomes. We have identified some minor problems the schools wouldn't have otherwise known about.

(TM) People want to know and they will try to fix it.

(JG) We have the luxury of working in the community with an advisory committee. The DEC is understaffed and underfunded; they could not do what we do.

(JG) JJC, Phil Haberstro, and Sean Crawford (CSCR consultant) sent letters to the judge expressing concerns about the project. JG sent a letter in response in November. The court is requesting more information from UB and to look into JJC's complaints. We have sent the information that was requested.

The probation office is not responsible for monitoring the soil study.

(TM) A friend who is also a judge has said that it is expected that a study of this size would be audited.

(JG) We will give the probation office more information with the 6 month financial reports.

The soil study has been given a no-cost extension through August. The CSCR contract expires at the end of December 2018. The funds allocated for CSCR are encumbered for a certain period of time after the contract expires, which means they have been set aside and have not been touched.

Community meeting to release maps Wednesday January 16th, 2019
Next CAC meeting Wednesday February 20th, 2019
6pm – Location TBD