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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION II

JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL BUILDING

NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10278

HUDSON RIVER PCB REASSESSMENT RI/FS

COMMUNITY INTERACTION PROGRAM

Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday, August 5, 1992

7:30 p.m.

Community Room, Glens Falls National Bank
Glens Falls, New York

M I N U T E S

The meeting of the Steering Committee was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Ann Rychlenski, Steering Committee Chair, also in attendance were:

Doug Tomchuk - U.S. EPA
Al DiBernardo - TAMS, Inc.
Phil Griffin - Co-Chair, Agricultural Liaison Group
Merrilyn Pulver - Co-Chair, Agricultural Liaison Group
Keith Griffin - Co-Chair, Governmental Liaison Group
Bruce Bentley - NYSDEC
Bill Ports - NYSDEC
Jim Behan - Co-Chair, Citizens Liaison Group
Bridget Barclay - Chair, Environmental Liaison Group
Carl Deppe - Co-Chair, Environmental Liaison Group
Tom Borden - Chair, Agricultural Liaison Group
Judy Schmidt-Dean - Chair, Citizen Liaison Group

In addition, there were a number of observers attending, including various Liaison Group members and several General Electric Representatives.

Ms. Rychlenski began the meeting with Liaison Group reports by the Chairs and Co-Chairs. No significant activities were reported upon with the exception of the Agricultural Liaison Group, whose Chair, Tom Borden, summarized the briefing held for that group on the Phase 2 Work Plan in July, 1992. Mr. Borden also requested a joint Liaison Group meeting with representatives of the Scientific and Technical Committee (STC).

After the Liaison Group reports, Al DiBernardo of TAMS, Inc (EPA's contractor for the Reassessment) gave a brief report on the project schedule as follows:

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| Finalization of Phase 2 Work Plan | 9/92 |
| Phase 3 Statement of Work (Feasibility Study) | 2/93 |
| Phase 2 Report | 8/93 |
| Phase 3 Report | 12/93 |

In addition, Mr. DiBernardo covered the tentative schedule for tasks to be undertaken during Phase 2:

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| Geophysical Survey/Confirmatory Sampling | spring 1992 |
| High Resolution Coring | 8/17/92* |

* High resolution coring expected to begin during the week of 8/17/92. Congener specific analyses of PCBs to be done by Aquatech in Burlington, Vermont. Work will begin in the lower river (around the Statue of Liberty) and will end the first week in September, around the remnant deposit sites in the upper river. The coring itself will be done primarily by staff from Lamont-Dougherty with TAMS oversight.

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| Water Column Sampling | 9/92 - 6/93** |
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**This will consist of seven sampling events, three in high flow and four in low flow.

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| Low Resolution Sediment Coring | Fall 1992*** |
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Mr. Di Bernardo categorized this effort as the most ambitious of the tasks considering that the Phase 2 Work Plan does not have a methodology for going ahead with the low resolution coring - and felt that this proposal should be brought out for public discourse prior to initiation.

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| Shear Stress Analysis | Winter 1993 |
| In-Situ Degradation | Spring 1993**** |

****Looking at congener-specific data in the archive samples that Richard Bopp has at RPI (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute).

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| Ecological Assessment | August 1992 Spring 1993 |
| Health Risk Assessment | Winter 1993 |

Mr. Tomchuk added that giving the schedule of tasks is important so that the public can see just what kind of time constraints EPA is operating under, particularly where comment periods may come into play. Some comment periods may be shorter than others and extensions to those comment periods difficult to give due to the ambitious schedule for work to be undertaken for this project.

Bridget Barclay asked as to whether the comments on low resolution coring would be on location of sampling, methods, etc.

Mr. DiBernardo answered that comment would pertain to sampling locations, methodologies and number of samples. He added that this might be a good subject for a Joint Liaison Group meeting.

Carl Deppe voiced his opinion that EPA is taking short cuts in the reassessment (including shortened comment periods). He also stated that it was his understanding that there was a lot of challenge to the high resolution coring by the STC (seeing it as a "dubious" method). In addition, Mr. Deppe voiced that it was his perception that comments from the public have been disregarded by EPA.

Mr. Tomchuk stated that comments have not been disregarded, but that EPA has not seen any comments that would change EPA's feelings on high resolution coring. He added that Mr. Deppe's view of the STC regarding high resolution coring as a "dubious" method is a misperception - since the discourse at the STC on this issue did not characterize the method as such.

Mr. Deppe asked for examples of comments that EPA responded to by changing their original plans in the Reassessment. Mr. DiBernardo responded with the following:

A comment to add two additional high resolution cores - done.

A February 4th meeting with G.E. on risk assessment - many things requested in this meeting have been done.

Bridget Barclay commented that when EPA announced its intention to do the Reassessment in December 1990, the original time scale given indicated that it would be complete in 2 years. Given the amount of delay in the time line, what factors may occur that could cause the time line to lengthen further.

Mr. DiBernardo stated that weather, the CIP and an element of being unrealistic are the main factors in the time frame. He added that the schedule as presented this evening is "do-able" if everything goes right.

Mr. Tomchuk added that there are often delays because of the nature of the work being done and the approvals necessary to do the work, i.e. congener specific analysis of PCBs.

Mr. Ports suggested that perhaps at a future meeting, EPA and TAMS can give a brief rundown of changes made due to comments received. Mr. Tomchuk stated that EPA would consider that, and may respond at a meeting of the Hudson River Oversight Committee (next meeting scheduled for 9/1/91).

Mr. Deppe reiterated his concerns regarding the various methodologies employed by EPA during the course of the Reassessment, stating that in his opinion, EPA is presently doing the same thing that NYSDEC has done over the course of the years it has been involved in the Hudson River PCB issue. He also stated that he was unclear as to what the goals of the Reassessment are.

A discussion ensued involving Mr. Deppe, Mr. DiBernardo and Mr. Tomchuk that centered around Mr. Deppe's contention that EPA should hold a meeting for the Liaison Groups centering specifically around Monte Carlo analysis. Mr. DiBernardo and Mr. Tomchuk both agreed that a remote subject such as Monte Carlo analysis is too deep and complex (requiring a working knowledge of calculus) to be the subject of such a meeting. They added that the public needs to be educated on environmental issues that they can easily apply to this particular site and its possible remedy, and that EPA is prepared to do that, and has been doing just that, via the CIP.

Mr. Tomchuk felt that an action item should be brought up to the Oversight Committee on how EPA's Reassessment differs from that which NYSDEC based its decisions on in the past.

Mr. Deppe asked that Mr. McCabe (chair, HROC) clarify at HROC just what the goals of the Reassessment are.

Bridget Barclay raised the question as to the scope of the Reassessment and the definition of the Superfund site and whether this site, like some others, can be broken down into operable units. Seeing "Operable unit 1" as the contaminated sediments in the upper river and "Operable unit 2" as contributions to PCB contamination in the lower river.

Mr. Tomchuk felt this to be a valid point of discussion for the Oversight Committee.

Ms. Barclay also requested clarification of the criteria used to make a decision based on the information at hand when a ROD is decided upon, i.e., human health risks in the upper river vs. human health risks in the lower river. Is there any consideration of economic impacts of the existing contamination?

Ms. Rychlenski stated that EPA has been looking at a program of environmental education incorporating the nine criteria as a workshop for the Liaison Groups. Mr. Tomchuk added that this would be applicable as we approach the Feasibility Study stage.

Mr. Bentley (NYSDEC) noted that EPA should take a look at the economic impacts on the river as part of its criteria, and that the agency should start exploring that issue now.

Mr. DiBernardo explained that economic loss is not one of the criteria by which a ROD is decided upon. He added that it is through the criteria of "community acceptance" that this issue may be explored, and reiterated the importance of participation in the CIP.

Ms. Barclay raised the issue of looking at other PCB contamination sources in the upper and lower rivers, i.e., DOT dredge spoils, stating that in her opinion, EPA is setting itself up for failure if it does not take these sources into consideration.

Phil Griffin and Merrilyn Pulver of the Agricultural Liaison Group also raised the matter of economic impacts of the project on farmers in the upper river, as well as a number of liability issues.

Judy Dean mentioned a cancer study being conducted by NYSDOH in Schuylerville and asked if EPA knew anything about it or whether it had any implications for the Reassessment.

Keith Griffin reported that he had no action items for HROC from the Governmental Liaison group and indicated that the group has not met, nor has he had recent contact with Chairman Darryl Decker.

A short break was convened, after which in consideration of the late hour, Ms. Rychlenski discussed with the Steering Committee whether the next agenda item (Goals of the CIP) should be postponed until the next meeting. This was put to a vote, and the Steering Committee decided to postpone this item until September 1, 1992, when a brief session discussing the CIP would be held prior to the Hudson River Oversight Committee meeting in Albany, New York.

ACTION ITEMS FOR HROC:

To NYSDOT - request for a brief update of DOT activities in and around the Hudson River.

To NYSDOH - a brief update on the cancer survey that is being conducted in Saratoga County (specifically, Schuylerville) and its implications in the Reassessment.

To EPA - Definition of Hudson River PCB Superfund site and clarification as to specific standards used by EPA for PCBs in fish tissue.

To EPA - A clear statement for what criteria EPA will utilize for consideration of non-carcinogenic health risks of PCBs.

To EPA - Will Agricultural aspects and impacts be addressed during the Reassessment, and if so, during which Phase?

A request was also made by the group for a joint liaison group meeting during which members of the STC would be present and available for questions on technical issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.