

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BROOKLYN-QUEENS AQUIFER FEASIBILITY STUDY

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING: October 7, 2004

MINUTES

The 22nd meeting of the Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer (BQA) Feasibility Study Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was held on Thursday, October 7, 2004 at the Hillside Manor Comprehensive Care Center. (See Attachment A for Attendance List.)

Helen Neuhaus, Helen Neuhaus & Associates (HNA), opened the meeting by referring to the Minutes of the September 9th CAC meeting, which may have misrepresented a comment offered by Earl Roberts regarding water quality problems in Cambria Heights. Upon receiving clarification from Mr. Roberts regarding that comment, Ms. Neuhaus asked the CAC for approval of the Minutes pending correction. The Minutes were adopted unanimously.

Ms. Neuhaus then facilitated a discussion of the water discoloration issue raised by Mr. Roberts and Irving Hicks, which was the only short-term follow-up item from the September 9th meeting. Commenting on the problem, Deputy Commissioner Doug Greeley and Bill Yulinsky, New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), noted that DEP received ten similar complaints in June and July. They explained that DEP replaced a 20" water main in Cambria Heights, which involved shutting down valves and related activities that may have caused temporary water discoloration. It was also noted that an upcoming contract will replace another 20" water main in the vicinity of 225th Street, between 104th and 116th Avenues. DEP will meet with Community Board (CB) #13 prior to the start of work to discuss how residents might be affected. Mr. Roberts indicated that he has not received any additional water-related complaints since the last CAC meeting. Mr. Hicks had no further information on whether his neighbor's situation has improved.

Ms. Neuhaus reported on a project team meeting with CB #12's Areas 1 and 2 Committees on Tuesday, September 14th to provide an update on West Side Corporation (WSC) remediation, Station 24, Station 6 and a new project, Aquifer Storage and Recovery. She remarked that the presentation resulted in a good dialogue with Committee members but that no issues were raised that have not been discussed at CAC meetings.

Project Update

West Side Corporation/Station 24

Nicole Brown, Malcolm Pirnie, began by reporting on her conversation with Dave Chiusano, Project Manager, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), regarding progress on remediation of the WSC site. Mr. Chiusano informed her that DEC expects to award the contract in November. Ms. Brown noted that this timeframe is consistent with what Mr. Chiusano presented at the September meeting. Ms. Neuhaus added that Mr. Chiusano is planning to attend the November CAC meeting to provide a more detailed update on WSC remediation.

Ms. Brown then referred to two schedules that were developed in response to requests at last month's CAC meeting. These schedules delineate individual timeframes and the interface between the Station 6, Station 24, WSC and relief sewer projects. The macro-scale schedule

(See Attachment B) provides a broad overview until 2011, whereas the micro-scale schedule (See Attachment C) focuses on specific activities over the next year. As shown on the schedules, construction at WSC is slated to begin in November 2004 and continue through March 2005. Operation of the electrical resistance heating system is expected to begin in January 2005.

Ms. Brown reported that design of Station 24 is well underway, with drawings and contract specifications being developed for review by DEP prior to a projected contract bidding date of April 2005. Referring to the schedules, she indicated that there will be about one year of clean-up at WSC before the beginning of operations at Station 24. In a final comment, Ms. Brown noted that the schedules will be updated every few months, as needed.

The following questions and comments were raised during the discussion that followed Ms. Brown's presentation:

- Richard Hellenbrecht asked why the micro-scale schedule concludes WSC source clean-up in December 2005, whereas the macro-scale schedule continues the clean-up operation into late 2007. Ms. Brown explained that the micro-scale schedule truncates the end date to show that the start of operation at Station 24 is contingent upon the progress of WSC remediation. She agreed to extend the bars representing the operational and overall WSC project timeframes to depict a more accurate chronology. In response to a follow-up question from Mr. Hellenbrecht, Ms. Brown indicated that construction durations on the macro-scale schedule include related elements (legal reviews, bidding processes, etc.).
- Several CAC members asked whether DEC will evaluate perchloroethylene (PCE) levels at a nearby school (P.S. 116) during the soil remediation process. Although Don Cohen, Malcolm Pirnie, emphasized that Mr. Chiusano must make the final determination on this issue, he reminded the CAC that DEC has already tested the air quality at residences near WSC, specifically targeting homes with high concentrations of PCE below their basements. These tests of PCE levels in the air concluded that PCE vapors were not seeping through the basement floors.

Peter Richards voiced his concern about the possible PCE contamination of drinking water in coolers at schools near WSC. In a related question, Mr. Hellenbrecht asked whether the schools' water supply is comprised of a combination of treated groundwater and reservoir water. Mr. Cohen assured the CAC that the schools' water coolers are completely safe, because they draw only from the upstate reservoir drinking water supply system, not from groundwater wells. Commissioner Greeley added that while there are still groundwater wells operating in the City, none of these wells are anywhere near WSC.

- Mr. Hellenbrecht inquired whether the City would be able to collect insurance money from the owner of WSC for expenses related to the clean-up. Commissioner Greeley replied that DEC and DEP will calculate total expenditures and then try to recoup funds. He speculated that, at a minimum, the property owner's assets should include the five acres of land formerly used by WSC.
- In response to a question from Linda Hazel, Mr. Yulinsky explained that treated water from Station 24 will be released directly into the storm sewer; this will only require construction of a new connection.

- Mr. Richards asked why the arrow representing the operational stage of Station 24 on the macro-schedule refers to “off-site clean-up” as opposed to “on-site clean-up.” Mr. Cohen explained that on-site clean-up refers to WSC, the source of contamination where the PCE is located. Off-site clean-up refers to the groundwater plume, which has migrated away from WSC. Commissioner Greeley added that it may be helpful to remember that the WSC component (on-site) addresses soil remediation, whereas Station 24 (off-site) involves groundwater cleanup.

In a follow-up question, Mr. Hicks inquired whether the work at Station 24 will include areas not within the physical boundaries of the Station 24 property. Mr. Cohen replied that while all work will take place on Station 24 property, the recovery well will be powerful enough to draw groundwater from surrounding areas, even as far as Merrick Boulevard.

Station 6

Mr. Cohen informed the CAC that the process design for Station 6 has been completed, with work continuing on detailed engineering to ensure that the size and configuration of equipment will result in logical flow. Mr. Cohen reiterated that, as discussed last month, the facility will typically treat 7½ million gallons per day (MGD) but will be designed to handle 10-12 MGD. He explained that engineering will now proceed to the conceptual design stage, which will focus on such details as electrical, plumbing and piping requirements.

Mr. Cohen also explained that at 30% design completion, the project team will participate in a Value Engineering (VE) session, which is required by the New York City Office of Management and Budget prior to the release of funding for any project. The VE process, a week-long review of the project by an independent engineering team, is designed to ensure that the project’s proposed approach is cost-effective without compromising technical utility. VE is scheduled to begin on January 24, 2005, to be followed by the project team’s evaluation and response to the VE team’s recommendations. In response to a question from Mr. Hellenbrecht, Mr. Cohen confirmed that the VE team can analyze every aspect of the process, including architecture, process, and engineering. However, he noted that the project team can identify specific items that are essential and cannot be altered; these are outside the purview of evaluation by the VE team.

Mr. Cohen also informed the CAC of the project team’s upcoming pre-application meeting with the Art Commission in November. He emphasized that this will be a preliminary meeting to ensure that the architectural concept for Station 6 is “on the right track.” While this meeting will take place on November 17th, materials must be submitted by November 3rd, a day before the November CAC meeting. Phil Zimmerman, Malcolm Pirnie, will attend the November CAC meeting to discuss the submission to the Art Commission. Mr. Cohen assured the group that the architectural design presented at an earlier CAC meeting has not been altered, except that it now includes four air stripping towers, rather than three, along with relocation of the towers.

Ms. Neuhaus asked the CAC if it was comfortable in allowing the project team to submit preliminary materials to the Art Commission before having the chance to further review them. Mr. Cohen assured the group that the project team would postpone the November 17th meeting with the Art Commission, if the CAC objects to the newest version of the design at its November meeting. The CAC endorsed submission of the pre-application materials to the Art Commission on November 3rd.

In a discussion of activities following the pre-application meeting with the Art Commission, the project team reminded the CAC that a meeting will be scheduled with residents in the vicinity of Station 6 to introduce the project, present the model, discuss the conceptual plan, and receive comments. Mr. Cohen noted that Councilman Leroy Comrie continues to express interest in co-hosting this meeting with his constituents. A formal design submission to the Art Commission will be made following the project team's review of all comments.

Referring to the project schedules, Mr. Richards and Mr. Hellenbrecht commented on the lengthy time required for Station 6 design. Ms. Brown responded that the timeframe is reasonable, considering the time needed for review and comment by the VE team and the Art Commission, as well as any revisions required as a result of the comments received.

Mr. Hellenbrecht also inquired about the need for zoning variances in order to proceed with construction of the Station 6 facility. Mr. Cohen confirmed that a zoning variance will be needed, since the New York City Department of City Planning does not wish to revise the current zoning for the site (residential – R4). Although R4 zoning allows water and sewer pumping, variances will be required to obtain permission for water treatment.

Relief Sewer

Mr. Cohen reminded the CAC that DEP is planning to build a new relief sewer from Station 6 to the Jamaica Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) in order to dispose of the process waste from the reverse osmosis unit. While the schedule for construction of the relief sewer has not yet been determined, the sewer must be completed before the beginning of operations at Station 6. Mr. Cohen promised to keep the CAC informed of progress on this project.

In response to a question from Michael Turner, Mr. Cohen replied that although the route of the new sewer has not yet been determined, it will generally run south from Station 6 to the Jamaica WPCP parallel to Guy R. Brewer Boulevard. Commissioner Greeley added that the New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) will need to examine roadway grades and width, infrastructure, and other factors before establishing the sewer's precise route. Some of this information has already been extracted from an engineering study currently commissioned to analyze the sewer system in Southeast Queens. Commissioner Greeley added that this study supports the need for another relief sewer in the area.

In response to several budget-related questions from CAC members, Commissioner Greeley provided the following information: the total cost of the WSC and Station 24 projects is approximately \$11 million; Station 6 will cost approximately \$60 million; and the relief sewer will cost between \$15 and \$20 million. The projects are being funded by the City. Funds for WSC and Station 24 are already secured, as are funds for the design of Station 6. Construction of Station 6 is included in DEP's 10-year capital program.

Other Business

- Mr. Turner asked whether other sewer improvement projects (in addition to the relief sewer for Station 6) are under way in Southeast Queens. Commissioner Greeley referenced work on a 48" water main on 110th Avenue and indicated that a more complete list of projects can be made available.

- Ms. Hazel commented on the number of new housing units being built in the vicinity of Station 6 and inquired whether new housing development would preclude the construction of Station 6. The project team assured her that this would not be the case.
- Referencing the prolonged street construction on Liberty Avenue, several CAC members expressed concern about potential neighborhood disruption resulting from piecemeal construction of the relief sewer and other infrastructure projects. Commissioner Greeley assured the group that every effort is made by DDC to coordinate projects among agencies and utilities in order to minimize construction time and impacts.
- Ms. Neuhaus mentioned that there has been progress regarding the establishment of an environmental education program at I.S. 59. Ms. Brown informed the CAC that she and Manny Caughman, who was unable to attend tonight's meeting, met with representatives of I.S. 59 last week. She added that the school's new principal was very enthusiastic about the project, especially since \$200,000 in funding has been secured by Councilman Comrie and an additional \$50,000 by Assemblyman William Scarborough. Ms. Neuhaus noted that in a phone conversation earlier in the day, Mr. Caughman was hopeful that construction of the science lab may begin in early 2005. However Commissioner Greeley and Ms. Brown cautioned that this may be overly optimistic, since a great deal of work, including preparation of blueprints, engineering, and remodeling of the room designated for use as the lab must be done prior to construction.

In a related comment, Ms. Hazel mentioned that Merrick Academy recently added a building that houses a science lab. She invited Ms. Brown and Mr. Caughman to visit the facility, as well as a local charter school with which she has been working as part of the "Reach into Cultural Heights" elementary school program.

Ms. Neuhaus encouraged CAC members to attend the next meeting, which will have a full and diverse agenda. Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Chiusano are scheduled to provide updates and the Scientific Review Panel will be invited to attend.

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, November 4, 2004 at 7 p.m.** at the Hillside Manor Comprehensive Care Center, 188-11 Hillside Avenue, Jamaica Estates.

Follow-Up List

1. Revise Minutes of September 9th CAC meeting to correct comments regarding water quality issues. Responsibility: HNA.
2. Revise micro-scale schedule to extend timeframe of WSC soil remediation operation into 2006. Responsibility: Nicole Brown, Malcolm Pirnie.
3. Update micro- and macro-scale schedules for distribution to the CAC every 3-4 months. Responsibility: Nicole Brown.
4. Contact Dave Chiusano, DEC, regarding air quality monitoring at P.S. 116 (107-25 Wren Place) and nearby homes during soil remediation at WSC. Responsibility: Malcolm Pirnie, HNA.
5. Present materials submitted to Art Commission (in preparation for November 17th pre-application meeting) at November 4th CAC meeting. Discuss procedures and schedule for Art Commission submissions. Responsibility: Phil Zimmerman, Malcolm Pirnie.
6. Visit science labs at other schools (including Merrick Academy) for ideas relevant to establishing lab at I.S. 59. Coordinate with Linda Hazel. Responsibility, Nicole Brown.
7. Provide list of planned sewer improvement projects in Southeast Queens to CAC. Responsibility: DEP.

Brooklyn-Queens Aquifer Feasibility Study
Citizens Advisory Committee
Thursday, October 7, 2004

Attendance List

CAC Members/Alternates

Tracey Bowes
Community Board #12

Linda Caleb Hazel
A Better Day Inc./St. Benedict The Moor/
St. Bonaventure

Jeff Diggs
Councilman Leroy Comrie

Richard Hellenbrecht
Community Board #13

Irving Hicks
Brinkerhoff Action Association

Sarah Hicks
Resident

Peter Richards
Community Board #13

Earl Roberts
113th Precinct Council

Michael Turner
Addisleigh Park Civic
Association

Media

Keach Hagey
Queens Chronicle

Project Team

Nicole Brown
Malcolm Pirnie, Inc.

Don Cohen
Malcolm Pirnie, Inc.

Lillie Farrell
New York City Department of
Environmental Protection

Doug Greeley
New York City Department of
Environmental Protection

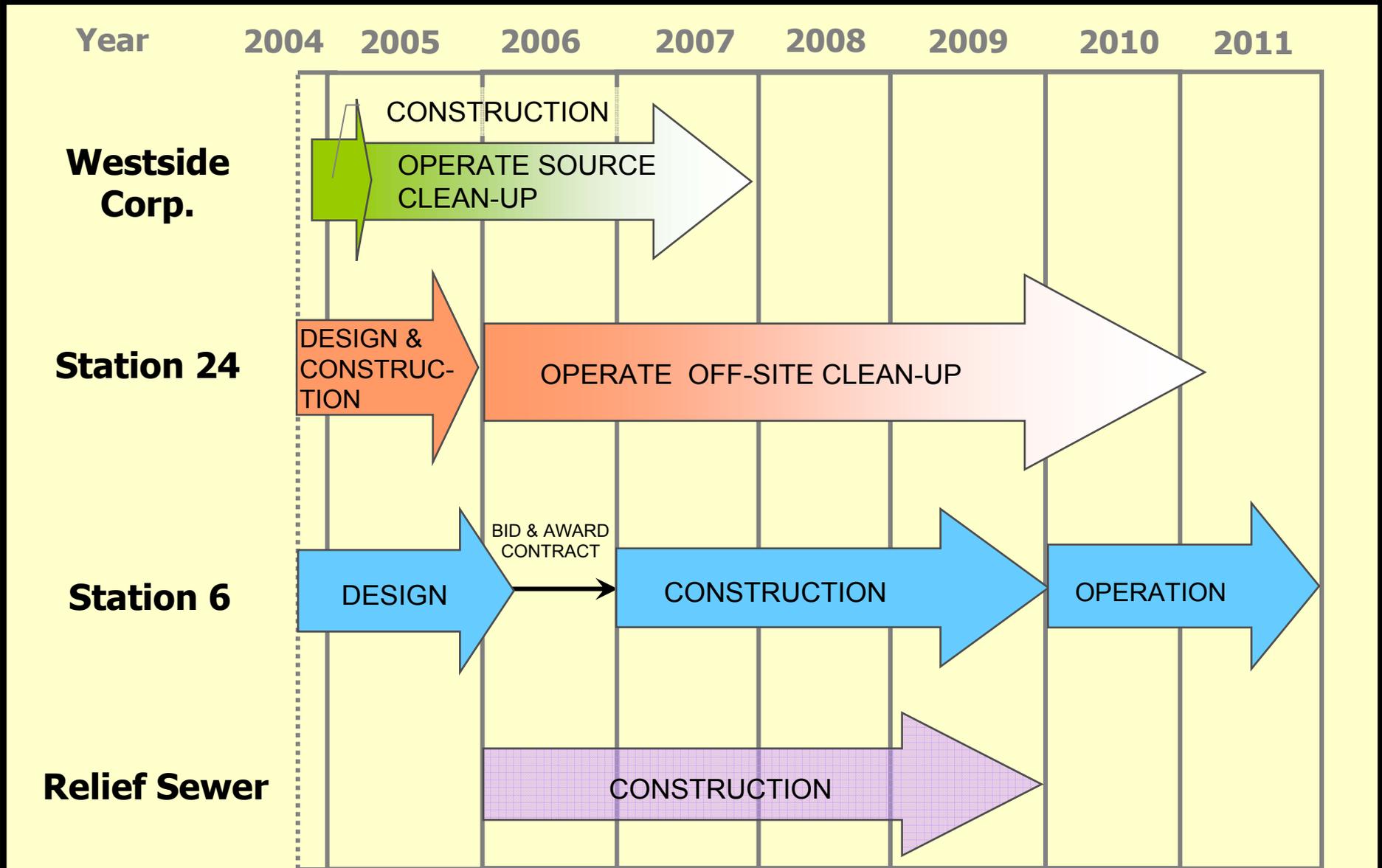
Helen Neuhaus
Helen Neuhaus & Associates Inc.

Andrea Wong
Helen Neuhaus & Associates Inc.

Anita Wright
Helen Neuhaus & Associates Inc.

Bill Yulinsky
New York City Department of
Environmental Protection

Station 6 /Station 24/ Westside Project Schedule



BQA Project Schedule 1 Year Projection

ID	Task Name	Start	Finish	2004					2005					2											
				a	Jun	Jul	u	e	Oct	o	e	Jan	e	a	Apr	a	Jun	Jul	u	e	Oct	o	e	Jan	e
1	Westside Corp	Mon 11/15/04	Fri 12/02/05	Westside Corp																					
2	Construction	Mon 11/15/04	Thu 03/31/05																						
3	Operation	Mon 01/10/05	Fri 12/02/05																						
4	Station 24	Wed 09/01/04	Fri 08/04/06	Station 24																					
5	Design	Wed 09/01/04	Thu 04/07/05																						
6	Bid	Fri 04/08/05	Wed 08/31/05																						
7	Construction	Thu 09/01/05	Fri 12/30/05																						
8	Operation	Mon 01/02/06	Fri 08/04/06																						
9	Station 6 Demonstration Project	Wed 03/14/01	Wed 09/20/06	Station 6 Demonstration Project																					
10	Conceptual Design	Thu 07/01/04	Mon 12/06/04																						
17	Art Commission	Thu 10/07/04	Wed 12/07/05																						
23	Value Engineering	Mon 12/06/04	Wed 05/04/05																						
33	Final Design	Thu 03/10/05	Wed 05/03/06																						
35	Permitting	Wed 03/14/01	Wed 09/20/06																						