

Omya Community Issue Team – Plant Issues

November 24, 2008 Meeting Summary

Location: Maclure Library, Pittsford, VT

Date: November 24, 2008

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Meeting Attendees (in alphabetical order):

Lawrence Copley – Acoustics expert and Omya noise consultant, L.G. Copley Associates
Ed Eugair – Florence resident
Jim Morale – Production Superintendent, Omya
Umberto “Pat” Rosato – Florence resident

Absent:

Ernie Brod – Florence resident
Peg Flory – State Representative
Dave Markowski – Florence resident and local business owner
Jack and Jane Orvis – Florence residents

Note Taking:

Dave Thayer – CLF Ventures
Mary-Kaye Zambon – Administrative Assistant, Omya

I. Welcome and Introductions

Jim Morale welcomed the members to the seventh Plant Issues Team Meeting. Sean Alvarez was unable to attend due to civic obligations. Jim introduced Lawrence Copley of L.G. Copley Associates as a guest speaker for the evening.

II. Old Business

Team Members were asked if they had any changes or additions to the meeting minutes of September 22, 2008. The team accepted the minutes as written for posting online at www.omyainvermont.net.

Discussion of Action Items and Prioritized Issues

Noise

Lawrence Copley was the noise consultant during the Section 5 Study and has continued on as an acoustics expert to devise a strategy to reduce noise at Verpol. He was originally trained as a mechanical engineer and later earned a Ph.D. in applied physics. He is a registered professional engineer, and has spent the past 30+ years as a consultant in noise control engineering.

Mr. Copley presented a status report on Omya’s noise mitigation efforts to the Team, including an overview of the noise attenuation efforts from 2006 – 2008, noise source identification & prioritization, PX mill noise mitigation effort, noise mitigation for the Tailings Dewatering Facility (TDF), and future plans.

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Preliminary noise findings in the Section 5 Study showed that the Verpol plant, Hogback Quarry, trucking on public roads and railroad operations all contributed to noise conditions. The State of Vermont Act 250 Permit sets the maximum noise level allowed from the Verpol Facility site to be 70 dBA at the property line. Subsequently Omya undertook sound level monitoring at five neighborhood locations near residences. It was found that the noise levels were the greatest at Location 1 (Markowski Road), which has the highest elevation and the plant visible. Noise levels there were measured at 50 dBA +/- at night and 42 dBA +/- in daytime. Noise levels at West Creek Road were roughly equal between day and night, and generally lower than at Markowski Road. Data showed that noise levels vary with weather conditions.

Efforts taken by Omya to reduce noise disturbances began when neighbors initially voiced concerns back in 2001 or prior. In December 2001, Omya installed a silencer on Flash Dryer #5. In 2002, Omya engaged Harris Miller Miller & Hanson Inc. (HMMH), noise consultants, to investigate the noise situation and a supplemental investigation was conducted in 2004. HMMH identified specific equipment that contribute the highest levels of noise and recommended noise mitigation methods. From 2002 – 2004, Omya has installed more silencers and noise screens. In 2007, Omya procured a sophisticated sound monitoring system to gain a better understanding of the noise situation.

The Section 5 Study ran from June, 2006 to February, 2008. This study provided several recommendations for addressing noise concerns of neighbors, including:

1. Extended noise monitoring at receptors to include time of day, weather and operating conditions.
2. Further monitoring to show prevailing ambient noise levels at comparable locations out of Omya range.
3. More detailed characterization of Omya noise sources.
4. Computer modeling to identify critical sources and evaluate mitigation options.

Steps 1 and 2, above, were initiated during the Section 5 Study. After that study was completed Omya retained the services of L. Copley to further research and develop noise attenuation options. This effort includes Steps 3 and 4, above.

Mr. Copley determined that major sources of noise heard by neighbors include the PX mills at Verpol. Noise from the mills passes out through roof-top ventilation fans. Since February, 2008, this noise has been reduced by shutting down the fans in cool weather, thus closing the dampers on top of the fans, which then block noise transmission. In warm and hot weather, these fans have to be run, thus allowing mill noise to escape. Mr. Copley identified various options to suppress the noise leaking out through these fan openings. The most promising option to date is a canopy structure made from sound absorbing panels, and placed over the four roof-top PX Mill exhaust fans. Analysis shows that this canopy would reduce the noise by 10 dBA, which would be a significant reduction.

Mr. Copley included in his presentation a discussion of noise emissions from the TDF facility. The State of Vermont Act 250 Permit sets the maximum noise level allowed from the TDF to be 48 dBA at the property line. During the design, four sets of noise sources were identified at the TDF and their noise emissions calculated (at the property line):

1. Rake Drive Motor – predicted noise 19 dBA

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2. A/C Unit – predicted noise 22 dBA
3. Agitator Motors – predicted noise 34 dBA
4. Building envelope, including vent fans – predicted noise 39 dBA

The combined total noise level at the property boundary from the TDF at maximum is predicted at 41dBA, which is well below the 48 dBA allowed under the Act 250 permit. Therefore, Mr. Copley feels quite confident that the TDF will not be a cause of noise disturbance.

One of the Team members asked at a past meeting specifically about how the TDF may alter the acoustics from the Plant and in what way could the TDF divert the noise from the Plant. Mr. Copley explained that the TDF building structure is 12 feet lower than the Verpol Plant roof, where most of the plant noise emanates. Noise from the plant roof area will tend to travel over the TDF building, and not be significantly affected by this new structure. Another factor is the relatively small size of the TDF in comparison with its distance from the plant noise sources. These factors suggest that the TDF structure will have very little effect on sound propagation from the main plant.

Looking forward, Mr. Copley noted the PX Mill noise mitigation feasibility study will be completed by the end of December 2008. He would like to conduct some further night sound measurements with the butterfly dampers on the top of the PX Mills open and closed. These sound measurements at a neighbor location to the west, with the dampers open and closed, will document the noise reduction that can be anticipated from the proposed roof-top mitigation. The proposed noise mitigation option would then require cost approval from Omya and then a project timeline would be established for engineering design and installation. Other noise sources for mitigation to be considered in 2009 are the Deagg-C Intake and the Spray Dryer/Flash Dryer vents.

Back-up Alarms

On the topic of back-up alarms, Jim noted that Sean had followed up with a suggestion by a team member to contact a local company, on their use of a new back-up alarm. Sean has the manufacturer information on this alarm and has discussed the effectiveness with Carrara & Sons. One unit will be obtained for trial on a loader truck in the stockpile area during the evening hours. Information will be gathered from the testing of this unit and presented to the team.

Issue Team Assessment Findings

David Thayer of CLF Ventures presented the findings of the Issue Team Survey. The survey was conducted to determine how well the three Omya Community Issues Teams (Trucks and Transportation, Plant, and Quarry) have worked for the members and the community. David conducted one-on-one interviews to gather candid feedback to address information gaps, establish a baseline of feedback for the future, determine whether the current structure is working and to identify the next steps for the program. Please refer to *Appendix A: Issue Team Assessment Presentation* for more details. Omya will get in touch with Team Members regarding the outcomes of the Issue Team Assessment process.

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Tickler List

At the last meeting members asked that a timeline or “tickler list” be created as a way of tracking progress and identifying improvements made at Omya while keeping the issues that are raised at meetings from being overlooked. Currently, all of the issues not included on the Prioritized Item list appear in section “IV Next Steps.” Mary-Kaye and David presented a draft timeline to the team to gauge what in fact the team desired. The representation showed a summarized listing of key agenda items, prioritized issues, discussion and action items from each meeting on the timeline. This approach is simply a quick reference to direct readers back to the specific meeting notes, which cover the topic area in more detail. The difficulty here is in presenting the details of meeting discussions in a simplistic manner. For example, the education of the team regarding Omya practices and processes is hard to track and other issues such as Plant noise and back-up alarms are on-going. Team members present did not require any changes to the format presented. But their desire was to see more detail on the steps toward a final solution. Further discussion will be required to determine the best approach to handling this request.

Other Ongoing Issues (if time allows)

Due to the length of the meeting, Surface and Stormwater Management, Tailings Dewatering Facility, Sense of Community, Membership and Kendall Hill Road Bridge Update were not discussed. *Appendix B Project Updates* provides these updates as requested.

Truck and Transportation Issues

A brief discussion was had on the issue of the low speed of haul trucks on US Route 7. Jim noted that safety is the number one concern for the haul carriers en route to Omya. An option for concerned parties is to petition the State and Federal Government to install truck lanes on the hill areas between Middlebury to Florence.

III.Next Steps

The Next Steps include:

1. Noise Study Update.
2. Secure Back-Up Alarm and test.
3. Slow Haul Trucks on Route 7.
4. TDF Update.
5. Create a tracking system to follow progress of Issues.
6. Brainstorm ideas to create a better sense of community.
7. Omya to consider attending Annual Town Meeting in Pittsford.
8. Follow-up with new member request.

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The Teams' list of prioritized issues is (1) Surface and Stormwater Management, (2) Noise Management: Plant Noise and Back-Up Alarms, (3) Tailings Management and (4) Sense of Community.

IV. Current Happenings at Omya

No new items were presented.

V. Wrap Up

No date has been set for the eighth Plant Issues Team meeting. A meeting date will be set after the Issue Team Assessment is complete.

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Appendix A - CLF Ventures Issue Team Assessment Presentation

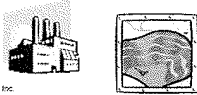
Overview of Issue Teams

Mission:

- Identify concerns of stakeholders
- Engage neighbors in problem solving
- Education on and communication of Verpol activities

Teams:

- Trucks and Transportation
- Plant
- Hogback Quarry



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History of Issue Teams

- Project began February 2007 with Omya staff training
- First team meeting in June 2007 (T&T team)
- 16 team meetings over 16 months
- 20+ community members and 10 Omya staff involved

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Assessment Purpose and Approach

Purpose

- Address information gaps
- Establish baseline of feedback for the future
- Determine whether the current structure is working
- Identify next steps for the program

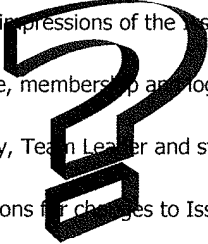
Approach

- Develop process for soliciting feedback
- Conduct interviews and survey
- Synthesize observations and develop preliminary recommendations
- Design implementation plan

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Interview and Survey Question Categories

- General impressions of the Issue Teams project
- Structure, membership and logistics of the teams
- Company, Team Leader and staff performance
- Suggestions for changes to Issue Teams



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General Impressions

- Positive experience overall
 - "An excellent opportunity" and "great program"
- Neighbors better understand Omya's operations, challenges and opportunities
 - Quarry Blast viewings = neighbors seeing for themselves
- Uncertainty about impact of Teams on Omya's plans
 - Do not want to be involved in "simple PR activity"
- Want to continue process with some adjustments

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Structure, Membership and Logistics

- Lack of dialogue between teams
- Low attendance hurts discussion
- Logistics are fine and not interested in compensation



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Appendix A - CLF Ventures Issue Team Assessment Presentation - continued

Company and Team Leader Performance

- ▶ Omya has done a good job and the effort is appreciated
- ▶ Staff occasionally become protective of Omya when replying to concerns
- ▶ A perception that the right people aren't always involved

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Changes to Issue Teams

- ▶ Get more community members that care in one room to discuss full range of issues
- ▶ Clarify how Omya incorporates team input into decisions
- ▶ Set realistic expectations up front
- ▶ Find ways to optimize time and effort

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CLFV Suggestions

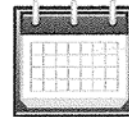
- 1) Consider consolidating teams into one new entity
- 2) Define the purpose of new entity, the roles of members and the expected outcomes
- 3) Clarify how input from the community will be used in decision-making at the company
- 4) Directly involve key environmental and communications staff in new entity
- 5) Raise public awareness of entity and assist participants in conveying information to the community

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Schedule

- ▶ November/ December 2008
 - Communicate findings to Teams and get feedback
 - Identify next steps
- ▶ January/ February 2009
 - Finalize plan
- ▶ March/ April 2009
 - Hold meeting(s)



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Appendix B - Project Updates

Kendall Hill Road Bridge

History

- Town of Pittsford Project commenced on Sept. 22.
- Objective: Repair deterioration to bridge decking

Update

- Completed application of concrete sealant during the week of Nov. 17.
- Reopen to two-way traffic on Nov. 21.
- Additional sealant application in Spring 2009.

Tailings Interim Certification

- Issued by ANR on Oct. 21
- Per certification requirement, Omya will:
 - Close Dolomite TMA by Oct. 2009
 - Have Dewatering Facility fully operational & discontinue use of settling cells by Oct. 2009
 - Close Kane & Drake TMA by Oct. 2010
 - Apply for new certification by May 2010
- Omya expects to submit a Full Certification Application for a lined onsite facility by April 2009 (Presented to stakeholders at Nov. 11 meeting).

Stormwater System Expansion Project

History

- Construction of permitted system commenced in September 2009.
- Required to accommodate additional stormwater runoff from the new TDF area.

Update

- Rock ledge removal nearly complete.
- Expanded stormwater system expected to be online in December 2008.

Site Monitoring Events

- Monthly surface water sampling continued in September & October.
- No detections of AEEA in Chrusciel Spring since July 2007.
- No detections of AEEA in the Pittsford Italian Quarry.
- AEEA was detected only within the onsite TMAs.
- Geosyntec completed the semi-Annual site wide monitoring event on October 27 – 30, 2008. Results & report expected in December.