

Omya Community Issue Team – Plant Issues

September 22, 2008 Meeting Summary

Location: Maclure Library, Pittsford, VT

Date: September 22, 2008

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Attendees (in alphabetical order):

Sean Alvarez – Safety Manager, Omya
Ernie Brod – Florence resident
Peg Flory – State Representative
Jim Morale – Production Superintendent, Omya
Umberto “Pat” Rosato – Florence resident

Absent:

Ed Eugair – Florence resident
Dave Markowski – Florence resident and local business owner
Jack and Jane Orvis – Florence residents

Note Taking:

MaryKaye Zambon – Administrative Assistant, Omya
Dave Thayer – CLF Ventures

I. Welcome and Introductions

Jim Morale and Sean Alvarez welcomed the members to the sixth Plant Issues Team Meeting.

II. Old Business

Jim provided a short review of the topics covered at the last Plant Issues Team Meeting on June 2, 2008. Team Members were asked if they had any changes or additions to the meeting minutes for that meeting. A short discussion was held regarding the use of team members’ names in the notes when describing issues or questions they raise. All members agreed that no individual names will be used. The generic term “team member” will be used to keep consistent with the format of the other Community Issues Teams. The team accepted the minutes of June 2, 2008 as written for posting online at www.omyainvermont.net.

After review of the minutes, the team requested that noise from back-up alarms be placed on the agenda as a Prioritized Issue. A discussion followed as noted in Section III below.

III. Discussion of Action Items and Prioritized Issues

Noise

An update on Plant noise was provided by Sean and Jim. The Noise Study Team, overseen by Lawrence Copley of L.G. Copley Associates, met in August and is in the process of assessing six noise mitigation options. The tonal noise source has been identified as the PX mills and computer modeling indicates more PX noise comes via roof-top area exhaust fans (AEF). The options for reducing this noise include:

1. Silencers atop fan.
2. Silencers under roof.
3. Horizontal roof-top ducts facing East.
4. Passive exhaust via supply fan access doors (shutting down AEF's & opening bay doors).
5. Reverse supply fans to exhaust (shutting down AEF's & opening bay doors).
6. Interior Noise Curtains.

Jim stated that he expects one of these options will be selected by the end of the year to provide a solution to the noise issue. He foresees the selected solution being implemented by summer 2009. Omya, in using the expert consulting services of Lawrence Copley, seeks to identify and select the best option in the timeliest manner. In the interim, Omya will manipulate the fans by closing the dampers on most of the PX mill roof-top vents whenever the weather permits. This may result in reducing the number of days that noise occurs and therefore minimize the impact to neighbors. Jim added that once the noise mediation option is installed, then Omya will have acoustical data and measurements to analyze.

When asked by a team member how Omya quantitatively measures improvements, Sean said that one indicator is the decrease in the number of complaints Omya receives. As noise reduction improvements are implemented, noise monitoring will be performed to verify that a reduction has been achieved at the source. One member mentioned that noise from the plant had increased some with the higher temperatures of the summer, possibly attributable to Omya's need to keep the vents open so that equipment does not overheat. Overall, however, this member believes that progress is being made on the noise issue.

Lastly, a discussion was held regarding what impacts the Tailings Dewatering Facility (TDF) will have on noise from the Plant. The questions raised were:

- Will the TDF alter the acoustics from the Plant and will the noise levels worsen or improve?
- In what way will the TDF divert the noise from the Plant?

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It has been explained in past meetings that the TDF design review addressed noise from the interior and exterior equipment and concluded that the TDF noise contribution – under worst case conditions – will not exceed 41dBA at the property line and 36dBA at the residences (maximum allowed with Act 250 permit is 48dBA). Members would like to have Lawrence Copley address the noise issue more specifically as it relates to the effects the TDF will have on Plant noise.

The next Noise Study Team meeting will be held in November at the Plant. Plant Issue Team members were invited to attend that meeting. It was agreed that members unable to attend the meeting could speak to fellow team members or team leaders to ensure that any question or issue be addressed by Lawrence Copley at that meeting.

Back-up Alarm Noise

The request to place the noise from truck back-up alarms onto the prioritized list of issues created a lengthy discussion that changed the agenda for the evening. This specific noise issue had been addressed in past meetings but was not included as a Priority Issue until this meeting.

The team asked what can be done to eliminate the noise of the alarm. Jim offered that there are a many different noise alarms on the trucks at the plant and it may be necessary to first determine which alarm causes the most annoyance and proceed from there. A Team member suggested that we contact a local company that may be currently addressing this same issue.

Sean discussed the MSHA Title 30 Code of Federal Regulations specific to horns and backup alarms. MSHA does allow for an automatic reverse-activated strobe light to be used at night in lieu of an audible reverse alarm. Omya is considering this option but the problem is not simple and it may take some time to solve. The alarms are clearly a life safety issue and Omya will always prioritize safety concerns.

Sean mentioned that Omya has had their safety management system audited and was awarded certification to the OHSAS 18001 international standard. Omya has been informed by the registrars that they are the first company in Vermont to achieve this level of recognition in safety. Omya is also one of only a few companies in the country to have achieved registration in three areas -- Quality, Environmental and now Safety management systems.

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Surface and Stormwater Management

An update on the May Water Monitoring Reports was not covered in detail due to the length of discussion of the Noise issue, but the team was referred to the report by the Geosyntec consultants on the Omya website.

Tailings Dewatering Facility

No further update provided due to length of discussion of the Noise issue. The effects of the TDF on Plant noise is addressed in the Noise section above.

Sense of Community

A member noted that the community appreciated Omya's presence at the Pittsford Family Day event on 6/28. Omya was a sponsor of the event and provided and supervised a waterslide and bounce house for the children, which by all accounts was a huge hit. The Issue team felt it was important for the community and for Omya to have the chance to interact in similar community events.

The team was asked to bring ideas to the next meeting of ways they felt Omya could facilitate a better sense of community either through participation at local events or ones that Omya and the team members might organize.

A team member suggested that Omya be present for Town Meeting Day. This member felt that this would be a good way to show Omya's involvement in the community and to hear people's concerns/questions for the area.

Several members said they have heard positive feedback from people on the direction that Omya is taking and they themselves feel the same. It was expressed that Omya continues to be open, proactive and positive in its approach to addressing questions and concerns from members of the community.

New Topics

Tickler List

Members asked that Omya create a tickler list or timeline of activities related to each of the three Community Issue Teams as a way of tracking progress and identifying improvements 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** for each meeting, however the team feels this new format would centralize all of the Issue Team information into one summarized format.

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Truck and Transportation Issues

Several comments were raised regarding issues generally covered by the Trucks and Transportation Issues Team. One issue raised was the low speed the hauling trucks use while traveling on US Route 7. A member felt that the trucks should consider pulling over as traffic backs up behind the trucks and generally the area is unsafe to pass. Another issue raised was regarding improvement to the switching yard rails. Jim noted that Vermont Rail Road controls the rail cars with their own policies and procedures and that Omya is not directly responsible once the rail cars leave its property. On another topic, a member asked about the current construction project the Town has underway at Kendall Hill Road Bridge and wondered what improvements is the Town making and what is Omya's involvement in that project. Sean and Jim will discuss these topics with the Truck and Transportation Issue Team Leaders for further information.

Membership

A team member presented the name of a community member for consideration as a new member on the Plant Issue Team. Jim will follow up with this individual directly to confirm their interest.

IV. Next Steps

The Next Steps include:

1. Contact local company regarding back-up alarms.
2. Brainstorm ideas to create a better sense of community.
3. Omya to consider attending Annual Town Meeting in Pittsford.
4. Update on the Noise Study Meeting and Noise Mitigation options. Address team member question on how the TDF will deflect Plant noise.
5. TDF Update.
6. Follow-up with new member request.

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.

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V. Current Happenings at Omya

The Team was updated that Omya has received an Air Permit to Construct to allow an increase in the aggregate throughput and operating hours, and to operate a portable screening unit at the Hogback Quarry. Applying for an Act 250 Permit amendment is one of the next steps in pursuing approval for year-round operations at the Hogback Quarry.

An Omya Community Issues Team Survey is being conducted by David Thayer from CLF Ventures. David explained that the purpose of the Issue Team Interviews is to determine how well the three Omya Community Issues Teams (Trucks and Transportation, Plant, and Quarry) have worked for the members and the community. One-on-one interviews will be conducted by David to gather candid feedback so that Omya can improve this forum to best meet the future needs of the members and community. These observations and the recommendations will be brought back to the teams for further discussion.

As some of the team had already completed the survey with David, they inquired if the teams will be combining into one larger team. David explained that the Issue Team Process is still being accessed and after review of the team members' recommendations the process forward will be determined.

VI. Wrap Up

The date tentatively set for the seventh Plant Issues Team meeting was Monday, November 24, 2008 at the Maclure Library. **The meeting will begin at 7:00PM.**