

Omya Community Issue Team – December 2009 Meeting Meeting Summary

Location: Omya Verpol Plant

Date: December 3, 2009

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Meeting Attendees (in alphabetical order):

Shawn Barrows – West Rutland Select Board Chair
Jill Blanchard – Administrative Assistant, Omya
Sharon Carpenter – Florence resident
Rick Donovan – CFI (freight transportation company representative)
Linda Doty – Proctor Town Selectperson
Amy Gamble – VT Agency of Transportation
Mary Ann Goulette – West Rutland Town Manager
Matt Harvey – Pittsford resident
John Haverstock – Pittsford Town Manager
Jon Keith – Pittsford resident and local business owner
Mike Laurent – Environmental Manager, Omya
Pierre Masuy – Verpol Plant Manager, Omya
Jim Morale – PX Area Manager, Omya
Tim Perry – Packaging & Shipping Area Manager, Omya
Bev Peterson – Florence resident
Gerry Racette – Logistics Manager, Omya N. America
Umberto “Pat” Rosato – Florence resident
Mary-Kaye Zambon – Administrative Assistant, Omya
David Thayer – Facilitator, CLF Ventures

Absent:

Ernest Brod – Florence resident
Peg Flory – Pittsford resident and State Representative
John Lapre – Florence resident
Fred McAtee – Florence resident
David Markowski – Florence resident and local business owner

I. Welcome

Pierre Masuy welcomed guests and team members to the fourth Community Issue Team Meeting and presented the agenda for the meeting. The focus of the evening’s discussion was lost product shipment trucks en route to and from Omya’s Verpol facility and the resulting impacts this presents for neighbors to the Plant. Pierre thanked attendees for their time and willingness to participate in this important discussion.

II. Topic 1: Lost Trucks

Omya asked representatives from the VT Agency of Transportation, the Towns of Proctor, Pittsford and West Rutland, and CGI (a freight transportation company) to join the Community Issue Team meeting and provide their perspectives on the issue of lost trucks around Omya’s Verpol facility.

Omya Community Issue Team – December 2009 Meeting Meeting Summary

Mike Laurent began the evening with a review of Omya's past and current efforts to address this issue. Mike also provided guests with an update on the actions taken as a result of deliberations at previous Issue Team meetings. A few of those key initiatives included:

1) Signage

- Worked with VTAOT to upgrade existing U.S. Route 7 and Town road signs (black sign with Omya logo and white lettering) to an improved reflectivity specification in February 2008.
- Blue & white "Omya" signs were posted in accordance with Town regulations but were determined to be non-compliant with VTAOT specifications and were removed.
- Green & white "Florence Truck Route" signs were installed in March 2008 in accordance with VTAOT specifications.
- Worked with surrounding towns to place "No Thru Truck" signs at key locations however signs were determined not to be compliant with VTAOT specifications.
- Posted 3 signs at Verpol's exit directing truck drivers to U.S. Route 7.
- Illuminated the Omya sign at the West Plant (main) entrance.

2) Carrier Communication

- Clarification of Verpol's physical address based on the E-911 address.
- Notice placed on all fax order communications for trucks to access Verpol by U.S. Route 7.
- Contact with GPS companies to modify access routes to Verpol.
- Omya lost truck tracking process includes direct contact follow-up with all lost carrier companies to provide correct travel directions.

3) Community Communication

- Contact information and an on-line comment form provided on the Omya web site (omyainvermont.net) and a Community Feedback phone line (802-770-7644) is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Omya Community Newsletter detailed lost truck issue (Spring 2009) and each issue published provides Omya contact information.
- Issue Team members were provided Town and State contact information in addition to Verpol staff contact numbers to share with neighbors.
- Team was encouraged to attend area town Select Board meetings and to bring the lost truck issue to the Rutland Region Transportation Council for discussion and for further direction and assistance.

4) Improvement Measures since last Community Issue Team Meeting (9/24/09):

Completed:

- Truck driver survey 11/21/09 – 11/27/09.
- Letter sent to Omya Carriers emphasizing travel routes to Verpol and a directive to use U.S. Route 7. Return acknowledgement required from Carriers.
- Multilingual direction sheets provided for travel to N.Y. and to Verpol.
- Multilingual travel directions placed on omyainvermont.net web site.

In Progress:

- Travel directions mandate to be included on each customer order.
- Omya's toll-free phone number (1-800-451-4468) to provide updated and multilingual directions.

Omya Community Issue Team – December 2009 Meeting Meeting Summary

- Efforts to make modifications to web mapping and GPS systems continue.

Next, Jim Morale shared the results of the truck driver survey conducted by Omya. The survey captured feedback from 53 product truck operators arriving at the Verpol Plant. The purpose of the survey was to better understand the issue so that Omya, the Community Issue Team, and others concerned about the lost trucks can work together to solve this challenge. The survey provides insight into how truck operators get to the plant and the directions, instructions and tools (such as GPS) that they use to find the plant.

A few of the highlights of that survey included:

- 1) 94% used the correct routes to access the plant;
- 2) For the majority (54%), this was their first time to Verpol;
- 3) Only 34% use GPS; and
- 4) 74% of truck operators arrive from the southern and western direction.

After further review of the existing initiatives, the group discussed additional ideas to solve this issue. A number of suggestions were made and most could be categorized into on the following improvement areas:

- 1) Improve signage to Omya Verpol:
 - Intersection of Kendall Hill Road and U.S. Route 7
 - In Town of Proctor
 - From U. S. Route 4 (exit 6)
 - Intersection of Whipple Hollow Road and Fire Hill Road
 - Clarify East and West Plant entrances
 - Company signs placed more prominently at entrance to the Plant
- 2) Clarify directions to Verpol and ensure communication with carriers:
 - Provide proper directions, instructions and maps to all carriers
 - Ensure customer-organized carriers get the message
 - Request that trucks call into plant for directions 30 miles from the plant
- 3) Enhance lighting at Omya Entrances:
 - Improve East and West Plant entrance lighting
- 4) Miscellaneous:
 - Modifications to web GPS and mapping systems
 - Reflectors along Truck Route

The group discussed next steps on each of these areas with a shared goal of solving the lost truck issue as quickly as possible. Omya will coordinate with Town officials to identify key intersections where they would like improved signage. In concert with Town officials, Omya will propose sign improvements to VTAOT. In turn, VTAOT will work with Omya and the Towns to guide these efforts during their application process and help find a satisfactory conclusion.

III. News, Updates, and Next Steps for Action Items

Other topics briefly updated and discussed were:

Omya Community Issue Team – December 2009 Meeting Meeting Summary

Noise

Omya conducted additional noise analysis during the fall to confirm earlier assessments and identify possible solutions. However, the analysis provided by independent consultant L.G. Copley Associates was not conclusive regarding whether installing noise silencers on Verpol's rooftop will reduce the level of noise transmitted offsite. Therefore, Omya will continue working with the noise consultants to monitor and assess the offsite noise levels.

Other

- Omya held its 9th annual Middlebury Quarry Open House on October 17, 2009 with over 1,100 people attending.
- The Omya in Vermont newsletter was released on November 25, 2009
- Omya employees donated over 750 pounds of food in November for the Pittsford Food Shelf.
- Omya is a sponsor of the Gift of Life Marathon Blood Drive, December 22, 2009 at the Paramount Theatre in Rutland.

Next Steps

1. Continue working to improve signage with assistance from Towns, Rutland Region Transportation Council, VTAOT and Travel Information Council as necessary.
2. Continue communication efforts to clarify directions with Carriers via phone, web and written correspondence.
3. Place "Florence Truck Route" sign at Kendall Hill Road and U.S. Route 7 intersection.
4. Place "Florence Truck Route" closer to Fire Hill Road and Whipple Hollow Road intersection.
5. Continue noise monitoring and assessment.

IV. Wrap-Up

The tentative date for the next Issue Team meeting is Thursday, March 25, 2010 at Omya's Verpol Plant in Florence. The final date will be confirmed.