

Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

Minutes of November 20, 2014, Meeting

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Conference Room C
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, California

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeanne Biehler, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
Bahman Hajialiakbar, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Betsey Landis, Environmental Organization Representative
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative
Christopher Salomon, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

OTHERS PRESENT:

Russell Bukoff, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Joyce Fang, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Patrick Holland, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition/Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council
Jason W. Jones, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Ralph Kroy, North Valley Coalition/ Granada Hills North Neighborhood Council
Karlo Manalo, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Andrea Provenzale, Granada Hills Resident
Edwin Pupka, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Nicholas Sanchez, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Rob Sherman, Republic Services, Inc.
Saeid Shirzadegan, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Michael Stewart, Republic Services, Inc.
Bereket Tadele, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Emiko Thompson, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works
Gerry Villalobos, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health
Ken Zimmer, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER, 2014, MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes of the October 16, 2014, meeting was made by Mr. Chris Salomon. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mike Mohajer, and it passed unanimously.

III. UPDATE ON THE SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Odor Complaints

Mr. Karlo Manalo provided an update on the Sunshine Canyon City/County Landfill odor complaints for the month of October 2014.

During the month of October, a total of 223 complaints were made to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) hotline. In comparison with September, the number of complaints received in October decreased by 26 percent (from 302 to 223 complaints). Compared to October of 2013, the number of complaints this October increased by 27 percent (from 176 to 223 complaints).

Mr. Manalo provided the Subcommittee with [AQMD's odor complaint charts](#) updated through September 2014. Mr. Manalo also distributed the following graphs depicting data pertaining to surface gas emissions, the amount of leachate collected, and the number of odor complaints at the Landfill, which have been updated to include data through October 2014.

- [Surface Gas Emissions and Number of Verified Landfill Gas Odor Complaints](#)
- [Surface Gas Emissions and Number of Odor Complaints](#)
- [Leachate and Number of Odor Complaints](#)

Mr. Manalo commented that the [Surface Gas Emissions and Number of Verified Landfill Gas Odor Complaints](#) graph does not appear to depict a direct correlation between the number of verified landfill gas odor complaints and the number of surface gas exceedances. However, he also noted that the verified landfill gas odor complaints comprised only about 27 percent of the total number of

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complaints reported to the AQMD, with roughly 60 percent of the total number of complaints neither responded to, nor verified, upon investigation by AQMD.

Additionally, Mr. Manalo noted that surface gas monitoring, which is performed at the Landfill one day each month, only represents surface gas conditions on specific dates of inspection and may not necessarily represent surface gas conditions for the entire month. Therefore, based on the available data, the graph may not accurately represent the relationship between surface gas emissions and the number of verified odor complaints.

Mr. Manalo also informed the Subcommittee that on October 22, 2014, the Sunshine Canyon Landfill-Community Advisory Committee sent three separate letters to Republic Services, Inc. (Republic), the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and AQMD. Copies of the letters were then disseminated to the Subcommittee on October 28, 2014. Mr. Manalo reported that the letters to Republic and LAUSD each suggested mitigation be installed at the Van Gogh Elementary School using bio-filter or eco-filter systems to be funded by Republic. The third letter sent to AQMD requested that AQMD notify LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health and Safety when odor complaint calls are received by the AQMD from the Van Gogh Elementary School.

Mr. Manalo also discussed a letter that was sent from Republic to Ms. Gail Farber, Chair of the Task Force, dated October 31, 2014. In the letter, Republic requested Public Works' assistance in obtaining information regarding an alleged natural gas leak detected by the Landfill's odor monitor at the corner of Golden Valley Lane and Constable Avenue in the Mission Tierra neighborhood during the morning of October 6, 2014. This letter was disseminated to the Subcommittee on November 13, 2014. Mr. Manalo mentioned that Public Works staff contacted the Gas Company and was informed by an operations supervisor that the leak was due to a damaged four-inch gas line which was first identified by the Gas Company on July 1, 2014, and repaired on October 9, 2014. The Gas Company received three natural gas odor complaint calls in August pertaining to this leak and another natural gas odor complaint call in September.

Mr. Wayde Hunter commented on Republic's letter in which Republic made statements regarding the possibility of some of the odor complaints received by the AQMD in September may have been attributable to the gas leak as these complaints were made around the same time as the gas leak incident. He added that the gas leak odor was too faint to account for the 134 odor complaints that were made from residents living in the Mission Tierra neighborhood during the month of September.

Mr. Wayde Hunter introduced Ms. Andrea Provenzale, who is a resident of the

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Mission Tierra neighborhood, and who first reported the gas leak odor to the Gas Company. She confirmed Mr. Hunter's statement that the gas leak odor was faint, and stated the Gas Company assured her the leak was not a danger to the residents in the area. Ms. Provenzale also stated that she noticed an increase in odors emanating from the Landfill since 2008 and she could distinguish the difference between landfill and natural gas odors.

Mr. Mike Mohajer made a motion recommending the Task Force send a letter in response to Republic's letter of October 31, 2014, requesting assistance in obtaining information from the Gas Company on the natural gas leak in the Mission Tierra neighborhood. Mr. Salomon seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Report on Mitigation Measures and Efforts by Agencies

Ms. Emiko Thompson provided an update on odor mitigation measures and efforts by the Interagency Working Group (Working Group). At the October 2014 Subcommittee meeting, the Subcommittee requested a written report on measures and efforts by the Working Group agencies to mitigate odors at the Landfill over the past six months. Accordingly, a staff report was disseminated to the Subcommittee on November 13, 2014, summarizing the actions by agencies.

Public Works' Update:

On October 22, 2014, Public Works sent a [letter](#) to Republic requiring additional corrective measures to mitigate odors at the Landfill. These measures, among other things, included modification of the landfill gas management system, measures to prevent surface gas emissions from intermediate cover areas, management of odiferous loads, and monthly reporting of any operational activities or occurrences from which any correlations could potentially be derived as contributory to cumulative odor impacts.

In response to these additional corrective measures, Republic sent a letter to Public Works on November 18, 2014. In the letter, Republic questioned the rationale behind some of the requirements, notably the spacing requirement of vertical gas extraction wells. Republic also requested that these measures be held in abeyance until the AQMD's Supplemental Environmental Project regarding the effectiveness of the landfill's gas collection system has been completed and released. Ms. Thompson commented that Public Works is in the process of preparing a response letter to Republic and plans to meet with representatives of the Landfill.

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AQMD's Update:

Mr. Edwin Pupka, Senior Enforcement Manager for AQMD, conducted a [PowerPoint Presentation](#) on the agency's initiatives toward mitigating odors at the Landfill. He provided a brief history of AQMD's involvement with the Landfill since December 2009, including the issuance of a Stipulated Order for Abatement on April 22, 2010, which was subsequently amended four times by 2013. Mr. Pupka also discussed AQMD's role within the Working Group; the consultant services contract to study the Landfill's gas collection systems and provide recommendations to Republic on odor mitigation measures; a short analysis of the odor complaints at the Landfill since January 2014; an update on the Landfill's gas-to-energy facility; and future steps to be taken by the AQMD.

Mr. Pupka, for clarification purposes, defined the term "nuisance" for the Subcommittee as six or more specific incidents for which the agency has taken a formal enforcement action, and are subject to AQMD's Rule 402 and California Health and Safety Code Section 41700.

Discussion ensued, and Mr. Ralph Kroy commented on Mr. Pupka's description of odors as " fleeting," and that the use of the word " fleeting" is subjective to the individual exposed to the odor. Ms. Provenzale also commented on the increased frequency and duration of odors at the Landfill. Mr. Pupka commented that AQMD inspectors have noticed an increase in the intensity of odors from the Landfill since January 2014. He added that odors reported during the late evening hours were typically landfill gas related, while odors reported during the late-early morning hours were typically trash related.

Ms. Landis commented that the topography of the Landfill is constantly changing and should be considered by AQMD's consultants as a possible means to control the odors at the Landfill that could otherwise be released into the air. However, Mr. Pupka added that the primary focus of AQMD's consultants will be to recommend improvements to the landfill gas collection system.

Mr. Mohajer requested for additional details regarding how a nuisance is formally defined by AQMD. Mr. Pupka informed the Subcommittee of the distinction between what constitutes a public nuisance versus a private nuisance. He reiterated that while a formal public nuisance requires six verified odor complaints from separate complainants of different residences and submission of a formal complaint form, a private nuisance is recognized by AQMD as less than six odor complaints.

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Mr. Pupka also stated that if the verified odor endangers a community's comfort, repose, health, or public safety; and/or causes property damage due to odors, this may also constitute a public nuisance. Ms. Landis inquired whether a demonstrated decline in property value could qualify as public nuisance, as recognized by AQMD. Mr. Pupka responded that he was unaware of any instances in which a decline in property values due to odor complaints, has ever been qualified as a public nuisance.

Mr. Bahman Hajialiakbar inquired into what specific areas of the Landfill the consultants' data analysis would focus on. Mr. Pupka informed the Subcommittee that the consultants were focusing on three specific areas of the Landfill which contain significantly aged material and its effect on the amount of landfill gas generated. Mr. Hajialiakbar inquired into whether the consultants would focus any of their efforts on trash odors, given that 41 percent of the total number of odor complaints was verified as trash odors. Mr. Pupka responded that the consultants' efforts would remain focused on the effectiveness of the landfill gas collection systems to manage landfill gas.

Local Enforcement Agency Update:

Mr. Gerry Villalobos provided an update on the Local Enforcement Agency's (LEA) review of the Interagency Working Group's odor mitigation recommendations of June 2013. He highlighted some of the operational changes that were implemented at the Landfill based on the recommendations developed by the Interagency Working Group. These operational changes, among other things, include the use of negative air pressure systems when installing vertical gas extraction wells and horizontal collectors to contain odors; the installation of misting systems and use of orchard fans to control odors at certain areas of the Landfill; and the immediate handling of treated medical waste loads upon receipt at the Landfill.

Other measures will be discussed when AQMD's study has been completed, including the potential use of funding previously set aside to conduct further research.

Mr. Mohajer inquired into whether the LEA has compiled a list of all the mitigation measures listed in the Landfill's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document to be enforced at the Landfill. Mr. Villalobos commented that the LEA would review the mitigation measures listed within the Landfill's CEQA document and determine which of those measures fall under the purview of the LEA to ensure the Landfill's compliance.

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Mr. Mohajer made a motion to recommend sending a letter from the Task Force to the Director of the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning, and the Director of the City of Los Angeles Planning Department, requesting a response to the Task Force's inquiry regarding efforts by both of the land use agencies to address odor mitigations at the Landfill. Mr. Salomon seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Proposal to Accept Sediment from the Devil's Gate Reservoir Sediment Removal Project

Ms. Thompson informed the Subcommittee that Republic had requested Public Works to look into the feasibility of receiving sediment from Public Works' Flood Control District's sediment removal projects for purposes of supplementing the Landfill's operational needs, including daily cover and revegetation. The Landfill is considering accepting the sediment from the Devil's Gate Reservoir Sediment Removal Project (Project), which consists of native material that has been naturally deposited into the Devil's Gate Reservoir from the San Gabriel Mountains. Public Works is administering a project to remove the sediment that has accumulated in the Devil's Gate Reservoir in order to restore flood control capacity. Ms. Thompson noted that the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Project; however, Sunshine Canyon Landfill was not included among the optional disposal sites listed to receive sediment from this Project.

Mr. Ken Zimmer, from Public Works Water Resources Division, provided a [PowerPoint Presentation](#) outlining the proposed project. Mr. Zimmer informed the Subcommittee that the San Gabriel Mountains are highly erosive which produces large amounts of sediment. He also discussed that as a result of the 2009 Station Fire, which burned approximately 160,000 acres near the Devil's Gate Reservoir, there is nothing to hold back sediment from sliding down the hillsides.

Mr. Zimmer stated that approximately 2.4 million cubic yards of sediment will be removed from the reservoir. Eighty percent of the material is proposed to be trucked to locations in the East San Gabriel Valley. Twenty percent is proposed to be trucked to the San Fernando Valley, namely Sunshine Canyon Landfill, at a rate of about 2,700 tons per day for a period of three to five years. Vegetation cleared from the reservoir will be deposited at the Scholl Canyon Landfill, and trucks transporting the materials will be covered as well as comply with emission standards.

Mr. Mohajer inquired into the specific locations at the Landfill where the sediment will be disposed of. Mr. Zimmer commented that there were several locations at the site where the sediment could be disposed of.

Mr. Hunter expressed disapproval of the Project stating that the Sunshine Canyon Landfill was not identified as a disposal site in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Project, and that the community had not been given an opportunity to provide public comment. He expressed his concerns over the presence of heavy metals within the sediment which may potentially have hazardous effects on nearby residents.

Ms. Landis commented that the Subcommittee could not take action on the proposed project until more information concerning what is contained in the sediment is disclosed. She requested staff to provide this information at a future Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Zimmer commented that an Addendum to the Project's Final EIR will be prepared by Public Works and circulated to the public for comment if Sunshine Canyon Landfill is determined to be a feasible disposal site for this Project. Ms. Landis inquired whether staff would be conferring with the Community Advisory Committee on the Project. Mr. Zimmer answered in the affirmative.

3rd Quarter 2014 Vegetation Report

Due to time constraints, this item was postponed to a future Subcommittee meeting.

IV. DISCUSSION ON FINDING OF CONFORMANCE QUARTERLY REPORTS

Due to time constraints, this item was postponed to a future Subcommittee meeting.

V. OPEN DISCUSSION PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Mohajer requested an update on the Finding of Conformance for the Azusa Land Reclamation Landfill be added to the agenda of the next meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:51 p.m.