

Attachment 5

Poll From May 12, 2005 BNL Community
Advisory Council Meeting

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June 15, 2005

Mr. William Dorsch
LTRA Group Manager
Brookhaven National Laboratory
Bldg. 51
Upton, New York 11973

Dear Mr. Dorsch:

Since the CAC was formed seven years ago as an advisory group to the Laboratory's Director, the members have closely followed the cleanup activities. They have had an ongoing interest in the environmental projects and have expressed concern that monitoring and surveillance activities continue.

Members of the CAC were polled during the May 12, 2005 meeting to get feedback on whether or not the Lab provided adequate information on cleanup activities and if they believed they had an effect on cleanup decisions.

The survey is attached for inclusion as an addendum to the Five-Year Review. If you have any questions, or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jeanne D'Ascoli, Manager
Community Relations

/sj

Enclosure:
As stated

Five-Year CERCLA Review

Community Advisory Council Input

May 12, 2005

CAC members were asked to respond to the following questions:

- a. Do you think you have had the opportunity to be adequately informed about Brookhaven Laboratory's cleanup and its progress during your time on the CAC?
- b. Do you believe that the CAC has had an effect on the cleanup? On which projects, and how?

Helga Guthy

Wading River Civic Association

"In my mind there's no question, the Lab has been great. With all the people, with all the information we've had, the time schedules have always been brought to our attention. I can't think of any time that they have not supplied us with whatever information we needed to make a decision.

We haven't always agreed on the CAC about what the effects should be or how it should be done but they certainly have given us again every opportunity and I guess the specific one that comes to mind with me is the Peconic River, I think it was Area B at the time. They were going to do a more aggressive cleanup than was thought was the best thing to do for that area. They did go back and change some of it, and did less and so on in order not to damage as much of the property as they were going to. And the concern of the fish, they went back and did some more studies. So I would have to say that it's been done very well."

Sarah Anker

Community, Health & Environment Coalition

"I agree, I think Brookhaven Lab has done a lot of, has spent a lot of time and even money producing all the information that they have. It can be overwhelming and I think you've made it to where we can understand it, which is really important. So as far as giving the opportunity to be informed I'll give you maybe a B+ because there's always room for improvement.

I think we did have an influence on the Graphite Reactor making you guys go a little faster and that was a big step. And also the Peconic River was a good back and forth of ideas being exchanged. The phragmites that Karen Blumer came in to discuss, the pros and cons with that. And again I think you enlightened us and we enlightened you so I think we worked well together."

James Heil

Town of Brookhaven, Senior Representative

"Yes, I think we have been adequately informed both at the conceptual and on the intricate steps on many of the cleanups. They've been very interesting, very well done. I think once again we've had differences on cleanups and I would hope that we've had some effect on the cleanup. I think we have. I could pinpoint the political, technical, and economic process but I think we have especially on the Peconic and the BGRR."

Graham Campbell

Brookhaven Retired Employees Association

“Yes, I think that the Lab has done an excellent job in keeping us informed about the progress of the cleanup and the design of the cleanup before hand.

I believe we have had an impact (tape changed) on the Peconic and groundwater in initially providing a sense of the importance of that in the community and applying a little pressure to get it done. Also, in terms of shaping in a smaller way, various things that happened in the cleanup. I’m thinking of some of the offsite work that the Lab was open to feedback from us on and I think modified plans in conjunction with that.”

Rita Biss

Lake Panamoka Civic Association

“I think that we have been adequately informed. What I guess has bothered me is many times things take so long. You seem to come to a conclusion and then a year or a year and a half later suddenly they’re starting to work on it. I guess Peconic River is one these where that whole discussion must have gone on for two or three years. You talked about doing different things and then you wouldn’t do anything for six months or a year. Granted, it’s difficult to work during the winter. But I have found coming here has been very interesting. We try to help, there’s many different ideas coming up which I think helps the Lab.”

David Sprintzen

Long Island Progressive Coalition

“No. 1, Yes.

No. 2, Peconic, Graphite Reactor, the groundwater cleanup, and increased funding to speed up the cleanup. So the answer’s Yes, I think it has been a remarkably successful process and I certainly appreciate the way the Lab has been providing responses and it’s been constructive.”

Don Garber

Affiliated Brookhaven Civic Organizations

“Definitely yes. First of all I now know more on numerous topics that I never ever thought I would. I also want to very much compliment the Laboratory in briefing us in a timely way as the decision process was developing. It was very refreshing and reinforced. I think we were more than well briefed during the various, numerous cleanup processes.

Do I believe the CAC had an effect on the cleanup? Yes I do. While I may not have been enthusiastic on many of the options, there was obviously controversy amongst us. I think that ultimately where the CAC came down had to help. We should also remember that there was also an initiative where the CAC actually tried and was successful in getting more money for the cleanups. So it has been extremely successful, it’s been a model for interaction between the Laboratory and the CAC.”

James McLoughlin

Suffolk County Fire, Rescue, and Emergency

“Yes, absolutely, they kept us informed on the cleanup operations.

On the second question do I believe that the CAC has had an effect on the cleanup? Yes, I do. The Lab has always been sensitive to the concerns of the CAC on the cleanup projects.

They've always listened to our concerns and taken them into account and that was certainly so with the Peconic River and some of the other projects."

Jean Jordan-Sweet

National Synchrotron Light Source Users

"A resounding yes. I think Brookhaven has just put great effort into investing a lot of resources into educating the CAC. Not only with BNL people, but with outside speakers as well and documentation, and web postings, and you name it, everything. It's been very impressive. And in the opposite direction, I think it says a lot that the Lab has been very good about taking everything that's been said around this table, not just things that we've come to consensus on and written letters of recommendation about but everything that everybody says around this table is listened to by the Lab and I think that's impressive.

And as far as impact on cleanups, I wanted to mention getting the funding four years ago was important and the other two projects that we had a lot of impact on were groundwater, the Peconic River, and the BGRR."

Michael Giacomaro

East Yaphank Civic Association

"The first question, well to the point of overkill I believe most of the time. More information that you didn't have idea that you really wanted to know. All questions were answered and some were even taken further to analyze all the aspects of the question so that you'd have the appropriate answer. So definitely, the Laboratory analyzes everything and gives you more than you need.

As far as do you believe that we had an effect? There have been times when we have had an effect on the cleanup especially with all the alternatives that are usually put out there that we're able to look at. The one instance that I have, that the Lab, I should say DOE didn't necessarily agree with was the Magothy cleanup, but still they looked at what we had to say. The other one of course was the Peconic River and we did have some thoughts on the cleanup there and were listened to. So yes!"

Robert Conklin

Town of Riverhead

At the onset of the Peconic River sediment removal and restoration, public meetings were held in many communities. Most of the decision making process was presented to the CAC at monthly meetings. A work group was formed that met frequently to address the then current issues and answer individual questions. Many excursions to the impacted sites were arranged.

If a person was interested and willing to put in the time and effort, one would have to say that we were offered a superlative opportunity to interact with the ongoing process.

As the path forward in the process became clear, the working group was phased out, the CAC discussions became less frequent and site visitations less numerous. However, any individual who wanted questions answered was afforded every opportunity. At this point, after many years of discussions and presentations, the CAC might have reached its saturation point with the Peconic River. The important offsite work in Robert Cushman Murphy County Park was not given a strong emphasis.

The dismantling of the BGRR took a similar course, frequent updates to CAC, a working group, and visitations but with the crucial core removal at hand, we have been given little information on the prospective process.

The OU III groundwater remediation had frequent CAC presentations and we were aware of the issues and process.

Did we have an effect on the cleanup? On the Peconic Project, from the CAC, there were very diverse opinions presented on most topics. Consensus was difficult to reach. I am sure that regulators and Lab authorities listened carefully to the public opinions expressed but the effect of these on the final outcome is questionable. For example: we have little knowledge that considerably greater quantities of smartweed were added to the river in former banded sunfish habitats. Will the restored habitat be adequate for sunfish survival? Has the evasive plant issues really been addressed? The pilot project would indicate that this is questionable.

The BGRR project did not involve as much of the unknown of Mother Nature's ecology. It was more a matter of degree of contaminant removal. The Lab authorities and regulators have gone to the wall to satisfy the most stringent public opinions. The CAC seemed to have a more united front and hence, a more potent effect. Final determinations wait in the wings.

Groundwater issues being long term, ongoing, and having limited technologies to apply to projects were less contentious. The CAC expressed a strong hand toward a timely and complete as possible contaminant removal. It would seem that Lab officials are moving in this direction.

Mark Walker

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers – Local 2230

Ok, part one, absolutely! It's hard to go last, everyone's already said everything. The Lab has been very forthcoming. I feel very informed.

Part two, the CAC has had a tremendous effect on the cleanup. I think back to the earlier days of the accelerated cleanup, I think that was a landmark of community involvement in an institution like this. I think that was just tremendous. The work that was done for the input for the reactor cleanup, the groundwater cleanup, the siting of different things having to do with the groundwater cleanup as far as where it was going to land outside in the community and what side of the street would it go down. I think those are all important things that we did. Just to close I'd like to say that I've been very proud to be a member of this organization and the work that's been done and the commitment by the people that are around here. Thank you all."

Submitted by email:

George Proios

Environmental Economic Roundtable

Since I am unable to make the Thursday meeting, I did want to participate in the survey.

1. YES

2. YES- Positive impact; although I feel the lab at times has been too quick to acquiesce to a small number of vocal activists at the expense of good science. That makes future decisions more difficult to make based on facts. We already have a President who makes decisions not based on facts. We can't afford to have scientists as well, caving in to public pressure or the fight is truly lost.

The Peconic River cleanup has dragged out for several years due to CAC issues and comments. My suggestion to use the guzzler was given due consideration- bio-remediation could have been discounted at the very beginning. My own internal dispute with the County

Health Department over how much damage we do to pristine wetlands for a few micrograms of contaminant (that in all likelihood posed absolutely no threat to humans or wildlife) was somewhat resolved with a compromise plan.

I believe the decision to dismantle the bio-shield of the BGRR is a decision everyone will come to regret!! This is one time when I hope I am wrong.

John Hall

Peconic River Sportsmen's Club

Question 2A, my answer is Yes...I had every opportunity to be informed about BNL cleanups and its progress. I was given every opportunity to visit any on site or off site location to view the progress taking place. BNL could not have been more cooperative towards myself, the Peconic River Sportsmen's Club (PRSC) Board of Directors, and the PRSC environmental lawyers. In the off site locations I have been present without an appointment and have been given every courtesy by cleanup personnel and BNL staff.

Question 2B, my answer is "no", which ones? All of them.

Jean Mannhaupt

NEAR (Neighbors Expecting Accountability & Remediation)

2 a: Yes, I am confident and assured I have been adequately informed and kept abreast of all cleanup policies and procedures as well as changes. The tangible results of our progress are in effect and can be readily pointed out.

2b: Our effect has been on groundwater treatment, soils, air quality, tighter, more proactive monitoring controls, overlapping site review controls and aggressive community involvement planning.

Ed Kaplan

Friends of Brookhaven

a. BNL has done an incredibly good job of keeping the CAC informed at each step in the remediation process for each operable unit. I can think of no instance where the CAC's requests for information have not been handled expeditiously and in great detail. However, there have been instances where cleanup activities seem to have begun, or would soon start, and where CAC members have felt that they were not given sufficient lead time for their input.

b. The CAC's input has been carefully considered by BNL for each OU. In doing so, I believe that BNL and the CAC have been able to accommodate each other's needs and concerns. For example, during very early discussions of the Peconic River cleanup the CAC requested that several pilot studies be done to better understand the range of potential remediation technologies, and to determine whether proposed revegetation plans were optimal. This led to several pilot studies that shed light on technologies that really could not accomplish the required cleanup, to revegetation activities that could help prevent invasive species, and to ways in which remediation contractors could mitigate the effects of their heavy equipment on the BNL environment.

Anthony Graves

Town of Brookhaven

a. Yes, it is my feeling that BNL has done a fine job of informing the CAC regarding cleanup activities. The staff expertise that BNL has provided to the CAC has been very effective in enabling CAC members to navigate and understand the complex decision making processes that culminate in plans for cleanup of the various Operable Units at BNL. Further, when incidents occur that may affect the community, or be reported in the media, or both, BNL has

done a good job of informing the CAC. This has had the effect of facilitating communication between BNL and the surrounding communities.

b. Yes, I believe the CAC has had an effect on the cleanup. The Peconic River cleanup incorporated suggestions from the CAC to salvage native plants and replant them in the cleanup areas. This addressed a concern that local genotypes be used as much as possible. Also in the cleanup of the Peconic River suggestions for rescuing native wildlife uncovered during cleanup operations were taken by BNL and implemented by the contractor.

Regarding the cleanup of the Brookhaven Graphite Research Reactor I believe the decision to remove rather than entomb large portions of the reactor's components was a direct result of input from the CAC and CAC member organizations.

It is my opinion that the CAC also was instrumental in securing fast-track cleanup funds for BNL, that the CAC had an effect on the standards to which the cleanup was specified, and on post-cleanup monitoring operations.

Tom Talbot

Longwood Alliance

a. I was provided with numerous opportunities to learn about, at CAC meetings, additional CAC work group sessions, as well as several field trips to the affected sites. One on one consultations with BNL personnel were available to discuss and respond to specific concerns and issues by individual CAC members.

b. There is no doubt in my mind that the CAC played an active role in affecting the scope and process employed in several site clean-up efforts.

Peconic River: The CAC was instrumental in the decisions related to which processes were to be employed to perform the clean-ups and to the levels the clean-ups were to achieve. Additionally, the CAC actively participated in the scope and form of the post clean-up restoration program.

BGRR: The CAC had a major role in affecting the overall scope of this clean-up activity. At a specially convened session, the CAC presented its views directly to local elected officials. The CAC was opposed to the original plan of a partial clean-up and actively supported an accelerated effort which ultimately became the approved plan.

Adrienne Esposito

Citizens Campaign for the Environment

a. YES.

b. YES, on all projects except the recent changes to the OUIII ROD which extended the clean up time for strontium 90 in the upper glacial and VOCs in the Magothy.

Iqbal Chaudhary

Science & Technology

A-1. Yes I do think that I have had the opportunity over the last few months to be well informed about the BNL's program and progress on cleanup. However given the fact that I joined the CAC only a few months ago and did not have the opportunity of first hand familiarization with what went on in the earlier years I still feel somewhat handicapped particularly when discussions get steered into the events and milestones of the past. Moreover I believe if some site visits can be arranged at different stages of the projects' implementation it can greatly enhance the level of

understanding of the scope of the projects, the practicalities of the solutions and the true dimensions of the issues at hand.

A-2. Certainly so. The CAC has been working in close cooperation with the BNL in the flagging of the Environmental issues-be it the risk of radiation from radionuclides that reside within the hence retired research reactor, the pollution of our rivers, harbors, estuaries, and the air, the damage to our pristine environment e.g. the pine barrens, the beaches, and the fish etc. The CAC-BNL partnership has been a model of success for our mutual benefit. My detailed formal comments and suggestions on the proposed Remedial Action Plan for the BGRR were given proper circulation and due consideration. The Long Island Community has derived satisfaction in having a voice that is being heard and respected. However the cleanup projects probably suffer from lack of speed e.g. the Peconic River cleanup has perhaps dragged for too long. The successful implementation of the recently started project-Remediation of Nuclear Contamination at the decommissioned BGRR site is a tremendous challenge and it is obviously the monstrous project to watch with fingers crossed. CAC can hope to continuously weigh in the maintenance of safeguards during the period of planned and approved remedial actions. Admittedly the DOE/BNL management has done their best to assist the CAC members understand the issues, encouraged them to contribute ideas to help in decision making and then displayed significant amount of respect and accommodation to the views and recommendations of the CAC members. All this is very healthy and assuring.

Submitted at the June 9, 2005 CAC meeting:

Barbara Henigin

Longwood Central School District

1. BNL has done an excellent job in keeping the CAC informed about their cleanup progress. With the detail and scope of Brookhaven's presentations I feel that I am more than adequately informed on these matters.
2. The CAC has had an effect on the cleanup projects here at BNL. The CAC has had a direct impact on the Peconic River cleanup project, with many of our members actually being involved in site visits and evaluations. The CAC was also actively involved in the discussion and recommendations for the various cleanup models for these operations. By being part of the CAC I believe that BNL is working for the best interest of the community while still maintaining the integrity of the Laboratory.