Raymark Bulletin #36

February 2001

Raymark Advisory Committee

This bulletin discusses the Raymark Advisory Committee: the local advisory group organized by the Town of Stratford to assist in cleanup decisions for the Raymark Superfund Site

Introduction

This fact sheet provides details on the Raymark Advisory Committee (RAC) that was established by the Stratford Town Council in June 2000. The Town Council established the group of approximately 20 residents and business owners to ensure the citizens of Stratford meaningful input into the cleanup decisions at the Raymark Superfund Site.

EPA proposed cleanup options for the Shore Road area in 1999. These proposals were not well received by the residents of the Town of Stratford. Based on resistance to its proposed cleanup options, EPA withdrew its clean-up plan for the Shore Road area and for all other areas throughout town that are contaminated with Raymark wastes. EPA has subsequently completely re-started the development of all cleanup options at all locations throughout Stratford, this time with specific input from the Town of Stratford. This input will be through the RAC.

Membership Terms

Each committee member has been appointed by the Town Council and has agreed to serve for a two-year term concurrent with the term of the Town Council. Each member has also agreed to attend all regularly scheduled monthly meetings and participate in the decision-making processes by preparing material prior to attending the meetings. Minutes are taken at each meeting by the facilitator of the group and are available at the Town Hall for review. All meetings are open to the public; however, the public must be recognized by the facilitator in order to speak. There are currently a few openings on the RAC and if you have an interest in serving, please contact Elaine O'Keefe at the Stratford Health Department at (203) 385-4090.

Membership Goals of the RAC

The Town Council sought to establish a broad-based membership to serve on the committee. The RAC members are charged with ensuring that the Superfund cleanup process addresses the many individual concerns within the Town, reconciling the collective interests of all Stratford residents, and ensuring the well being and future of the Stratford community. The RAC will periodically address the Town Council meetings to provide updates on the RAC progress. These meetings are publicized for all to attend.

The Town Council views the RAC as a forum that provides for an on-going dialog with members of the Stratford community, Town officials, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP), and other concerned parties interested in the Raymark cleanup. This forum allows the Town to have an active voice in the on-going work within the Town. The RAC will provide comments on documents developed on site investigations, initial cleanup strategies, upcoming fieldwork events, and public relations information. The committee will receive the documents and provide comments to EPA on behalf of the Town. All cleanup plans and options will be studied by the RAC prior to any cleanup decisions being proposed by EPA. This will ensure that the cleanup options meet the needs of the Town.

Government Role in the RAC

In return, EPA has pledged to honor its relationship with the RAC and ensure that documents are provided to the RAC for their review, oftentimes prior to public release. EPA will be acknowledging the RAC comments in all future decisions made on the Raymark Superfund cleanup activities. EPA is deeply committed to making the RAC relationship meaningful and productive in developing solutions for the cleanup of the Raymark site. This will ensure that the cleanup decisions are amenable to the citizens of Stratford.

EPA, CTDEP, and the Stratford Health Department have been attending each meeting as a resource for the group to call upon as needed. No government agencies are members of the committee. Committee members can contact government agencies for clarification on materials under review, or to preview upcoming actions.

RAC Meetings

To date, there have been approximately 10 RAC meetings held over the past 8 months. These meetings have been used to gather the technical information about health studies, contamination of the soil, groundwater, sediments, and air, and to understand the regulatory framework of the project. Members of the RAC have had opportunities to ask questions and to develop a common base of knowledge about the project.

RAC Consultant Hired

Armed with this background information, the RAC successfully requested and received funding from EPA to hire a technical consultant to assist in document review and decision making. The RAC recently selected Geo Insight from Londonderry, N.H. as its independent consultant. This technical engineering consulting firm will be assisting the RAC in reviewing the enormous volume of material that is currently available. The RAC, and now its consultant, are currently reviewing Remedial Investigations and potential remedial alternatives for the various operable units that comprise the Raymark Superfund site. Copies of these documents are available for the public to review in the Stratford Public Library.

Who should you contact or more information?

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