

ROCKY FLATS CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES OF WORK SESSION

May 7, 1998

FACILITATOR: Ken Korkia, RFCAB Board/Staff Coordinator

Mary Harlow called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Aluisi, Susan Barron, Tom Davidson, Eugene DeMayo, Tom Gallegos, Mary Harlow, Victor Holm, Bob Kanick, David Navarro, Linda Sikkema / Steve Gunderson, Joe Legare, Tim Rehder

BOARD / EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Clark, Jim Kinsinger, Beverly Lyne, Tom Marshall / Jeremy Karpatkin

PUBLIC / OBSERVERS PRESENT: Kenneth Werth (citizen); Richard Wahl (Jeffco Community Coalition); Russell McCallister (RFFO); Chuck and Gloria Barrick (Plainview); John Corsi (K-H); Will Neff (RFLII); Carol Lyons (City of Arvada); John Rampe (DOE); Mariane Anderson (DOE); Jack Hoopes (K-H); Pat Etchart (DOE); Ken Korkia (CAB staff); Erin Rogers (CAB staff); Deb Thompson (CAB staff); Brady Wilson (CAB staff)

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Comment: Richard Wahl: I work with some residents in Coal Creek and served as a correspondent for the Jefferson County Communities Coalition, which contains 11 homeowner community groups. Mr. Wahl read from a letter from three of those communities located close to Rocky Flats. This letter addressed the work of the Industrial Area Transition Task Force and the alternatives offered by the Task Force. The letter notes that these communities cannot support any of those alternatives for commercial or industrial reuse of buildings within the industrial area or the buffer zone. A copy of the letter is available at the CAB office as part of the May 7 meeting documents.

Comment: Kenneth Werth: I want to know if there will be a national discussion on the nuclear waste issue?

Response: Joe Legare: The most recent information I have on the national dialogue, although it is called something different now, is that the national League of Women Voters is sponsoring along with DOE two sessions, one in San Diego in mid-June and one in Chicago at the end of June to discuss transportation and waste disposal issues. Ken Korkia: Mary Davis Hamlin has information on that she can share with you.

Comment: Gloria Barrick: I signed the letter Mr. Wahl discussed with you. We live about two miles west of the plant, and my husband worked at the plant for 39 years. The letter expresses our concerns. We appreciate this opportunity for you to review our interests. We particularly like anything that will support this area, the wildlife issues and preservation of the area. There is a herd of 52 elk in our yard, and it would be nice if we could get some access area to help the wildlife in this general area.

Comment: Will Neff: I'm the Community Reuse Program Manager for RFLII and the Project Manager for the Industrial Area Transition Task Force. I'm not saying this in response to any particular comment this evening, but I do want to point out that the Industrial Area Transition Task Force's decision making process is by consensus, therefore if one member withholds their agreement on any particular proposal, that proposal is considered to not have achieved consensus and it is my understanding that it will not be presented in the final report. The second thing I'd like to state for the record is that I have been involved with the Task Force since about August 1997, and have been to all the meetings, and the Task Force members have been civil with each other and have not made any disparaging or dismissive remarks about their individual opinions, each other's opinions, or the opinions of the public.

UPDATE FROM THE DEFENSE NUCLEAR FACILITIES SAFETY BOARD

(Mark Sautman, DNFSB): Mark discussed current Rocky Flats issues that the Board is tracking:

- The Board visited Rocky Flats in January, and most of the discussions focused on plutonium stabilization.
- DNFSB has issued its annual report, and copies are available in the public reading rooms.
- The Board has a home page on the web (www.dnfsb.gov) which includes copies of all the weekly site representative reports, staff visits, and Board correspondence relating to all the sites in the complex.
- Plutonium residues: There has been a lot of reclassification of the risks associated with those, along with the processing needs and milestones. There have been more than 800 residue samples inspected and which have undergone significant amounts of characterization. In many cases they have found the actual residue hazards were lower than expected, and milestones have been modified accordingly.
- Plutonium Stabilization and Packaging System: Has been undergoing demonstrations, and oversight will be increased as it gets closer to installation at

Rocky Flats.

- There has been discussion of accelerating plutonium shipments from Rocky Flats to Savannah River. DNFSB has been reviewing the potential safety impacts of accelerated shipments.
- In Building 771, they have begun tapping and draining the holdup solutions in the various piping and tanks there. New hazards have been discovered, for example some of the lines have been found to contain hydrogen gas and nitrogen oxides. Issues about controlling those hazards are being reviewed by DNFSB.
- Glovebox removal has begun in Building 779. These contain plutonium and beryllium, and those activities call for DNFSB oversight.
- The Board is overseeing the qualifications for the shift managers and shift technical advisors in all the plutonium buildings. The Board sits on the oral boards to help ensure the candidates are more qualified.
- Emergency preparedness: DNFSB is focusing its oversight on the performance at the Incident Command and Hazards Assessment Center.
- Readiness reviews: DNFSB provides oversight to make sure these are performed adequately.
- The Board has also been reviewing and providing oversight into the following complex-wide issues: 1) integration of plutonium stabilization and disposition activities; 2) Integrated Safety Management System implementation; 3) High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter degradation; and 4) DOE resolution of assessment findings.

**UPDATE ON DOE RESPONSE TO CAB RECOMMENDATION 98-2;
FORMATION OF INTEGRATED MONITORING PLAN DATA PRESENTATION
WORKING SUBGROUP:**

Following CAB's recommendation made in February, a subgroup was formed to look at effective communication of environmental data to the public. One FY99 goal for Kaiser-Hill is to upgrade the site's environmental data management systems. This is a RFCA requirement. Common platforms are being put together, so that workers at the site can communicate with one another through a linked system, rather than different types of computers. They are working on upgrading the quality control of the data being input, using more electronic transfer of data and making it faster, and implementing some form of electronic communications with the public. In addition, the web page is being updated to include more information on environmental studies and data, and give the public easy access to such information. Kaiser-Hill is interested in having CAB lead the subgroup.

**PRESENTATION ON ROCKY FLATS SITE STEWARDSHIP PLANNING AND
THE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT POLICY** (John Rampe, DOE):

John presented information on the Natural Resources Management Policy (NRMP) first. This is also a RFCA requirement, a deliverable which is due on September 30, to guide Buffer Zone management policies at the site through its closure. The NRMP deals primarily with the Buffer Zone and resources located within that area. The guiding

philosophy of the document is to maintain resources in the Buffer Zone throughout DOE's stewardship. The first step is to define the resources at the site, and then discuss the standing policy of those issues. An example is water management. What is the interim management of the ponds area going to look like? As the site comes closer to closure, much less water will be draining away from the site. How will they deal with water quality and the effect of a lessened amount of water which was artificially introduced to the site? Another primary issue is threatened and endangered species. How does the community feel about reintroduction of species to the site? Management of vegetation - what about weed control? Should the prairie be burned, or will that mobilize contaminants in the soil? Many issues such as these need to be addressed, and public input is essential. Site personnel have also considered the idea of a National Environmental Research Park at Rocky Flats, which would entail opening up the site for wider academic research on habitats and the uptake of contaminants. The document was released for public comment on April 30, and public comment runs through June 22. The final comment period is expected in late August or early September. Meetings to discuss the document will be held on May 18 in the morning, and May 20 in the evening.

Next John went over preliminary discussions beginning at the site about long-term stewardship. Long-term is defined as after closure of the site. The Rocky Flats Local Impacts Initiative asked the site to convene a discussion on this issue with stakeholders, with the idea of finding out what is on the minds of the public about how to manage the site following its closure. Examples of issues to be discussed include: What does the community expect to be done after closure? How do you ensure no further contamination offsite? Who will be managing the site to maintain anything that may break down? What kind of institutional controls are needed? Discussions are in the early stages. Board members were asked to give their preliminary thoughts and issues to be included as part of the discussion. A timeline will be developed about decision-making based on the final site closure plan.

Q&A / Comment Session:

Question: Victor Holm: The national environmental research park, what kind of restrictions on access would be part of that? Would that include public access?

Answer: John Rampe: As I understand the NRMP, it could include public access for the purpose of research. They would be set up as broad licenses for research activities in the buffer zone. People doing research in the buffer zone would still be subject to general requirements. There are certain areas where access would be excluded, or people would need to use standard safety precautions.

Question: Victor Holm: Does this mean until final closure?

Answer: John Rampe: Yes, it's a DOE designation for DOE property. It would last through closure while DOE owns the site.

Question: Susan Barron: You mentioned burning, and studying uptake. If you don't understand what uptake has already occurred, I have a concern about burning then. Also, can I get information about the phytoremediation study that should have been concluded by now?

Answer: John Rampe: Phytoremediation will be looked at this summer, but we do not yet have a study done. My understanding is we do have some data relative to plutonium in plants. We have some soils data, etc., and I am told we have sufficient data to look at potential exposure scenarios. The question about burning the prairie is more what are people concerned about, but also under which circumstances would people feel comfortable and what are the data needs. I am encouraged by the discussions we've had so far.

Question: Susan Barron: Could we get some information about what uptake has already occurred?

Answer: John Rampe: Yes, I think we can get that to you, that should be available.

Question: Mary Harlow: I have a question about the soil erosion that may occur after the burning, has anyone taken that into consideration? The soil out there is pretty fine and tends to blow more easily.

Answer: John Rampe: I don't know that we have. That's an issue to discuss. That may help in defining boundaries about where you burn and where you don't.

Question: Kenneth Werth: About burning the prairie, that prairie grass is an anchor holding down the particulates. I question whether the burning would make things worse, especially with the high winds you get out there. The winds would then pick up the particulates and blow them from north to south. It's not a good idea.

Answer: John Rampe: That's a good point. After you burn the prairie, you will get a lot of ash and particulates. I think the question is, how much plutonium is likely to be carried by those, and is that really a significant amount? We do have the tallgrass prairie which is virtually extinct elsewhere in North America. So it's a matter of balancing natural resource issues.

Comment: Tim Rehder: If the controlled burns aren't done, we're not decreasing the fuel load in that prairie and we could have wildfires that we're not going to be able to control. That's a concern that's not getting enough discussion.

List of issues CAB would like to see addressed regarding NRMP and stewardship:

- Site characterization
- Weed issues, etc. - complicated - will the site be sustainable?
- Budget shortfalls, environmental remediation questions - when will the site close?
- More information on herbicides
- Clearer public involvement plan
- What assumptions should be made about long-term stewardship in the near-term?
- Who should manage the site and what should be the reuse?
- Uptake, burns, stewardship - site has been unresponsive so far - what does it take?
- Tough situations - closure/cleanup - continued government involvement
- Approach is backwards
- When will the site close?

RECOMMENDATION ON SITE REUSE(Victor Holm): The D&D / Closure Focus Group drafted a recommendation for the Board to approve on site reuse. The recommendation follows up on recommendations made by the Future Site Use Working Group in 1995, and the Industrial Area Transition Task Force's current work on reuse strategies. After much discussion, the Board was unable to reach consensus on wording in the recommendation, and wanted the focus group to continue to work on the recommendation. Board members were asked to give feedback to the group on what needs to be changed in the draft recommendation to assist the focus group in drafting a recommendation that everyone can agree on.

Decision: *Send recommendation back to focus group for revision, then back to the Board. APPROVED BY CONSENSUS.*

CAB OFFICER ELECTIONS: Elections were slated for April; however, the meeting was canceled due to inclement weather. A proposal was brought from the Executive Committee to the Board, asking to postpone elections until the November meeting. Because CAB is at an all-time low number of members, the Executive Committee felt it may be wise to wait until more members are added to CAB before electing new officers. Most Board members agreed with this strategy. The 1998 elections will now be held in November.

Decision: *Postpone officer elections until November 1998 Board meeting. APPROVED WITH THREE ABSTENTIONS.*

CAB OFFICER ELECTIONS: A request was made to amend CAB's bylaws to allow for absentee and/or mail-in ballots. Some members thought this was acceptable, and others thought members who wished to vote must be present at the meeting when

elections are held. No agreement was reached.

Decision: *Because of the lack of attendance at the meeting, the issue of amending the bylaws to allow for mail-in and/or absentee ballots was tabled at this time. APPROVED BY CONSENSUS.*

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Comment: Richard Wahl: I liked a lot of what we heard in the discussions. The staff at RFLII did a good job characterizing the public comments. My statement was about some of the interpretation that members of the committee were giving to the public input. Also, about the Northwest Parkway, we're aware of that. That's another reason to preserve open space in that area. The process for the parkway has its own course through the Denver Regional Council of Governments, and will consider other alternatives. The original Jefferson Center map showed a route east of Rocky Flats. That alignment was roughly on Alkire. There are still fears of contamination there. A study from a few months ago by CDPHE and EPA, stated there are no contamination concerns off the federal site. A Public Service Company pipeline was put down that alignment. So it must be relatively clean on that side. Also, the colors on the map I distributed are not zoning areas. They are called land use categories.

LETTER TO DOE REGARDING NEW TECHNOLOGY (Mary Harlow): The Plutonium Issues Focus Group brought to CAB a draft letter to Jessie Roberson. The letter asks DOE to investigate and consider using a new technology, combined with Global Positioning Satellites, to aid the site in detection and characterization of radioactive contamination. This technology has been used to aid in remediation of plutonium soil contamination at the Johnston Atoll in the South Pacific.

Decision: *Approve letter to DOE regarding new technology options, with revisions made by the Board. APPROVED BY CONSENSUS.*

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON ACCELERATING CLEANUP: PATHS TO CLOSURE (Mary Harlow): The Site Wide Issues/Budget Focus Group prepared a recommendation on the national and site document now called *Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure* (former the Ten Year Plan and 2006 Plan). The recommendation offers the following comments to DOE:

- Time and cost should not be the primary drivers of the plan, but rather risk reduction or elimination. Cleanup and risk reduction activities need to be done well and done safely.
- Current cleanup plans may rely on false assumptions. DOE was asked to plan contingencies for these assumptions, primarily in the areas of waste and nuclear

materials management, and cleanup levels.

- Cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats is complicated and many issues may delay current projections. The 2006/2010 goals the site is striving to achieve may send an unrealistic signal to Congress. DOE was asked to carefully describe the challenging nature of cleanup at the site.
- As DOE relies on questionable offsite options for waste and material disposition, CAB called for a coordinated national process to ensure publicly-acceptable and scientifically-credible decisions are made.

Decision: *Approve comments and recommendations on Accelerating Cleanup: Paths to Closure, with revisions made by the Board. APPROVED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS.*

OUTREACH COMMITTEE - UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES (Erin Rogers):

1. Survey update: CAB's survey of area residents is going well with a good response rate, and the interviewers are enjoying the project as it is something meaningful. A preliminary report with the raw data should be available next week, and the analysis report will be ready a week or two following that.
2. CAB forum: The co-chairs discussed this issue in March. There was some agreement to focus on some of the future land use issues at the forum, and to tie those together. But there was not a final decision. The timeframe is September for the forum. The preliminary vision is similar to the Rocky Flats Summit agendas, with break-out groups and smaller group discussions. CAB members were asked to volunteer to serve on a planning committee to make arrangements for the forum. The plan is to first come to agreement on a topic, and come back to the Board next month with a recommendation for a topic. Next would be developing an agenda and setting goals for the forum, who would be involved, etc.

UPDATE ON SOIL ACTION LEVEL OVERSIGHT PANEL ACTIVITIES (Ken Korkia): CAB is the grant administrator for this project. CAB's current grant was amended to include funds for the Oversight Panel's administrative services at this time. A second amendment to CAB's grant will be prepared in early August, to reflect funds for the technical services review. The RFP for administrative services went out May 1. A bidder's meeting will be held on May 8, and proposals are due on May 14. A contractor will be selected and ready for CAB to approve by the June 4 Board meeting. Following that, the technical services RFP will be completed by the end of May, with distribution the first of June. Contractors will have approximately six weeks to develop proposals, and are due mid-July. The contractor should be selected by mid-August, with CAB approval at its September Board meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Staff promotion: Approve promotion of Erin Rogers to Senior Program Coordinator, with a 3% salary increase.

Votes by mail in April 1998: Items sent out in April to be voted on by mail were confirmed and are now considered official.

NEXT MEETING:

Date: June 4, 1998, 6 - 9:30 p.m.

Location: Westminster City Hall, lower-level Multi-Purpose Room, 4800 West 92nd Avenue, Westminster

Agenda: Future Rocky Flats reuse recommendation; recommendation on Rocky Flats Natural Resource Management Policy; results of community survey; planning for CAB forum; recommendations on changes to Rocky Flats environmental monitoring systems

ACTION ITEM SUMMARY: ASSIGNED TO:

1. Rewrite proposed reuse recommendation and bring back to Board - D&D / Closure Focus Group
2. Revise letter regarding new technology and forward to DOE - Ken Korkia
3. Revise comments on *Accelerating Cleanup* document and forward to DOE - Erin Rogers

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:20 P.M. *

(* Taped transcript of full meeting is available in CAB office.)

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Tom Gallegos, Secretary
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board

The Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board is a community advisory group that reviews and provides recommendations on cleanup plans for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons plant outside of Denver, Colorado.

[Top of Page](#) | [Index of Meeting Minutes](#) | [Home](#)

[Citizens Advisory Board Info](#) | [Rocky Flats Info](#) | [Links](#) | [Feedback & Questions](#)