

Pig's Eye Dump Task Force

Notes for Pig's Eye Dump Task Force Meeting #8

Thursday, February 13, 2025

9:00-11:00 a.m.

Virtual and Lower Level - MPCA 520 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155

Members in Attendance

- Dan Scollan, Water Resources Ecologist, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Sam Paske, Planning Assistant General Manager, Metropolitan Council
- Jimmy Francis, Mayor, City of South Saint Paul
- Bill Sumner, Council Member, City of Newport
- Melanie McMahon, Executive Project Lead – Mayor's Staff, City of Saint Paul
- Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County
- Dave Magnuson, Waste Regulation Supervisor, Dakota County
- Caleb Johnson, Environmental Program Manager, Washington County
- Nathan Wallerstedt, Project Management Branch Chief, Army Corps of Engineers - Saint Paul District
- Pam Anderson, Remediation Division Director, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
- David Bell, Environmental Research Scientist, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

Other Contributors

- Hans Neve, MPCA
- Jenna Roberts, Zan Associates
- Kara Van Lerberghe, Zan Associates
- Megan Ryan, Zan Associates

Presenters

- Hans Neve, MPCA

1. Welcome, introductions, agenda

Hans Neve (MPCA) kicked off the meeting, thanked everyone for being in attendance, introduced himself, and went over the agenda. Task force members and consultants followed by introducing themselves.

2. Re-cap previous meetings and next steps

Hans Neve (MPCA) provided a recap of previous meetings and reviewed the timeline that includes three phases: education, decision-making, and documenting and review. He went over the future land use options, remediation goals, and shared updated maps depicting remediation options.

3. Presentation from Cuyahoga National Park

Chris Davis from Cuyahoga National Park started his presentation by sharing background information on Cuyahoga National Park in Ohio and the Krejci Dump. He shared that the dump was significantly smaller than

Pig's Eye Dump, operated from the 1950's to the 1980's, and included a variety of junk debris including drums of paints, solvents, and miscellaneous garbage. There were six companies that were identified as parties who were responsible for the dumping and funded the cleaning up of the site. The contamination on the site was hauled and stored at a proper landfill. After the waste was removed, the cleanup goals were met, and the site was restored. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) asked why there were certain soil compaction requirements if it they were not the best fit for an ideal restoration and Chris shared that the project was treated as a typical construction project and there were not ecologists or biologists involved when the requirements were set. He shared the importance of having those staff involved early on in the process.

4. Presentation from Met Council on area plans

Mark Lundgren with the Metropolitan Council provided a background on the Metropolitan Council and the communities they serve. He shared information on the wastewater system in the Twin Cities and the role of the recovery facility that is located next to the Pig's Eye Dump. The Met Council has plans to expand the wastewater facility in the future to accommodate growth or enhance services to meet regulatory requirements which will require portions of the land near the current facility. He concluded the presentation by sharing history on the river health and how it has significantly improved after water quality improvements due to the facility. David Bell (MDH) asked if they have a timeline for the expansion and Mark responded that they are ready for expansion and are expecting that new requirements may be coming that would require the facility to grow. Jimmy Francis (City of South St. Paul) asked if they monitored for PFAS and Mark shared they do not and are not currently required to but if there is a regulatory requirement in the future, they will comply.

5. Presentation from City of St. Paul on area plans

Alice Messer and Yasmine Robinson from the City of St. Paul Department of Parks and Recreation presented on future City plans for the area near Pig's Eye Dump. They went over how the Pig's Eye area is zoned and what entities own what areas of land near the dump. The Great River Passage Long Range Plan which was adopted by City Council in 2013 includes high level goals for the floodplain region where Pig's Eye Park is located. Goals in the plan include expanding park access, establishing buffers for natural areas, and improving connections to the lakes and river. Possible improvements to Pig's Eye Park outlined in the long-range plan include improving recreational access through trails, protecting natural resources within the park, and providing nature-based recreation. Current work on the site includes efforts to improve access and signage to the park. Jimmy Francis (City of South St. Paul) asked how often the plan is updated and they shared that if additional funding was available they would take the plan the next level. Caleb Johnson (Washington County) asked how remediation options impact their plans or if their improvements are based on the landfill remaining in place. They shared that this plan is a high-level recommendation for how this area could be an asset to the City's Park System. A member of the public shared that if the waste was removed and the lake was restored, it may align with the goals in the Greater River Passage Long Range Plan. Another member of the public shared that this area is included in a critical corridor plan for wildlife and there are efforts to share a plan for wildlife safety with the City Council. Melanie McMahon (City of St. Paul) responded that those efforts are different from the Pig's Eye Dump Task Force, so she didn't feel comfortable providing comment on them during this meeting. David Bell (MDH) asked where signage would be installed at Pig's Eye Dump. They shared that a sign would be installed at the entrance and there would be some improvements to the parking area.

6. Presentation from Ramsey County on area plans

Scott Yonke is the planning and development director at the parks department in Ramsey County. Scott shared there are two plans related to the Pig's Eye Dump area that he would be providing an overview of, including the Battle Creek Regional Park Long Range Plan and the Pig's Eye Lake Long-Range Plan. The overall goal of the Battle Creek Regional Park Long Range Plan is to improve connectivity and access including connection to the Pig's Eye Lake Park. The Pig's Eye Lake Long Range Plan includes the addition of the Pig's Eye Lake Islands, other natural resource improvements, and additional public protection and safety planning. Hans Neve (MPCA) asked for confirmation that the starting point of those plans assumes that the waste is not relocated, and Scott confirmed. Dan Scollan (DNR) asked if the dump site is part of the regional park and Scott shared that it is not part of the regional park.

7. Public engagement update

Hans Neve (MPCA) shared an update on the public engagement timeline, which includes a survey and video that would be shared with the Task Force for review and then the public. After the survey responses are collected, the Task Force will receive a summary of the findings for discussion at the April meeting. The survey includes information on remediation and restoration options and will be shared with community groups and shared through social media. Hans asked if anyone had recommendations for another community event in March. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) asked if they were looking for existing event ideas and Hans confirmed. Jimmy Francis (City of South St. Paul) suggested looking into the State Hockey tournament as many community members attend those games. Hans shared that they want feedback from anyone who is interested in the Pig's Eye Dump, local community, and underserved members who we may have not heard from yet.

8. Task Force discussion

Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) shared that it is helpful to hear all of the parameters and expectations for the site and will be helpful to hear the public input to formulate next steps. She also shared that it would be good to hear more information on how they would target waste removal, concerns about where the waste would go if it was excavated and hauled away, and mechanisms for treating the waste to remove PFAS. Jimmy Francis (City of South St. Paul) added that he would like to hear possible places where the waste could be relocated in a future meeting and hearing more about how the site would be treated. Dave Magnuson (Dakota County) shared that there are only two landfills in the Metro area that could store the waste, both of which are in Dakota County and have limited capacity. Once those landfills are full, waste from the metro area will need to be carried farther away and is harmful for the environment due to greenhouse gas production. Relocating the Pig's Eye Dump waste could take up 25% of the capacity left in these landfills. He added that these are also privately owned, and they may not be interested in accepting the waste from the Pig's Eye Dump. David Bell (MDH) asked what the projected timeline are for the landfills currently and Dave answered that they are projected to close in around 2100 but could close earlier depending on a few factors. Victoria added that landfills produce large amounts of greenhouse gases as well. Dave shared that the other landfill has a projected timeline of about 13 years of space left. Dave added that there is another dump in the Metro area that is also investigating moving the waste to a landfill which would also have a large impact on space left available. Caleb Johnson (Washington County) asked if the cost estimates for each remediation option included where the waste would be relocated to and Hans shared it is a high-level estimate did not take into account the secondary effects that Dave is discussing. Caleb mentioned that barge or rail could be utilized to move the waste for less environmental impact but was unsure about feasibility. Victoria shared that Ramsey and Washington County are moving forward with anaerobic digester to process organic waste that should be considered and may lessen the

reliance on landfills. Caleb shared that it would be helpful to hear about the economic return of some of the remediation and restoration options to understand how it could benefit the community near Pig's Eye Dump. Dan Scollan (DNR) asked for confirmation on where the targeted waste removal would be located within the dump and Hans Neve (MPCA) clarified that the waste would be targeted by location to create space between the waste and water and add a filter. Dave added that the waste would be moved around to better prevent contamination and Hans confirmed. David shared concern that the targeted waste removal option may need to be revisited again in 10-15 years, so if they moved forward with that recommendation, he would want to provide additional follow up steps. Dave added that all landfills are harmful to the environment and may have concerns about effectiveness in the future. He emphasized that he wants to make sure they are considering the regional impact and not only focusing on Pig's Eye. Victoria added that they really haven't done much to address the waste currently, so even the targeted waste removal option is an improvement. Nathan Wallerstedt (Army Corps of Engineers) asked if there is a way to better prevent flood water from penetrating the waste to prevent contamination during floods. Dave Magnuson added that the dig and line remediation option may be the best option to address that concern. Hans added that the filter that would be put in place during the targeted waste removal would help address contamination during flood events.

9. Public comment

A member of the public shared concerns about contaminated water and the impact to the nearby community and that they would like to see efforts to investigate the best place to process and store the waste beyond just moving it to another landfill. They shared additional concerns about the impact to wildlife if the waste stayed in place or if a new landfill was built. Another member of the public shared that they have memories of interacting with the dump when they were young and asked if there was a way to direct the water coming from the site to the Met Council water treatment facility so it could be treated before entering the river. Sam Paske (Metropolitan Council) responded that he is unsure about the feasibility of redirecting the water, but they would be open to exploring that if it was an option. Dave Magnuson (Dakota County) mentioned that leachate from other landfills are treated by the water treatment facility, so if they moved forward with the building a new landfill it would be sent there. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) shared that she is looking into if the anaerobic digester could be utilized for this waste as well. Another member of the public asked if they could look into collaboration with other states along the Mississippi river. Victoria Reinhardt (Ramsey County) added that there is currently an effort before congress called the Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative (MRRRI) to coordinate conservation efforts along the entire river corridor. Another member of the public shared that she understands concerns about landfill capacity but doesn't want the Pig's Eye site restoration to be limited in anticipation of that. Jimmy Francis (City of South St. Paul) commented to add the League of MN Cities to the list of survey distribution.

10. Adjourn

Hans Neve (MPCA) adjourned the meeting.