

Downtown Camas Association – Public Participation in the Georgia-Pacific Mill Site Clean Up Project



Meeting minutes: Community Advisory Group Meeting #3

Thursday, March 10, 2022 | 4 – 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Attendees

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Members:

- Caroline Mercury, Chair
- Leslie Lewallen, City of Camas
- Marty Snell
- April Berlin
- Randal Friedman
- Isaac Dizon
- Commissioner Larry Keister, Port of Camas Washougal (substitute for David Ripp)
- Tim Hein, City of Camas
- Steve Young
- Kalani Cox

Maul Foster & Alongi (MFA) Members:

- Alan Hughes
- Will Henderson
- Emily Hess
- Abbi Russell
- ZZ Lundburg

Downtown Camas Association (DCA) Members:

- Carrie Schulstad, Executive Director

Meeting Purpose and Topics:

Meeting objectives included:

- Review and discuss the Remedial Investigation Work Plan next steps
- Discuss engagement and outreach tactics
- Plan and prepare for May public event
- Discuss next steps
- **Opening:** 4 – 4:15 p.m.
 - Welcome and introductions
 - Agenda review
 - Approve minutes of the Feb. 10, 2022, meeting
 - General Updates
- **Draft Remedial Investigation (RI) Work Plan next steps:** 4:15– 4:25 p.m.

- Updates
- Question and answer
- **Engaging the Camas-Washougal Community:** 4:25 – 4:55 p.m.
 - Public meeting requirements under Ecology Public Participation Grant
 - Review CAG partner toolkit
 - Public input
- **Plan and prepare for May 7 public event:** 5:00 – 5:25 p.m.
 - Communications materials
 - Engagement activity brainstorm
 - Timeline and next steps
- **Next Steps:** 5:25 p.m.
- **Adjourn:** 5:31 p.m.

[The full meeting agenda can be found online.](#)

Meeting Minutes:

Meeting began at 4:05 p.m.

MFA and DCA staff introduced themselves and reviewed the proposed agenda for the meeting. The CAG members approved the agenda.

The CAG members approved the minutes of the Feb. 10, 2022, meeting.

CAG Chair, Caroline Mercury, shares that the CAG's comments have been submitted to the Washington State Department of Ecology and Ecology acknowledged receipt. While they will not be shared with GP in their full form, the CAG's comments will inform and potentially be incorporated into Ecology's responses.

Draft Remedial Investigation (RI) Work Plan next steps: Emily Hess, MFA, reviewed the steps MFA took to incorporate CAG and public feedback in the draft RI Work Plan comment matrix that was submitted to Ecology. The next step is to wait for Ecology's comments and see what was incorporated. Ecology's timeline is unclear, but the DCA and MFA will communicate with Ecology and update the CAG as appropriate. After Ecology provides comments to Georgia-Pacific (GP), GP will address them and incorporate into an updated RI Work Plan, which then must be approved. This process generally takes 12 months, and the resulting work plan is only limited to certain areas of the site.

Chair Mercury asked if there is a prescribed amount of time that GP has to respond to the feedback. Alan Hughes, MFA, responded that it's typically 90 days, which Ecology may request but is not in the Agreed Order.

Engaging the Camas-Washougal Community – Abbi Russell, MFA, led the discussion around community engagement. Under the participation agreement, the DCA is required to hold

at least two public events centered around the Ecology process as well as two “piggy-back” events, or meetings attached to current community events. The CAG is not limited to these four meetings; it can also hold more meetings as long as they fit within budget.

The Public Participation Grant (PPG) that funds this project prioritizes outcomes and equitable engagement; Chair Mercury provided PPG background information to CAG prior to the March 10 meeting. Camas and Washougal meet several priorities, including the Environmental Health Disparities index and income and language markers. The CAG is obligated under the grant to deliver additional resources and information to the entire community, but especially to impacted communities within Camas and Washougal. MFA and DCA are continuing to identify which audiences need focus and how best to reach them.

CAG members discussed relationships and pathways that could lead to beneficial outreach to impacted communities, including the neighborhoods adjacent to the mill as well as those downwind in Washougal (see demographic info). It also includes low-income community members, those who identify as Asian (5% in area around the mill), and those who report low English proficiency.

Chair Mercury suggested reaching communities through religious gatherings and church groups that offer services in languages other than English.

CAG member Kalani Cox asked if MFA/DCA plan to use written materials in other languages and mentioned the NextDoor App as a good resource. Abbi responded that we could create these materials.

CAG member Leslie Lewallen suggested surveying the community and suggests CAG members knock on doors and speaking to community members, namely asking questions about what they care about.

CAG member Randal Friedman echoed that the CAG should have as much direct contact as possible. He mentioned Clark Public Utilities’ maps of assistance programs, and said they had some interesting mapping on economically challenged households. Randal will send Caroline the document of relevant maps.

Abbi mentioned that they could consider bill stuffers in utility bills, as it’s the one bill everyone gets and is a relatively low-cost option. This can also be done online.

CAG member Mark Nickerson suggested using the community center in East Camas, including providing translated materials at the center.

CAG member April Berlin identified that both Camas and Washougal both have local Safeway stores and not many other grocery stores. The DCA/CAG could partner with these stores and set up an information table during high-traffic days (e.g., paydays) to reach a diverse group of people.

CAG member Marty Snell suggested that countywide agencies may have local plug into Camas-Washougal community groups and local people who connect with those groups would be a good audience. There used to be an association of neighborhoods UCAN, which he noted could be targeted because it identified neighborhoods rather than homeowners.

CAG member Isaac Dizon began a discussion around using the library as a resource for materials and to reach community members across income levels. Alan Hughes said that as a

part of the agreed order, GP is required to put the RI Work Plan and reports at the library. Chair Mercury mentioned that the library and DCA have a very strong relationship.

Port of Camas-Washougal Commissioner Larry Keister, who substituted in this meeting for David Ripp, mentioned that when the port was working on the design of its waterfront, they used community activities. The Port focused the direction, then the public could pick from posterboards and would rate which they liked. He suggested lots of visuals and more targeted questions to get more focused answers.

CAG member Kalani Cox suggested using QR codes on materials to save money and be environmentally friendly. The group discussed having multiple options for the community to engage immediately as well as online.

Kalani also suggested including school district events as parents across the area will get information through their kids' schools.

DCA Executive Director Carrie Schulstad recommended very focused in-person work if the CAG chooses to go door-to-door, as this is a time-consuming tactic. She also supported the use of QR codes and highlighted site visits as a measurable as well as an ever-evolving resource.

Review CAG partner toolkit – Abbi Russell, MFA presented the Partner and Community Toolkit, which includes content for use by the CAG and community partners to share information about the process with their networks. The CAG discussed the content and possibilities for use, including NextDoor and community group newsletters.

Public input – Abbi Russell, MFA introduced the topic of preparing for the May 7 DCA Plant Fair and asked the CAG to share when they will need to know from public input to represent community interests. The group reviewed previously identified focus areas for public input.

DCA Executive Director Carrie Schulstad mentioned that visuals are always best and work wonders to give community members a jumping off point.

Chair Mercury reminded the group to avoid the false impression that the CAG and the process are about envisioning what will happen to the GP mill site when operations cease. The CAG does not want operations to stop, nor do they want GP staff to feel disrespected. She wants to ensure that we are managing expectations and that GP is not being left out of the conversation.

CAG member Leslie Lewallen believes this process can look through two lenses at once, one that's focused on the current GP mill operations and one on the potential for the future.

CAG member Marty Snell highlighted the technicality of the material in the RI Work Plan and suggested considering how to present the information to help the community understand it. He also suggested a bibliography that defines acronyms.

Commissioner Keister suggested beginning the question with "if we have the opportunity." The current opportunity right now is a very viable business, but there are opportunities if GP decides to stop work at the site.

CAG member Steve Young said that a timeline that gives folks a sense of length of time for this process and may avoid unrealistic expectations.

CAG member April Berlin suggested creating an infographic with a variety of different boxes; one focused on history, then current use, then clean up areas and potentials for the future.

CAG member Randal Friedman said that part of the excitement about this site is that many community members have not seen what the site looks like. There are miles of shoreline that no one has ever seen. He encouraged the team to explain complicated and technical pieces of this process to help the community understand.

CAG member Isaac Dizon suggested an overall “demystification” of current mill operations to give the community a chance to understand and connect current operations to this process and the future.

DCA Executive Director Carrie Schulstad began the conversation about an interactive timeline of the history of the mill, which would include over 100 years of operation. Kalani echoed her interest in that idea, suggesting using downtown and placing mill history throughout the windows.

CAG member Mark Nickerson suggested the use of the interpretive center at the GP mill property. Caroline explained that it is currently closed, but that she may be able to reach out and begin the conversation about this use with GP.

Plan and prepare for May 7 public event: Will Henderson, MFA explained the proposed activity at the first event and introduced the idea of using a “dot survey” – a display board upon which community members could place a dot sticker to identify their priorities around the cleanup process. MFA staff member will staff the event and he requested that CAG members volunteer for two-hour shifts.

Will presented the goals for this event: introducing community members to the project; demystifying the CAG and the Ecology process; building trust and transparency; and managing expectations around the long cleanup timeline.

CAG members highlighted the following priorities for inclusion on a dot survey:

- The interface between the water and land (the shoreline)
- Future use of the site
- Public access to waterfront and trail
- Products the GP mill produces today
- Contamination of water
- Clean up phasing plan
- Integrating the future of the mill site with existing communities
- Providing the community with a sense of ownership
- An overview of the project area and what areas of the mill property are operating today

Will thanked the CAG for their input and explained further details of the event. MFA will be sending out a poll so that members can sign up for shifts.

CAG members discussed the potential for an in-person CAG meeting. DCA staff said they will consider, and the group agreed to also incorporate virtual and remote options.

Next Steps: Will Henderson, MFA, wrapped up the meeting and went over next steps:

- Plant Fair volunteer poll
- Submit Partner Packet for review by Ecology; finalize and send to CAG members
- Begin developing materials for the Plant Fair and other engagement opportunities
- Next CAG Meeting: May 12, 2022

Meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Sign up for email updates and learn more at: www.downtowncamas.com/camaswamillinfo

Email questions and comments to Caroline Mercury, DCA Past President:
camaswamillinfo@downtowncamas.com

Read and review the draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan:
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?%20csid=15156>