CSO Long Term Control Plan Development
Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting 5
Monday, November 22, 2010
1:00pm

In Attendance: Gary Mercer, CDM; Bob Albright, CDM; Greg Daviero, MPI; Mike Miller, CHA; Deb Shannon, CDRPC; Rocky Ferraro, CDRPC; Garry Nathan, City of Cohoes; Mark Kestner, Town of Brunswick; Linda VonDerHeide, Rensselaer County; Stuart Findlay, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies; Rick Touchette, Town of Coeymans; Rich Lyons, ACSD; Neil Bonesteel, City of Troy; Chretien Voerg, Town of Colonie; Shayne Mitchell, NYSDEC; Andrea Dzierwa, NYSDEC; Henry LaBarba, Town of East Greenbush; Joe Cunniff, CANA; Paul Murphy, City of Watervliet; Sean Ward, Village of Green Island; Tim Murphy, ACSD; Justin Schievelbein, City of Albany; Laura DeGaetano, Albany County WQCC; Nancy Heinzen, Albany County Stormwater Coalition; Dawne Kelly, Town of Schodack; Phil Hansen, Albany Rowing Center; John Lipscomb, Riverkeeper; Tracy Brown, Riverkeeper.

1. Welcome and Introduction

Deb welcomed everyone to the fourth meeting of the Citizens' Advisory Committee. It had been just over a year since the last meeting, but the delay has been productive; time has been taken to reach agreement with DEC on the models.

Everyone introduced themselves to the group.

2. Project Recap

Mike briefly reviewed the activities of the previous four CAC meetings. The first meeting introduced the New York State SPDES permit requirements for CSOs, the planned phasing for the Albany Pool CSO project, and the CAC responsibilities.

The second meeting discussed the plans for Combined Sewer System modeling and the water quality sampling program.

The third meeting looked at the findings of the Receiving Water sampling program, which found the River to be well mixed. Sampling also uncovered higher levels of bacteria than expected in the tributaries that led to the communities undertaking additional sampling in 2009.

The fourth meeting discussed the Combined Sewer System models and the approach that would be used for the model of the Hudson River.

3. Project Update - APJVT

a) 2009 Tributary Sampling Program

A PowerPoint presentation was shown that identified the 16 tributary sampling locations used during July and August 2009. Five dry weather events were sampled, and the geometric means of the Fecal Coliform counts were calculated for each location. The NYS standard for Class C waters requires that the geometric mean of five samples shall not exceed 200 cfu/100ml. Results showed that the Wynants Kill and Poesten Kill were

under the standard but that the other tributaries had exceedances of the standard. While the Patroon Creek continued to have elevated levels of bacteria, the counts were considerably lower than those recorded in 2008 due to the City of Albany and the Albany County Sewer District's efforts to track down and eliminate pollutant sources.

Three wet weather samples were taken at each location which showed that all the tributaries exceeded the bacteria standards; only two samples were under the standard.

CAC members asked whether flow data had been recorded.
Flow data was not recorded. The APJVT used USGS flow meters and extrapolated for load.

b) Receiving Water Quality Model

A PowerPoint presentation was shown that reviewed how the model was developed, including, the upper and lower limits, channel depth, and bacteria inputs taken from the 2008 sampling program. The model was model calibrated using bacteria samples from 2008 and USGS gage data.

Once calibrated, the APJVT used the model to run several possible scenarios, such as disinfection at the wastewater treatment plants, improvement in bacteria levels from the headwaters, and capturing 85% of the CSOs. Model runs showed that the greatest impact to River water quality could be obtained from disinfection at the treatment plants. 85% capture of CSOs without any other changes had no impact on the number of months of bacteria standard exceedances. These runs do not look at dry weather overflows which must be stopped.

CAC members asked what the 10^{th} and 90^{th} percentile storms were in the model runs. The APJVT used 5 years worth of data with multiple storms. Information on the five year period and the levels of storms can be found in the Combined Sewer System Modeling Report on the website: www.cdrpc.org.

Now the APJVT is looking at the issue of floatables controls. The Pool Communities created a map of key recreational areas along the River. 250 foot and 500 foot buffer zones were drawn around these key areas and CSOs within these buffer zones were identified. The Team also reviewed a list of water quality projects that are being undertaken by the communities and sewer districts to improve the collection systems.

CAC members commented that 250 foot and 500 foot buffers seemed unrealistic because when a CSO triggers the floatables become channelized and keep going down river.
The Team responded that the buffer zones were arbitrarily determined but that this was only the early stages of the analysis. During sampling, the Team did not see many floatables. The decision was to focus first on key areas but the Team will also be looking at the frequency of discharges and the volume of discharges in making the final determination of the location of floatables controls. The idea is to locate controls were they will get rid of most of the floatables.

CAC members noted that though it is effective for study purposes, the use of a geomean does not mean that water may be safe for recreational activity on a daily basis. A geomean may indicate acceptable bacteria levels but on a day to day basis the bacteria may be unacceptable, or there may be areas that are bad. The general public needs to be educated on what the geomean is and how this is affected by extremes. On-going testing should be done and some type of swimmability guidelines/warnings should be established and made available to the public.

The Team agreed that the geomean is not perfect, but it is the required analysis. As part of the Demonstrative Approach that will be used, on going water testing will be necessary. A model has been developed in Philadelphia that predicts bacteria levels for target areas to provide warnings for the public.

CAC members were concerned about the tributary sampling results and wanted to know what the neighboring communities were doing to resolve the issues. Dry weather testing is being performed in Albany County.

It was also suggested that the MS4 and CSO activities be coordinated, particularly in light of the contributions by the tributaries. The recommendations should a management strategy that assigns responsibilities to coordinate these efforts.

4 Schedule Update

The Long Term Control Plan has been extended and is now due on June 30, 2011.

A financial analysis has to be undertaken that looks at the costs of the proposed controls and the ability of the communities to cover those costs. A schedule of the proposed projects would be developed and after evaluation, this would be presented to DEC.

5. Next Steps

The CAC was urged to check the website: www.cdrpc.org for CSO project reports, meeting minutes and updates. CAC members should e-mail or call with any questions or concerns rather than wait for more formal meetings. The Communities are moving forward with this project and we want to know of issues upfront so that they can be addressed.

A public meeting will be held in early January. CAC members will receive an e-mail about the meeting with fliers that can be posted or passed to anyone who might be interested in attending. The Public meeting will cover similar material to that presented today.

The next CAC meeting will occur in the spring when we have some control alternatives to discuss.

Meeting adjourned.