

Closure of Hazardous Waste Locations

Public Meeting – December 7, 2022

Questions & Answers

This list shows all questions received in connection with the virtual public meeting held on December 7th to discuss the closure of hazardous waste locations. This responsiveness summary will be made available at <https://www.thebellwetherdistrict.com/community>.

Questions are copied directly as asked with spelling errors corrected.

Q1: I know this is off topic, but could you talk about the zoning bills related to the Hilco site that the Philadelphia City Planning Commission is meeting about this week? Some road widenings around the Northern portion of the site.

A: When the site was initially acquired, we proposed that the northern area of the property be devoted to industrial development. Through our master planning efforts, we have chosen to instead pursue a life science campus in that section of the site. The newly introduced zoning bills ultimately reflect that change.

Q2: Question about the tanks: 1) What substances are/were stored in the tanks? 2) How old are they?

A: These tanks (i.e., those that will be permanently closed during the Hazardous Waste Container storage area closure process) stored spent caustic material and were in service prior to our ownership of the site. We do not know the age of the material accumulated. Following the purchase of the facility, our demolition contractors removed and disposed of the remaining material, and that work is complete.

Q3: Who monitors your monitoring?

A: All sampling procedures and results in connection with the closure of the Hazardous Waste Container storage areas are submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) for review and approval. Our sampling is not considered complete until we have PADEP's final sign-off.

Q4: Where is the dirt that is being removed be moved to and is it going to be traced?

A: There is no plan to move this soil during the Hazardous Waste Container storage area closure process. Currently, we are only sampling soil to send to the laboratory for chemical analysis.

Q5: You're really not done yet, so you're going to come back again when it's clean?

A: Yes, those samples have not been collected yet. We'll get the results back from those samples in 2023.

Q6: I was wondering about the traffic around there because I do a lot of work in the Navy Yard and go to the airport. I think it's just a major opportunity to connect 76 to the airport and wondering if you have any plans for that?

A: We are actively working through a significant traffic improvement study. We're trying to pursue all avenues for potential traffic improvement, though we have not yet evaluated connecting I-76 to the airport.

Q7: Is any of the shallow groundwater beneath the soil samples being sampled?

A: In connection with the Hazardous Waste Container storage area closure process, we will begin with soil sampling and then, based on what the soil sample results indicate, determine the need for groundwater or additional soil sampling. If we have exceedances of standards that indicate the potential for groundwater impact, then we would move on to groundwater sampling if required. Environmental sampling is usually an iterative process. Groundwater sampling is possible, but it's not the starting point. PADEP will oversee this process.

Q8: Have you considered installing a solar farm on the roofs of the planned warehouses that are planned?

A: Yes, we are considering the opportunity to install solar panels on the roofs throughout the industrial campus. Sustainability, resiliency, and green energy are important focal points for our development planning efforts. Solar panels have continually become a popular green energy solution and we are excited to pursue the potential benefits it could provide at The Bellwether District.

Q9: When will [the] revised Master Plan be done? When will the revised traffic study be received?

A: The Bellwether District's master plan has been consistently refined since the conception of the project. To ensure potential traffic improvements are adequate for our future tenants and the surrounding community, we have expended extensive efforts on the Traffic Impact Study of the development at full build-out. We have continued to coordinate our findings and conceptual improvements with the Philadelphia Streets Department, the Philadelphia Planning Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

We have now begun to narrow our focus to the first phases of the Industrial and Life Science campuses. The initial phase of development in the Industrial campus is planned for two buildings totaling approximately 1 million square feet. As future buildings are planned at The Bellwether District, we will continue to refine the Traffic Impact Study.

Q10: What potential uses are being explored for the area south of the Platt Bridge?

A: That area of the site is currently slated for industrial use. The existing wharf and rail in that location provide a number of potential benefits and there are a variety of tenants that we could eventually pursue, but today we remain focused on industrial development in that area.

Q11: Can you give us any more info on what was in the spent caustic? (e.g., what contaminants will you be testing for?)

A: Spent caustic refers to potentially corrosive materials that were used during the refinery process. Soil samples are taken near where the spent caustic tanks were located and will be tested for a site-specific set of constituents which include constituents that are known to be present in other areas of the site and chemicals that are known to have been used at the site. So, it won't only be tested for what may have been present in the spent caustic tanks, but also for a list of constituents that are routinely analyzed and are known to be constituents of soil and groundwater at this site. Those include certain volatile organic compounds like Benzene, certain semi-volatile organic compounds, and metals like lead.

Q12: Will there be Job order to people in [the Greys] ferry community? Will the farm tank be taken down?

A: *We are invested in workforce programs and partnerships that will help prepare local Philadelphians to receive jobs that we create, both now and in the future. Those will include both construction-focused jobs in the near-term and, ultimately, jobs created by our tenants. The tank farm is currently in an idle, non-operational state. We have no immediate plan to demolish the tank farm although we are currently evaluating future redevelopment of that site.*

Q13: How many tanks are there with storage in it? Is true that gas  or heat oil for the house?

A: *The caustic storage area held two tanks. Neither of those tanks would have contained gas or heating oil. Both tanks contained spent caustic which was a product used in the refining process but was not the petroleum or oil itself. The Schuylkill River Tank Farm is currently non-operational, there is no gasoline or heating oil stored at the facility. The facility currently holds a minimal volume of residual fuel across a small number of active static tanks.*

Q14: What collaborations have you taken recently with Evergreen for deep soil testing across the site now that lots of infrastructure has been removed?

A: *Some background: Evergreen is an affiliate of a former owner and operator of the former refinery, Sunoco. Sunoco sold the former refinery to PESRM in September 2012. Evergreen and Sunoco also have cleanup obligations on the site. Evergreen and Sunoco are responsible for contamination in the soil and groundwater that occurred prior to Sunoco's sale of the former refinery in September of 2012. PESRM, the current property owner, is responsible for cleanup of contamination that occurred after its acquisition of the former refinery in 2012. Evergreen and PESRM have ongoing investigations and cleanup activities that are being executed concurrently by the respective party. Sampling has been ongoing at the facility for decades and as the former refinery has been decommissioned and demolished it has created new opportunities for sampling – the permanent closure of these hazardous waste containment areas are an example. Other examples include sampling in connection with the large refinery units and storage tanks that have come down. As those are removed, more soil becomes exposed and accessible for sampling.*

We remain in regular communication and coordination with Evergreen. We are both involved in extensive sampling and remediation at the site.