

Q & A Response: The Bellwether District Public Meeting – November 14, 2023

Below are questions received during The Bellwether District's November 14, 2023 virtual public meeting. During the meeting, development and community-focused updates were provided, with a particular focus on flood mitigation and stormwater management plans. Questions are copied directly as asked.

Q 1: What are these fumes? Are you monitoring them? How is benzene which is odorless and other chemicals being monitored?

A: First and importantly, the safety of our workers and neighbors is paramount. We are currently performing earthwork, which means large amounts of soil is being moved onsite. Before this work could begin, we worked closely with both the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a soil management plan. Our soil management plan, which was approved by PADEP and the EPA in 2020, is available on our [website](#) [under the Environmental tab in the Community section]. This plan gives us the ability to move soil around the site, provided we comply with requirements for sampling, tracking, reporting, and addressing waste materials if encountered during work.

We also have an air monitoring protocol in place during earthwork. Six monitoring stations have been installed at the perimeter of our current work area and continually measure dust and VOC concentrations. Our air monitoring plan detailing our monitoring processes and related action levels is available on our [website](#) [under the Environmental tab in the Community section].

It is also important to note that The Bellwether District is located in an industrial corridor and that surrounding properties may also generate odors. If you observe an odor, we ask that you report it by emailing thebellwetherdistrict@hilcoglobal.com or calling (267) 807-2075.

Q 2: Does any part of the development involve hydrogen power?

A: While we are still finalizing The Bellwether District's energy master plan, we are seeking to employ as many renewable sources of energy as possible. We see hydrogen as an exciting new technology and while still in development, we are excited about its potential future use on our site.

The Bellwether District is part of a regional coalition including Greater Philadelphia, Southern New Jersey, and Delaware developers, landowners, institutions, labor unions and energy producers called MACH2. MACH2 [recently received funding](#) from the Federal US Department of Energy's Hydrogen Hub program and is one of seven hubs moving forward in the department's initiative to further develop and incubate this technology. We will continue to be at the table for those conversations and will look at clean hydrogen and other renewable sources of power as our energy master plan continues to be developed.

Q 3: Can we please post all upcoming permits to the Bellwether to the district website?

A: Yes, we can post approved near-term permits to the BWD website.

Q 4: Is there a master planner for the portion of the project that incorporates green pathways, pedestrian walkways, etc.?

A: We are committed to providing safe and convenient access for bicyclists and pedestrians and making all possible connections to existing public greenways.

CBT is the firm that developed our master plan. That plan incorporates initial concepts for green pathways and pedestrian walkways. We anticipate these types of green connections will exist throughout the site and along the riverfront. As we build out roadways, we're incorporating pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and expect that sidewalks and cycle paths will exist on both sides of any new streets. Notably, all designs are being developed in coordination with and aspects are subject to approval by the Department of Streets, the Department of Planning and Development, and Zoning.

Q 5: Will the bike pedestrian trail in The Bellwether District connect with the existing Schuylkill River trail?

A: HRP is in active discussions with the Schuylkill River Development Corporation (SRDC), the organization developing the Schuylkill River Trail. SRDC's current plan contemplates bringing the trail south along the west side of Schuylkill River and connecting to the Passyunk Avenue Bridge. As we've shared in previous meetings, due to its historic use as an oil refinery, the site is subject to regulatory and third-party restrictions and covenants that currently limit the creation of publicly accessible recreational space. While we need to work through these restrictions in order to provide SRDC the access needed to connect the trail, we're hopeful this can be accomplished in the future.

Q 6: Are there future plans to build residential properties on site?

A: There are no current plans to build residential properties onsite. The site is subject to regulatory and third-party restrictions and covenants that limit certain uses, including residential development.

Q 7: How often is work being stopped when VOCs are detected?

A: Work stoppages to investigate potential environmental conditions and determine if any of our protocols need to be put in place occur periodically in the course of work of this nature. Roughly one week ago we stopped work due to strong odors that were observed onsite until a corrective action plan could be put in place.

Q 8: How many 100-year and 500-year flood events have happened on the property in the last 25 years...100 years? Tell me more about the upcoming steps of your stormwater discharge and permitting process. Describe further replacement plans of wastewater treatment plants.

A: Based on recorded United States Geological Survey StreamStats data at the Fairmount Dam (Gage 01474500), there has only been a single storm event exceeding the peak flow rate for the 100-year storm, which dates back to October 1869.

Regarding upcoming steps related to the discharge permitting process, we previously received one NPDES permit for the industrial campus. We are in the process of receiving a second NPDES permit, specific to the innovation campus, and an amendment to the first permit for the industrial campus. Throughout these processes, we've been coordinating closely with the Philadelphia Water Department, providing applications, calculations, plans, and details to show compliance with their regulations.

Regarding stormwater management and the discharge associated with it, today, there are two somewhat traditional wastewater treatment plants with tanks and settling areas, which settle out any contaminants or substances in runoff. As noted, those were necessary during refining operations that occurred onsite. With the demolition of that infrastructure and halting of refinery operations, those structures are no longer needed. A new, temporary system is currently under development. The new structure was designed and approved by PADEP to solely treat construction water.

Q 9: Who are the MEP Consultants for the lot 15 and 16 vertical developments?

A: For both lots 15 and 16, we have hired what are called "design build firms." A design build firm is a general contractor that manages a design team as part of their scope of work. We are working with Clayco for Lot 15 and ARCO for Lot 16.