

Odor Monitoring Committee Minutes, September 7th, 2011 at St Paul Episcopal Church, 6:30 p.m.
Minutes by: Ron Charles, City of LA Department of Public Works, Public Affairs Office

The purpose of this meeting was to gather all OMC volunteers to define their responsibilities in helping the Echo Park Rehabilitation Team monitor odors as a result of the draining of Echo Park Lake; to explain the odor monitoring process and to provide a project update, especially on the draining schedule.

The participants of this meeting were Mitch O'Farrell (CD 13), Alfred Mata(BOE), Tonya Durrell(PAO), Olga Morales and Ron Charles(Harris & Company). The Odor Monitoring Committee members who attended were: Thomas De Boe, Hoyt Husing, Gloria Sohacki, Cheryl Revkin, Judith Raskin, Shaun Sohacki and Ida Talalla.

Introduction

Mitch O'Farrell welcomed everyone to the first official Odor Monitoring Committee (OMC) meeting. Everyone introduced themselves and Mitch went to briefly explain the Clean Water Bond and its direct relationship to Echo Park Lake Rehabilitation Project.

Project Update

Alfred Mata gave an update on the project and gave insight on what the community should expect in the coming weeks.

- Project is on schedule.
- In all, 89 Red Haired Slider turtles were removed from the lake. The turtles are now with the Department of Animal Services in an animal shelter. After the turtles are examined by a Veterinarian, they will be turned over to the California Tortoise Club and their Tortoise and Turtle Adoption Program.
- Fish removal is ongoing, and so far, 300 fishes have been captured and relocated. Thomas De Foe stated that there was a smell of dead fish in the air on Monday and Tuesday. Alfred responded that the contractor is working with a biologist on-site to ensure that no fish die in the transplanting process. So far, he hasn't seen any dead fish and none were reported. Mitch also stated that during his walk around the lake, he also didn't see any dead fish.
- Lake drainage should be completed in about 2-3 weeks.
- Paving on the pathways have been removed. Other miscellaneous demolition has transpired.

- In order to divert some of the water that was drained directly into the lake back into the storm drain system, the contractor will be repairing the storm drains at the west side of the lake.
- Large pipes are on order and should be delivered in about 2 weeks. New storm pipes will be installed at the east side of the lake.
- Odors will be monitored at every stage of the lake drainage. Daily measurements are taken at the fence line and so far no odors have been detected. The team suspects that hydrogen sulfide will come from the exposed lake bottom. Hydrogen sulfide is one of the by-products of bacteria that breaks down organic matter in the lake's sediment. Method of treatment is to apply lime to the sediment so that it raises the PH levels and neutralize that reaction. Lime does not have any adverse effect on the soil or the areas around the lake.

OMC Function and Reporting Process

Tonya Durrell covered this portion of the meeting. The City has often partnered with the community to be our eyes and ears, and this time the City is asking the community to be our eyes, ears and noses. The members will be out there on the frontline reporting odors back to us and also sharing with other community members how to officially report odors.

Another meeting is tentatively scheduled for sometime in October and members will be properly notified. Once odor complaints have been received by the office, we will work closely with the contractor to ensure that odor mediating measures are in place. When calling, please provide your location and the location of the odors so that the area could be checked for odors. Members should call our hotline number (213 978 0317) or email us at bpw.pao@lacity to report odors. If calling after hours, your call will be routed to a second line and your complaints could be registered there as well. We expect to get back to you by the next business day with our findings, or let you know that your complaint was received and investigated.

Please be as thorough as you can when reporting and try to describe the odors you are smelling. Wait for an update from the team in regards to your complaint and please share the findings with your neighbors and other OMC members.

Olga: The sign in sheet will serve as a commitment to the community that you will follow the steps that were just explained by Tonya.

Q/A

Brian-Is there a site that members could visit that will show the location of detected odors?

Alfred-There will be a log of all odors but uncertain if there will be a site available for the public to access.

Mitch-Wanted the group to know that odors are being monitored daily at the site. Nothing is left to chance, there are equipment in place to monitor odors so that if someone smells any odors, it could be also verified by the monitoring equipment as well.

Alfred-Certified hygienist on site who is taking odors, air sampling, and measuring hydrogen sulfide concentration on a daily basis.

Brian-Will odors expected to peak at a certain time?

Alfred-Once the lake is drained and sediment is handled, that would be the time when more odors are expected. At the October meeting, we will know more accurately when potentially that might occur.

Mitch-The Oversight Committee will meet in November. They will decide then when it's best to meet. Members of the construction staff, project staff, boat house will be present.

Brian-Wanted to know if the team is open to him creating an email address/website that members of the community could send their concerns to.

Tonya-The community is encouraged to send their inquiries and concerns to bpw.pao@lacity.

Alfred-The team will keep a log of all calls/inquiries so it's best to send it directly to us. Also members are encouraged to tell their neighbors about Echoparklake.org for updates on the project.

Thomas De Boe-Who will maintain the outside of the lake?

Alfred-Contractor will add some trash barrels on the outside of the construction zone.

Mitch- The contractor will add some trash barrels and maintain them as well. Also

have encouraged the contractor to connect with Dave Bermudez of the Central City Action Committee in the hopes of subcontracting that service out. Maybe through Central City Action Committee, some local youth could also get involved in the process. Kendrick Okuda was also working on that as well.

Brian-Maybe the maintenance crew who maintains the play area on Bellevue could also clean the outside of the lake.

Alfred- I will look into this.

Gloria-After the church's food drive, recipients would go through their items and discard the undesirables onto the street.

Mitch-The responsible party is the church. Furthermore, we need to get the word out that we need to clean up after ourselves. Otherwise those behaviors will not

change when the park reopens. Might as well start on the public awareness now, so that when the park reopens we won't run into the same problem. Maybe we could add signage with the trash barrels about keeping the community clean.

FYI

Mitch stated that Martin Cox and Gary Lenard are documenting the draining of the lake and have arrangements to get access to the project site when needed. They are creating new archives for the history books!