

**Community Liaison Committee
Minutes**

December 6th, 2018

6:30pm

The End Zone, Pyramid Center, St Marys

Present

St Marys Cement: Kara Terpstra, Vanessa Barr, Jose Soraggi

St Marys Council: Al Strathdee, Marg Luna (sitting in for Jim Craigmile), Brent Kittmer

Community Members: Marvin Arthur, Sylvia Harvey, Marti Lindsay, Rodger Muir, Stewart Grant

MECP: Krysta-Leigh Johnston

1. Welcome

6:30pm Kara welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Paperwork Provided

Minutes from September 7th meeting provided to the public.

Copy of December 6th Community Liaison Committee Meeting Presentation

Copy of the Information Boards set up at the back of the meeting room

3. Welcome and Introductions

Kara welcomed everyone to the table and thanked visitors for joining.

Al Strathdee provided an overview on the format of the CLC meeting. Tonight's meeting varies from standard meetings because we have an open question answer period after the meeting is closed. During the actual CLC meeting public are welcome to observe with no speaking status. They can present questions after the meeting is completed.

Round table introductions. Members of the CLC were seated at the table, and introduced themselves to community members. Note that Jim Craigmile was unable to attend and Marg Luna sat in for him. Also, Al Strathdee is stepping down from the committee and councillor Tony Winters will be the active council member.

Noted that the Perth District Health Unit had planned to attend but was unable to due to weather.

4. Review of September 7th Minutes

Kara provided the copy of the minutes, for time reasons they were not reviewed in this meeting but any changes can be sent to Kara. If members of the public want a copy of the minutes, Kara will email them upon request.

5. Community Complaints

Kara reviewed the process of receiving complaints. Also highlighted was the need to bring complaints directly to the cement plant.

Total number of Year to Date complaints were shared. Also provided the number of Health Concerns brought forward to SMC and the PDHU since the start of 2018. Note that Health Complaints are identified as part of odour complaints so the number of health complaints in a month is a portion of the odour complaints.

Marg Luna asked if SMC had received complaints or data from the emergency room or local doctors. Kara will follow up with the PDHU regarding these complaints.

6. Odour Abatement Plan and Next Steps

At the last two CLC meetings, SMC talked about the plan for testing our raw materials using a sensory approach. SMC reviewed using the olfactometer for sensory analysis. In addition we used an electronic nose to perform analysis on the samples.

SMC completed lab scale testing for determining odour contribution of raw materials. Samples were heated and the gases captured. SMC found highest odour was coming from the limestone samples. Odour in the limestone was not consistent but random with no gradient.

Because limestone is 75-80% of the cement manufacturing process it cannot be substituted. SMC is now focusing efforts on odour dispersion through stack extension. Computer modeling has been validated using CALPUFF. SMC is working on engineering studies and has extension scheduled for 2020.

7. Recent Concerns

1. Email to Cement Plant Nov. 28th

1. What analytic methods and on what frequency do you test your petcoke for sulphur and sulphur compounds and b) can you correlate those compositions with the timing of the odour complaints?
Petcoke samples are collected directly from the kiln fuel silo and tested using Combustion Infrared Detection Technique. This tests for Sulphur, Carbon and Ash. The results of these analysis are stable. In addition we monitor sulphur in our stack emissions which are also stable. Overall there is no correlation between sulphur concentrations and odour complaints.
2. At the June 1st meeting, a consultant company was mentioned (Zorix?). It was said they were trying to help identify the specific raw materials that were causing the odour. What have they done and what have they discovered?
Zorix was the consultant which helped with the sensory analysis using the olfactometer. Their results were consistent with the electronic odour sensor, showing the odour originates from the limestone.
3. How can you increase the efficiency of the built in limestone scrubber to reduce the amount of sulphur in the emissions?
Just to clarify we do not have a separate limestone scrubber, the 'scrubbing' is when the hot gas in the kiln flows counter to the material, therefore by nature the entire system is a scrubber. This is a chemical reaction between Sulphur and Calcium, and by optimizing the process itself we optimize the sulphur reduction.
4. Can you please explain again the role of gypsum in the process, especially as it relates to sulphur?
Gypsum is added to the clinker after the kiln process, and is not heated. So although gypsum contains sulphur, there are no emissions related to gypsum addition.

5. In answering one of my email questions, you said: "We are also chipping away at the variables from a process side and have yet to find the source, so we keep on investigating." Could you please tell me what variables you have investigated from the process side?

There are several variables including Flow, Temperature, Production rate, and Stack Analyzer data. When we receive complaints we look at these for any variations or fluctuations.

6. Could you explain to the public how they can receive copies of the minutes of the past CLC meetings?

We are working on the website and in the mean time I can email them to residents.

2. Email to the Perth District Health Unit Re. Silent Sufferers

At past meetings, we learned that incidences of various health concerns in St. Marys were tracked by the PHU and the numbers were not found to be a concern.

The fact that "silent sufferers" were not included in those numbers was raised in a letter to the editor (July 5) in the local paper. At the September 7 CLC meeting, one part of this concern was addressed in that it is difficult to monitor those who move away. However, the fact that many other people with symptoms do not go to the doctor was not addressed.

My question concerns these "silent sufferers". Does the PHU have any suggestions as to how to systematically research the number of people who experience ill health effects from the Odour, but who do not go to the doctor?

Email response from the PDHU:

If an individual is experiencing health-related symptoms, it is important they follow-up with their own Health Care Provider, who can do a comprehensive assessment, and will have an understanding of the complete medical history of the individual, and can provide tailored guidance.

In addition, with regard to this specific situation in St. Marys, it is important that individuals continue to report odour and other issues to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The MECP ensures compliance with Ambient Air Quality Criteria (AAQC) and may also provide direction with regard to odour abatement. The work of the MECP is assisted by residents who provide valuable information.

With regard to the public health role of monitoring and protecting population health, our May 2018 report described our investigation, which included consideration of many data sources, and concluded that St Marys Cement (SMC) does not pose a health risk as it is operating within standards set out to protect human health and the environment. It also described some of the complexities of assessing odour. Any given substance will have an odour detection threshold that differs for each person, and the fact that an odour is detectable does not mean that levels are harmful. This is further complicated by the fact that multiple substances can be contributing to an odour. Regardless, emitters are expected to follow odour abatement plans so that emissions do not interfere with the enjoyment of adjacent properties.

Further research (such as a survey) intended to try to systematically identify people who may be impacted by emissions and have not sought medical consultation will not add to current knowledge about cement factories and population health. A small health unit cannot match, much less exceed, the rigour or effort of the larger studies done to date on this complex issue, and would be limited by small numbers and confounding factors. Furthermore, such a survey would not add to our understanding of compliance of SMC with current AAQC. Anyone who is experiencing respiratory or other symptoms, whether they suspect the symptoms to be related to SMC or not, is encouraged to see their family doctor. Anyone who is impacted by odours and/or emissions is encouraged to report this to the MECP.

PDHU is further reviewing data on school absenteeism; to see if it adds to our understanding of impacts on students and conditions when symptoms may be exacerbated.

3. Questions for the MECP

1. How do similar weather conditions have different odour?

Krys highlighted that meteorological data and stack data can vary, and that odours can absorb. Also there are weather conditions that are not as easily observed such as atmospheric turbulence.

2. On what did SMC go over the SO₂ limit of 40?

Just to reiterate SMC did not go over the limit. The limit changed in May 2018 and the exceedance happened on November 21st, 2018. Since then no exceedances have occurred. SMCs air quality consultants noted that data analysis shows that SMC is within the limits.

8. Round Table

Al Strathdee asked what kind of media would be going forward in terms of announcing SMCs plans for stack extension etc.

Vanessa highlighted the importance of residents contacting the plant directly.

Sylvia Harvey noted that there were difficulties breathing for some individuals in town. She spoke about Grassy Narrows and the importance to draw parallel from the two towns and to strive for air quality.

Krys Johnston noted that there are reports on the town website regarding stationary monitoring from October 2017 to June 2018. These reports showed the average SO₂ or NO_x are within AAQCs and that the values are similar to values in Southwestern Ontario.

Brent Kittmer highlighted that the reports since last year are available on the town website.

Marti Lindsey commended the transparency of the cement plant and noted that the meeting gave the public the opportunity to present questions in advance and at the meeting.

Stew Grant spoke on the effectiveness of the CLC meetings and highlighted that this is the place for intelligent questions and meaningful data regarding the cement plant. If community members have questions they can come to these meetings and reach out to the committee.

Rodger Muir asked if we had found exactly what happened in the limestone to cause the odour, to which Jose noted that we don't know what but we are taking the dispersion approach now because of the magnitude of our feed.

9. Guest Consultants for the Question and Answer Period

Kara introduced Don Van Galen as the facilitator for the open question/answer period. Also present are Bill Asselstine (VP Sustainability and Cement Sales for SMC), Ruben Plaza (Corporate Environmental Manager for SMC), Robin Manzer (Production Manager for SMC), Walter Pearce (Quality Manager for SMC), Nic Palermo (Quality Control Analyst with SMC), Bridget Mills (Senior Environmental for BCX Environmental Consulting who does air emission consulting for SMC) and Winnie Song (Senior Environmental for BCX Environmental Consulting who does air emission consulting for SMC).

Krysta-Leigh Johnston introduced Rob Wrigley (District Manager, MECP), Emilia Kuisma (Issues and Projects Coordinator, MECP), and Peter Rehbein (Air Quality Analyst, MECP).

10. Closing Remarks

The next meeting will be in March 2019.

11. Open Question Answer Period

Facilitated by Don Van Galen.