

Community Relations Plan

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Access, Hyde Park, VT
January 10, 2018

Overview:

The purpose of the Community Relations Plan (CRP) is to describe the Lamoille County Planning Commission's (LCPC) strategy to address the needs and concerns of Hyde Park's residents potentially affected by the proposed mitigation of environmental contamination present at the proposed Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) trailhead located at Depot Street Extended in Hyde Park, Vermont (the "Site"). The Site is owned by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans), who intend to lease the Site to the Town of Hyde Park for use as the proposed trailhead.

The CRP outlines how LCPC and redevelopment stakeholders have involved, and will continue to involve, affected residents, Town officials and local organizations in the decision-making process regarding the environmental cleanup at the site. The success of the environmental cleanup of the LVRT trailhead property hinges on informed citizen involvement in each step of the cleanup process.

A railyard associated with a nearby railroad depot was formerly present at the Site, which is located in a residential area near the southern margin of the Town of Hyde Park. A former railroad bed was recently improved for use as a recreation path (LVRT), which bisects the Site. There are currently no Site improvements other than the recreation path. Past rail operations have resulted in contamination of surface soil by polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). An engineered barrier will be installed at the Site in areas that will be redeveloped as parking, information kiosk, and picnic areas.

Spokesperson and Information Repository:

The Spokesperson for this project is Seth Jensen, Principal Planner of LCPC and LCPC Project Manager for the LVRT trailhead remediation project.

Mr. Jensen can be contacted at:

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Copies of all environmental assessment reports are located at the LCPC offices at the above address.

Copies of environmental assessment reports are also available in Montpelier, Vermont at the Department of Environmental Conservation (VT DEC), Waste Management and Prevention Division offices.

Site Description and History:

Site Location

The Site is located on approximately 0.7 acres of undeveloped land located between Depot Street Extended and Morey Road at the southern edge of the Town of Hyde Park village.

Site History

A railroad depot was historically located west of the Site and serviced a rail line that extended east to west from St. Johnsbury to Lake Champlain, Vermont. The railroad was built circa 1870 and was used both to convey passenger cars and freight, such as dairy products, timber, limestone, talc, and asbestos from northern Vermont forests and quarries (<http://lvrt.org/history/>). According to the LVRT website, passenger service ceased in 1956, and the rail was purchased by the State of Vermont in 1973, with freight service continuing until 1994 when the railroad was closed. Revitalization of the rail corridor began in 2014 for use as the LVRT recreation path.

Summary of past assessment and remediation work and current status of the threat to public health and the environment:

VTrans conducted a soil assessment in 2015 in anticipation of leasing the Site to the Town of Hyde Park, Vermont for use as a trailhead. Six test pits were excavated at the Site to depths ranging between 18 and 42-inches below ground surface using a backhoe. Soils were screened for the presence of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), composite soil samples were collected from each test pit for metals analyses, and soil samples were collected from three test pits for PAH analysis. No VOCs were detected using field screening methods. Carcinogenic PAHs were present at concentrations exceeding Soil Screening Values established by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VT DEC) for both residential and industrial properties.

Stone Environmental, Inc. conducted a follow-up Site Investigation in April 2017. The objective of the Site Investigation was to assess surface soil quality within the footprint of the proposed trailhead in order to determine if an exposure risk to Site Users exists and to support soil management decisions during redevelopment activities. Carcinogenic PAHs were identified in surface soil throughout the proposed trailhead footprint at concentrations that exceed the VT DEC regulatory criteria for industrial sites. PAH contamination was attributed to the presence of coal ash and foundry wastes observed in surface soils. Arsenic was also identified in surface soil samples, but at concentrations below the state-wide background concentration established by the VT DEC. Stone concluded that the occurrence of arsenic at concentrations greater than regulatory criteria may be due to natural occurrence, but also may, in part, be a result of historical Site rail operations (e.g. storage and combustion of coal, the potential use of arsenic as a creosote

fortifying agent for rail tie preservation, and/or the potential use of arsenic-based pesticides for rail bed maintenance).

Summary of Proposed Remedial Actions:

Remedial actions are necessary at the Site to mitigate direct exposure risk to workers during construction and future Site users to known surface soil contamination. The proposed remedial actions include:

1. The installation of an engineered barrier;
2. Maintaining dense vegetation on portions of the Site not covered by the engineered barrier to deter use of this area;
3. Periodic maintenance and monitoring of the engineered barrier and vegetated area; and
4. Implementation of an institutional control on the Site Property deed in the form of a Deed Restriction. A Deed Restriction grants the right to the state to enforce requirements of maintenance, monitoring, or other restrictions that are placed on the contaminated areas of the Site. The Deed Restriction would describe the location of contamination remaining on Site and require that the engineered barrier be maintained for as long as necessary to mitigate direct exposure risk. The Deed Restriction should further require that the VT DEC be notified prior to any future Site renovations that would require disturbance of contaminated Site soil.

Community Background:

The Site is located in the Town of Hyde Park, Vermont. According to the *US Census Bureau's 2010 Demographic Profile*, the town had a population of 2,954. The Town is approximately 39.0 square miles with a village located in the southwest corner. The Site is located immediately south of the village center on Depot Street Extended. There are approximately 1,309 housing units, median age is 40.1, and 89.6% of residents have graduated high school. The town contains an elementary and regional middle and high schools, a post office, fire department, public library, county sheriff's office, churches, and various retail businesses. The town's Median Household Income was \$54,441 according to the *2016 American Community Survey*.

The predominant use of the area is residential and commercial, though agriculture remains prominent and there are likely many small, home-based businesses.

Chronology of Community Involvement:

Town of Hyde Park community members and officials have been discussing the potential for developing a trailhead at the Site for nearly a decade.

Summary of Public Comment Hearings/Periods

To date, no public meetings have taken place.

All public meetings will be held at the Municipal Offices Community Meeting Room located at 344 Route 15 West, Hyde Park, Vermont

Key Community Concerns:

One Hyde Park resident has made a land claim to a portion of the Site and has expressed concern regarding proposed redevelopment plans. VTrans has refuted this land claim, meanwhile Town of Hyde Park Selectboard members have been in regular communication with the concerned resident.

Continued Community Involvement:

Stone Environmental, Inc. is preparing a Corrective Action Plan for VT DEC review and approval that details the construction of the engineered barrier, deed restriction requirements, and ongoing maintenance and monitoring requirements. LCPC will post the final Site Corrective Action Plan to the brownfields page on the LCPC website (http://www.lcpcvt.org/index.asp?SEC=0F26570A-D472-45DD-B654-B6225359916F&Type=B_BASIC). Additional project information will be disseminated through updates to the LCPC newsletter.

Additional opportunities for public comment will be developed during the completion of the Corrective Action Plan and will include a Public Meeting in Hyde Park to be scheduled prior to regulatory approval of the Corrective Action Plan. The Public Meeting will take place as part of a regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting and will be warned in accordance with Vermont open meeting laws. LCPC will also advertise the Public Meeting through Front Porch Forum.