

Community Advisory Group (CAG) for the Omaha Lead Site

Minutes for Meeting Held
Wednesday, December 13, 2006, 9:30 a.m.
Salem Baptist Church
3131 Lake Street
Omaha, NE 68111

OLS CAG Members Present:

Rebecca Barrientos-Patlan—*Burlington Road Neighborhood Association*
Sue Casteel—*Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Control*
Brenda Council—*Facilitator*
Todd Davis—*Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality*
Jonah Deppe—*League of Women Voters*
Connie Determan—*MFG, Inc.*
Kara Eastman—*Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance*
Bob Feild—*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*
Jeff McDermott—*Union Pacific Railroad*
Shireen Rajaram—*University of Nebraska, Omaha*
Marian Todd—*City of Omaha Planning Department*
Rebecca Valdez—*Chicano Awareness Center*
Vernon Waldren—*Douglas/Sarpy County Extension*
Cheryl Weston—*Lead Safe Omaha Coalition*
Tommie Wilson—*NAACP*

Others Present:

Mary Castaneda—*EPA Information Offices*
Lelia Coyne—*Citizen*
Felisa Dillon—*EPA Information Offices*
Nancy Gaarder—*Omaha World-Herald*
Tina Gray-Ventry—*Lead Safe Omaha Coalition*
Louise Latimer—*Senator Ben Nelson's Office*
Kathy Leinenkugel—*Douglas County Health Department*
Stan Quy—*U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*
Jennifer Rawley—*MFG, Inc.*
Steve Sanders—*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*
Che Thompson—*Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance*

1. Discussion on Minutes from the November 8, 2006 Meeting

Ms. Council asked for corrections or additions to the minutes from the November 8, 2006 meeting. Ms. Weston stated that in the first paragraph on page three, "Ms. Weston stated

that she would like EPA to forward comments to the CAG” should read, “Ms. Weston stated that EPA could choose to forward comments on as they wish.”

Mr. Feild stated that in the first paragraph on page three, “Mr. Feild stated that EPA would not forward comments to the CAG” should read, “Mr. Feild stated that EPA is not required to provide comments to the CAG.” Mr. Feild stated that, “Mr. Feild stated that EPA would forward all received comments on the large park sampling plan to the CAG” should be deleted.

Ms. Weston motioned to approve the minutes with the above corrections. Mr. Waldren seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved (9-0).

2. EPA Update

Mr. Feild stated that the ATC laboratory report is not yet available.

Mr. Feild provided copies of EPA’s treatability study work plan. Mr. Feild stated EPA would accept public comments on the work plan until the next CAG meeting.

Mr. Feild stated that EPA did not have any update on the lead-based paint assessment criteria from the last meeting and that he did not know why it was still on the agenda. Ms. Council stated that the topic would be removed from future agendas.

Mr. Feild stated that EPA is still developing a response to the CAG’s request for an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD).

Mr. Feild stated that EPA has received some comments on the large park sampling plan and would accept additional comments through the end of the day. Ms. Barrientos-Patlan stated that she has comments to submit and distributed her comments to the CAG. Ms. Barrientos-Patlan stated that she is concerned about EPA’s identification of high child impact areas. Ms. Barrientos-Patlan stated that on many of the park maps, baseball fields and playgrounds were not identified for sampling. Ms. Barrientos-Patlan stated that samples should be collected at baseball fields and around bleachers, where children play. Ms. Barrientos-Patlan stated that the park maps did not have enough streets labeled to identify their locations. Ms. Barrientos-Patlan stated that she would like EPA to consider and address her comments.

Mr. Feild stated that EPA is hoping to sample all large parks this year, but does not know if it will be possible. Ms. Weston asked if EPA will be prevented from sampling if the ground freezes. Mr. Feild replied that Ms. Weston was correct. Mr. Feild stated that the large park sampling will be a special effort and that EPA would likely perform the large park sampling in one episode.

Mr. Feild stated that EPA provided an email responding to the concerns voiced by Mr. Frank Jackson at the November CAG meeting.

Ms. Coyne stated that EPA has completed its report on air quality criteria for lead. Ms. Coyne asked what EPA's process is for making a determination. Ms. Coyne asked how individuals can advocate. Mr. Feild stated that he did not know, but suggested that Ms. Coyne contact Mr. Josh Tapp with EPA at 913-551-7606.

Ms. Weston asked if PRI is currently performing soil excavations. Mr. Feild replied that PRI is currently working under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contract.

3. Report on South Omaha Survey

Ms. Valdez and Dr. Rajaram reported the results of a lead survey conducted in South Omaha. Ms. Valdez explained that the purpose of the survey was to determine what South Omaha residents know about lead and how the residents prefer to receive information about lead. Ms. Valdez stated that the survey was disseminated among the South Omaha Latino population. Ms. Valdez stated that the survey consisted of ten questions. Ms. Valdez reported that 640 surveys were completed.

Ms. Weston asked if copies of the questions and results could be posted online. Ms. Valdez replied that a fact sheet will be published. Ms. Valdez added that she would check with EPA to determine what information could be released to the public.

Dr. Rajaram described the survey and explained that Ms. Valdez, Dr. Jose Villegas, and she provided training to the survey workers. Dr. Rajaram stated that surveys were conducted door-to-door, and participants were given coupons for Roberts Dairy products.

Dr. Rajaram reported the following results of the surveys:

- Participants knew lead-based paint could cause lead poisoning.
- Participants did not know that lead safe work practices should be used when performing home renovations.
- Participants did not know other sources of lead, such as soil.
- Participants did not identify old factories as a source of lead in soil.
- Participants were not knowledgeable about EPA's yard soil cleanup.
- 55% of participants indicated that lead poisoning is a problem in their neighborhood.
- 94% identified that child hand washing before eating would help reduce exposure to lead.
- Fewer than 50% of participants knew exposure to lead could be reduced by implementing cleaning methods (e.g., wet moping).
- 12% of participants reported using bean pots or antique pots.
- Five participants reported using herbal remedies (e.g. Arzacón) to treat stomach ailments.
- Television was identified as the preferred mode of receive information about lead.
- Participants reported learning about the lead problem from television, El Perico, the Omaha World-Herald, the radio, and doctors' offices.

Ms. Council asked if a question about candy was included on the survey. Dr. Rajaram replied that such a question was not on the survey. Ms. Deppe asked if the survey question regarding herbal remedies included herbal tea. Dr. Rajaram replied that the questions were open-ended and that some respondents mentioned tea.

Ms. Barrientos-Patlan suggested testing some imported goods, such as teas. Ms. Leinenkugel stated that one batch is not necessarily like another. Ms. Leinenkugel stated that the Douglas County Health Department has heard that some people consult an herbalist in Omaha, but the Douglas County Health Department is unaware of where the herbalist is located and if visiting the herbalist is a widespread practice.

Ms. Leinenkugel asked if all of the survey respondents had children. Dr. Rajaram replied that survey participants did not necessarily have children.

Mr. Quy asked what percent survey participants' children had had their blood lead levels tested. Dr. Rajaram responded that 42% of survey respondents' children were reported to have been tested. Mr. Quy asked why the percent of children tested was low. Dr. Rajaram replied that factors, such as lack of access to medical care or immigration status, could be affecting whether or not children are tested. Dr. Rajaram stated that a specific question was not included in the survey to address why or why not children are tested.

Ms. Valdez stated that they wanted to include education and follow-up as part of the survey program, but did not have adequate funding to do so. Ms. Council suggested applying for additional grants through the EPA Environmental Justice program. Ms. Eastman stated that OHKA is looking at applying for an EPA that may be a good fit for such activities. Ms. Valdez and Ms. Eastman agreed to meet to discuss potential grant opportunities.

Ms. Barrientos-Patlan suggested incorporating lead questions into the State behavioral risk survey. Ms. Council stated that Nebraska Health and Human Services could be invited to a CAG meeting to discuss the State behavioral risk survey. Dr. Rajaram suggested contacting the Office of Minority Health. Ms. Deppe suggested contacting Maternal Child Health Services. Ms. Deppe stated that Maternal Health Services is putting together a health plan.

4. Discussion on Staying Connected to the Media

Ms. Council asked for suggestions for keeping the CAG connected to the media. Ms. Council stated that she was pleased to see Ms. Gaarder in attendance. Ms. Leinenkugel stated that public service announcements are included in the CAG's education matrix, but that the CAG has not had funding. Ms. Eastman stated that the OHKA board of directors will be forming a media committee to address the issue. Ms. Council stated she would like to see the Omaha World-Herald print articles on the CAG's Omaha Children's Museum display and other activities.

Ms. Castaneda suggested providing information via Spanish-speaking radio stations.

Ms. Leinenkugel stated that a sustained, repeated media message is necessary, rather than a one-time media blitz.

Ms. Gaarder suggested requesting the Omaha Children's Museum to send a press release regarding the display to the Omaha World-Herald "Go" section. Ms. Gaarder stated that CAG members are welcome to call her for advice regarding the media.

Ms. Eastman stated that OHKA is embarking upon a strategic lead marketing plan.

Ms. Barrientos-Patlan stated that it is expensive for low-income families and those on fixed incomes to visit the Omaha Children's Museum. Ms. Barrientos-Patlan asked if the Grants Committee could look into providing free tickets through the Chicano Awareness Center. Ms. Eastman stated that the Education Committee is pursuing holding a permanent exhibit at the Omaha Children's Museum in 2008 and is holding out utilizing funding for the current exhibit to identify funding for the permanent exhibit. Ms. Council stated that a permanent exhibit at the Omaha Children's Museum is newsworthy and congratulated the CAG for their efforts. Ms. Council further emphasized the achievement of obtaining a permanent exhibit to educate the children of Omaha on this important issue. Ms. Gaarder stated that publicity for the exhibit is not a matter of newsworthiness, but rather about how much time a reporter has. Ms. Gaarder encouraged the CAG to pursue multiple angles and reporters to generate publicity.

5. OHKA Update

Ms. Eastman provided an update on OHKA activities. Ms. Eastman asked that if anyone has ideas, comments, or suggestions for activities, to please let her know. Ms. Eastman stated that she welcomes suggestions.

Ms. Eastman reported that the OHKA Housing Committee met twice and is considering moving forward with hiring lead inspectors. Ms. Eastman stated that the next committee meeting on January 24, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at OHKA. Ms. Eastman asked for suggestions of any other representatives who should be identified to attend the Housing Committee meeting. Ms. Eastman stated that she has invited the Omaha Housing Authority to attend.

Ms. Eastman stated that she would be meeting with Mr. Jeff Linkenbach next week to develop a strategic marketing plan. Ms. Eastman stated that the marketing plan will be presented to the Education Committee and reported to the CAG.

Ms. Eastman reported that Ms. Anne Camp recently convened major lead players for an update. Ms. Eastman stated that Ms. Camp requested a breakdown of money spent on lead issues in Omaha. Ms. Eastman stated that she is trying to consolidate that information and would appreciate that those groups from which she requested this

information would respond to her. Ms. Eastman added that she would like the information by mid-January.

Ms. Eastman reported that OHKA is working with Omaha Urban Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and others to provide medical professionals training on lead on May 10, 2006 at 7:00 a.m. Ms. Eastman stated that the training will be held at the Eppley Cancer Center at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Ms. Eastman added that the training will be telecast to other remote locations, such as Boys Town and Creighton Medical Center.

Ms. Eastman stated that Boys Town is applying for an EPA grant and OHKA may collaborate with Boys Town to apply for the grant. Ms. Eastman stated that OHKA is also applying for an EPA grant under a different program. Ms. Eastman stated that OHKA is interested in obtaining funding for WIC screening and education.

Mr. Steinkraus commented that connecting with Boys Town is a great opportunity because Boys Town serves 17,000 children under age six.

Ms. Eastman stated that the OHKA website (www.omahahealthykids.org) is up and running and includes a calendar of activities, lead news, and other information.

6. City HUD Grant Update

Ms. Todd stated that the City is preparing for EPA's paint stabilization program. Ms. Todd stated that training for painters has been scheduled. Ms. Todd stated that the training is a one-day HUD/EPA curriculum training that will be taught by Mr. Steinkraus and Mr. Dave Johnson. Ms. Todd announced that the training will be held January 16, 2007 at the Douglas/Sarpy County Extension office. Ms. Todd stated that an information session for interested contractors will be held January 23, 2007 at the Civic Center.

Ms. Todd clarified that EPA and the City have an existing agreement to perform the paint stabilization, which does not require city council approval. Ms. Todd stated that the initial paint stabilization work will be a trial period to determine how costly the work is.

Ms. Todd reported that signs reading, "Lead Safe Workers Don't Spread Lead – Kids Run Better Lead Free" have been designed and will be posted in yards where EPA performs lead-based paint stabilization. Ms. Todd stated that the signs include OHKA's logo and Ms. Todd's phone number.

Ms. Todd stated that the City's HUD program is ongoing and still accepting referrals. Ms. Todd reported that 21 homes are complete, 29 are underway, and 44 applications have been received.

Dr. Rajaram asked if there are plans to target Spanish-speaking remodelers. Ms. Todd stated that the initial training session will be in English, but that the City intends to hold

additional sessions, including Spanish-speaking sessions, to target the South Omaha housing industry.

7. NDEQ Update

Mr. Davis did not have any new information to provide.

8. LSOC Update

Ms. Gray-Ventry reported that the Lead Safe Omaha Coalition is working with HeadStart and increasing blood lead testing numbers.

9. Comprehensive Plan Committee Update

Ms. Deppe reported that the Comprehensive Plan Committee met and discussed moving the committee over to OHKA. Ms. Deppe stated that the committee agreed to email all committee members to ask for feedback on if and how to move the committee to OHKA. Ms. Deppe stated that the committee would be making recommendations to the CAG at the next meeting.

10. Education Committee Update

Mr. Waldren stated that copies of the real estate professional training evaluation were provided to the CAG. Mr. Waldren stated that positive feedback was provided.

Mr. Waldren stated that the School Task Force will meet January 22, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at OHKA.

Mr. Waldren stated that the Education Committee's next meeting will be January 9, 2007 at 1:30 p.m.

11. Questions and Answers

Ms. Barrientos-Patlan asked how the City's combined sewer overflow project will affect EPA's work. Mr. Feild stated that EPA is coordinating with the City.

Ms. Council stated that the next CAG meeting will be held January 10, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. The location is to be announced.

Handouts Provided for the Meeting (January 10, 2007):

Draft CAG Meeting Minutes from 12/18/06

Final CAG Meeting Minutes from 11/08/06

Comprehensive Plan Committee Minutes from 12/11/06

EPA Draft Treatability Study Work Plan, Omaha Lead Site (Provided by EPA)

Windows of Opportunity: Lead Poisoning Prevention, Housing Affordability, and Energy Conservation (Provided by Ms. Marian Todd)

\$10,000 Champions for Healthy Kids Grants Now Available (Provided by Ms. Marian Todd)

CPSC Takes Step Forward in Effort to Protect Children from Hazardous Metal Jewelry (Provided by MFG, Inc.)

Children's Butterfly Necklaces Recalled by U.S. Toy Co. Due to Lead Poisoning Hazard (Provided by MFG, Inc.)

Comments of Union Pacific Railroad Company on EPA's November 6, 2006 "Field Sampling Plan Large Park Surface Soil Investigation, Omaha Lead Site" (Provided by Union Pacific)

49th and Sorenson Email and Information (Provided by EPA)

Attachments to Minutes:

Sign-In Sheet (hardcopy to be delivered)

EPA Update (hardcopy to be delivered)