F-Complex Public Meeting Summary

Public Meeting Date: January 19, 2023
Location: Niskayuna Town Hall, Niskayuna, New York

U.S. Department of Energy
Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center –
New York Project Support Office

F-Complex Public Meeting Notes

January 19, 2023

Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to brief the public on the proposed removal alternatives for the Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory (KAPL) F-Complex.

Presenters and Meeting Support Personnel

- Martin Krentz, Federal Project Director, Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center (EMCBC) New York (NY) Project Support Office
- Gregory Chandler, Project Officer, Naval Reactors Laboratory Field Office, KAPL
- Hugh Davis, Consultant, DOE EMCBC-NY Project Support Office
- Lesley Cusick, CERCLA Subject Matter Expert, Facilitator, RSI
- Allison Getsi, President, RSI
- Samantha Long, Communications, RSI

Attendees

25 in-person attendees, 30 virtual attendees.

Host/Location/Date & Time

Meeting hosted by the DOE EMCBC-NY Project Support Office at the Niskayuna Town Hall in Niskayuna, NY, from 6-8pm Eastern Standard Time on Thursday, January 19, 2023.

Meeting Presentation

Introduction

Ms. Cusick opened the meeting stating that the purpose of the public meeting was to discuss and obtain feedback on the proposed removal alternatives for the F-Complex buildings at KAPL. Ms. Cusick explained that the presentation portion of the meeting would be live-streamed and that the stream would stop at the start of a question and answer (Q&A) session. A copy of the livestream video is provided on the EMCBC website.

Ms. Cusick extended thanks to the Town of Niskayuna, including the Town Supervisor, Jaime Puccioni, the Supervisor's Assistant Jean Foti, Seth Goldstein for IT support, and Town staff who were essential to promoting this event as broadly as possible, including posting it on the Town's Community Events agenda and calendar. Logistics were provided regarding emergency exits, restroom facilities and emergency needs should they occur. Attendees were encouraged to fill out an evaluation form to provide feedback to DOE on the effectiveness of the public meeting and communications with the community. Attendees were provided Fact Sheets and Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) sheets on Waste Transportation; the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) process; General F-Complex information; and F-Complex Removal Action Alternatives. DOE also displayed posters on the Naval Reactors programs and the CERCLA process. The CERCLA process is being used by DOE to evaluate options and select an alternative for the inactive KAPL F-Complex. Copies of the Fact Sheets, FAQs, and The United States Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program 2020 (i.e., "Gray Book") were available for people to take home.

In summary, Ms. Cusick explained that CERCLA is a public process. Documentation has been prepared to discuss the history and other aspects of the F-Complex and to engage and promote feedback from the public and regulatory communities.

Ms. Cusick then introduced Mr. Krentz, the DOE EMCBC-NY Federal Project Director.

Marty Krentz Presentation

Mr. Krentz offered his thanks to the Town of Niskayuna and public participants and welcomed everyone to the F-Complex public meeting. Mr. Krentz explained that members of the regulatory community were in the audience and watching the live stream, including members of the New York State Department of Health and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 2.

Mr. Krentz provided a slide presentation (attached). The slides included several sections designed to inform the audience about the F-Complex project. The presentation followed the order of the slides. Annotations provided below are limited to information presented by Mr. Krentz that is additional to the slides.

When introducing the DOE Environmental Management (EM) Program (Slides 2 and 3 referred to), Mr. Krentz said that it is the largest environmental cleanup program in the world, with the mission to complete safe cleanup of the environmental legacy brought about by the Manhattan Project and the Cold War. Mr. Krentz explained that while EM has expertise in multiple areas as shown on Slide 2, the evening's topic was facility Deactivation and Decommissioning (D&D).

Referring to Slide 4, depicting the KAPL site, Mr. Krentz pointed out that space is at a premium.

Referring to Slides 12 through 15 depicting the Flexible Plastic Reactor and the Thermal Test Reactor, Mr. Krentz emphasized that these defueled assemblies are small and could fit in a small room or a portion of a small room. When discussing the Full Core Physics Experiment (FCPE), shown on Slides 16 and 17, Mr. Krentz noted the FCPE is larger and several stories tall, but it is still significantly smaller that a commercial production reactor.

When discussing the F-Complex removal action alternatives (Slide 19), Mr. Krentz explained that there have been no spills or releases from the buildings, and that removal of any contaminants would be done in a manner consistent with EM's mission – to be protective of public health, worker health, and the environment. He also emphasized the important relationship with the regulatory community to ensure compliance.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Krentz turned the meeting back over to Ms. Cusick for the next agenda item, the Q&A. Prior to beginning the Q&A's, Ms. Cusick confirmed that the live streaming had concluded.

Meeting Q&A

At the beginning of the Q&A portion of the meeting, Ms. Cusick reviewed the options for submitting comments as depicted on Slide 24. She explained that the objective for the evening's Q&A portion was to answer questions, and if they could not be answered during the meeting, she asked that the questioner submit them in writing so that the comments could be provided to the appropriate people to obtain answers. At this time the floor was turned over to Mr. Krentz to take questions from the audience.

Except as noted, all responses were provided by Mr. Krentz.

1. Is there a budget estimate for the three alternatives?

Answer: Yes, as shown on the Removal Action Alternatives Fact Sheet (see attached), DOE-EM's cost estimates are $17.5M for Alternative 1: Continued Legacy Facilities Management, $38.4 for Alternative 2: Cleanout of Defueled Assemblies, and $68.4M for Alternative 3: Demolition of F-Complex.

2. **How long would each alternative take?**

Answer: As shown on the Removal Action Alternatives Fact Sheet, Alternative 1 (a type of "no action" alternative), would be continued for the next 30 years; Alternative 2 would take four (4) to five (5) years; and Alternative 3 would take an additional six (6) months beyond the duration for Alternative 2. Mr. Krentz explained that Alternative 3 would include everything in Alternative 2, with added building demolition and waste disposal at the end; Alternatives 2 and 3 are close in duration (Slide 21 was referred to).

3. **With what happened on the previous cleanup, was a monitoring system in place to see if there were any adverse consequences during the work? Will you have a monitoring system in place while the work is being performed on this project?**

Answer: Yes, there will be multiple monitoring systems in place. Workers are monitored for health and safety protection. KAPL has independent ongoing monitoring that is performed for health and safety and compliance purposes that is reported in the annual environmental monitoring report. In addition, the Contractor performing the work will have real-time monitoring set up around the site to make sure there are no releases to the public.

4. **There was a problem with the previous cleanup; there was some sort of a release. There will be a robust monitoring system set up for this work, I would assume?**

Answer: Yes, there will be multiple monitoring systems in place.

5. **Assuming option 2 or 3 is selected, how will the decommissioning waste be disposed?**

Answer: There are many different classifications of waste and disposition depends on the waste profiles. There is also flexibility given to the Contractor who will perform the work for how the alternative is implemented. There are no definite answers at this time for what waste will go to what facilities. Disposal of waste is an audited, highly regulated process; transporters and disposal facilities are licensed, permitted, and inspected to ensure compliance with any applicable regulations.

6. **Is it NR's intent to repurpose the space? The reason I ask is that Knolls is on the town's tax rolls. We've had a problem with GE and the reported aggregate value of their properties. Is it your intent to repurpose the facility or lower taxes?**

Answer (provided by Mr. Chandler): First, because KAPL is a federal government facility, it is not taxed. If Alternative 3 is selected, KAPL may construct a new building and reuse that space; but an alternative hasn't been selected.

7. **Do costs come out of your $7.5B budget (EM's budget)?**

Answer (provided by Mr. Chandler): Naval Reactors partners with DOE-EM to do the work, and the cost comes out of Naval Reactors' decommissioning budget. Naval Reactors transfers the funding to DOE-EM.

8. **What is RSI's role?**

Answer (provided by Ms. Cusick): RSI provides technical support to the DOE-EM NY project office; RSI helped DOE-EM develop the public documents and implement public outreach efforts.

9. **Do you see any additional wastewater generated and discharged? The State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit is prescriptive in defining what is allowed.**

Answer: There will be no wastewater discharged on site. Misting during the demolition process is performed to control dust without generating excess wastewater. In addition, applications of fixatives and dust suppression agents are used to control dust and avoid overwatering demolition material. All demolished material is shipped off site as waste.

10. If you went with Alternative #2, could the buildings be repurposed?

Answer: Some consideration was given to this option, but the layout of the complex doesn't lend itself well to reuse. And with the age of the facilities, repurposing these structures wouldn't be practical. (Slide 9 was projected on the screen to help with the response.)

11. When the building is decommissioned and all radioactive material is removed, could there be any radioactive contamination left behind?

Answer: There are no known releases from the F-Complex. If Alternative 3 is selected, monitoring and confirmation sampling will be done during D&D and at the conclusion of the project to prove there is no remaining contamination.

12. You said an outside contractor would do the work. Does DOE provide oversight?

Answer: Yes, DOE-EM will oversee all work performed by the prime site contractor. There is a network of qualified contractors with specialties dealing with facility D&D. Typically, there are teaming agreements where companies come together to get expertise lined up for a particular project.

13. Will DOE be located on site during work?

Answer: Yes. DOE-EM has office trailers located at KAPL (Slide 4 was referred to). While the DOE-EM trailers referred to in the response are not shown in the KAPL aerial photo, the general location of the EMCBC trailers was pointed out.

14. They have you in a trailer?

Answer: You'd be surprised how nice office trailers are now!

15. As the public process continues and if you decide #3 is the alternative, when would you start work?

Answer: The dates known at this time for the DOE-EM process are on the slide (Slide 22 was referred to). After DOE-EM issues the Action Memorandum decision document, we would coordinate with contracting to develop the Statement of Work and issue a Request for Proposal. After that, we would award the contract. Depending on the selected contractor, there are documents that need to be approved if they haven't worked on the site previously. Work would likely begin in a year's time after contract award.

16. What's the downside of doing nothing?

Answer: The government would be spending money on buildings that have no use. The government can't walk away from the buildings as there are risks associated with the reactor assemblies, lead in paint, ballasts, etc. Because of this, the buildings must be maintained. The government is then left with monitoring and maintaining the buildings in perpetuity and still having to do something in 30 years after spending $17M.

Meeting Conclusion

Mr. Krentz concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for coming out in the inclement weather.

Ms. Cusick told the audience to feel free to send their comments in by any of the available methods shown on Slide 24, which was still visible on the screen. She noted that there were two (2) more weeks in the public comment period, and that the documents are all on the website. Also there are copies of the Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA), the Historical Site Assessment (HSA), and fact sheets available in the back of the room that were prepared in anticipation of questions.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 pm. DOE and their support team remained until all meeting attendees left.