

Rockaway Park MGP UPDATE

A Progress Report to the Community

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Remedial Plans for Former MGP Site to be Presented at Public Meeting September 8

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and KeySpan will present the Proposed Remedial Action Plan (PRAP) for the Rockaway Park former MGP site at the Beach Club, 129 Beach 116th Street at 7:00 PM on Monday, September 8. The site, bordered by Beach Channel Drive, Beach 108th Street and the Rockaway Freeway, has been the subject of an on-going environmental investigation, supplemental studies and several Interim Remedial Measures.

At the Public Meeting, the NYSDEC will summarize the findings of the environmental investigations and present its recommendation for addressing the contaminant residues on the site associated with its use as a manufactured gas plant, ending more than 50 years ago. The PRAP has been placed in the Document Repositories for the site (see page 2 for locations), and a Fact Sheet, summarizing the recommendations, has been prepared by the NYSDEC for mail distribution in the neighborhood surrounding the site.

The proposed Plan includes removal of contaminated soils and source material for contamination of groundwater, the installation of barriers on site to prevent migration of the contaminated groundwater towards Jamaica

Bay, a barrier adjacent to the bulkhead area north of Beach Channel Drive to prevent any migration of material that may be under Beach Channel Drive, and the use of wells to remove liquid source material for the groundwater plume. These remedies, an engineered soil cover system on the site and institutional controls to maintain the technologies and prevent uncontrolled digging or excavation on site, will permit virtually any reuse of the site, including commercial, residential, recreational or industrial use.

KeySpan has made no decisions about reuse. The company will work with the community in consideration of reuse options as the remediation process goes forward and the final design for the approved Remedial Action Plan is developed. That design process is likely to take a year to eighteen months after the NYSDEC approves the Remedial Action Plan for the site.

NYSDEC and NYSDOH will receive public comments about the PRAP at the Public Meeting on September 8. Written comments may be submitted to the NYSDEC until September 22. After considering the public input, the NYSDEC will issue the Record on Decision which approves the RAP. **For more information about the Public Meeting, please call KeySpan's Telephone Hotline at 718 403 3400.**

Interim Remedial Measures Minimize Current Impact

KeySpan has undertaken a number of Interim Remedial Measures (IRM) in recent years to minimize any current impact of the environmental conditions related to the historic use of the site.

Early in the project, KeySpan undertook a "cut-and-plug," capping underground pipes that could act as conduits for the migration of contaminated groundwater or source material.

During the relocation of the LIPA electric substation on the site, some contaminated soils were removed.

An Interim Remedial Measure (IRM) has been conducted on the bulkhead area portion of the site, which is north of Beach Channel Drive and owned by the City of New York. This included removal of surface debris and tar-like materials on the surface. Supplemental IRM activities are underway which include additional investigation and removal of some subsurface contamination. Separately, the City of New York completed a rehabilitation of the bulkhead, to address the "wear and tear" of years of constant exposure to the waves and winds of Jamaica Bay.

Reports on the completed IRMS are available for review in the Document Repositories.

Questions & Answers

Does the public really have a say in the Remediation Plan, or is already decided between KeySpan and the NYSDEC?

As required under the Order on Consent, KeySpan submitted a Feasibility Study to the NYSDEC with a wide range of alternative approaches for a Remedial Action Plan, applying various technologies and combinations that would meet NYSDEC's very stringent requirements for a Class 2 Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Site. The NYSDEC's experts as well as experts from the New York State Department of Health evaluated the alternatives and selected one that they are confident is protective of human health and the environment while recognizing the need for a remediation that is technically feasible, not overly disruptive to the community and economically responsible for the environmental benefit achieved. Public input is very important to understanding what the local issues are, and whether the plans respond appropriately to them. Many proposed remediation plans in New York State have been adjusted based on public input.

Will the site be clean enough for residential use?

After remediation, the site can be used for residential, recreational, commercial or industrial use with appropriate institutional controls. The controls, which would be approved by the NYSDEC and NYSDOH, as well as City of New York agencies, may require certain barriers, installation of certain technologies and strict limits on subsurface activities. Combined with removal of materials and installation and maintenance of barriers and technologies recommended in the PRAP, this will protect human health and the environment in any foreseeable use.

Why will starting the remediation take so long?

This is a very complicated site to remediate, because of the underlying geology, proximity to both Jamaica Bay and the Atlantic Ocean and the need to conduct a large scale remediation in a highly developed neighborhood without disrupting residential enjoyment, daily business or traffic on the major roads immediately north and south of the site. The design phase that comes next will address all of these issues.

For More Information

The PRAP, Final Remedial Investigation Report, reports on the Supplemental Remedial Investigations and other documents related to the former MGP site may be found at the Document Repositories:

Queens Borough Public Library
Peninsula Branch
92-25 Rockaway Beach Blvd
Rockaway Beach, NY 11693
(718) 634-1110

Community Board 14
1931 Mott Avenue
Far Rockaway, NY 11694
(718) 471-7300
(by appointment)

New York State DEC (Region 2)
1 Hunters Point Plaza
47-40 21st Street
Long Island City, NY 11101-5407
(718) 482-4900
(by appointment)

KeySpan maintains a Telephone Hotline for neighbors of the Rockaway Park former MGP site. Please leave your name, a phone number where you can be contacted and your comment or question. We will get back to you in one business day 718 403 3400.

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