

Deer Park Community Advisory Council

Meeting Notes

Monday, August 28, 2023

The 311th meeting of the Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC) was held on Monday, August 28, 2023, at the Republic Grill. Facilitator Anne Gowan reviewed the agenda, which was accepted as proposed. The May 2023 meeting notes were approved without changes.

ATTENDANCE

DPCAC Community Members		DPCAC Plant Members		Guests/Resources	
	Brian Babin, US Rep 36		Clean Harbors , Bruce Riffel	X	Alida Donnell
X	Ruth Bovd	X	Dow Chemical Deer Park , Sharon Hulgan	X	Officer Clint Jackson, Deer Park Police
	Steve Corry, DPIISD	X	Evonik Oil Additives , Jim Bentinck-Smith	X	David Kayser, Lubrizol
X	Sheryl DaPron	X	GEO Specialty Chemicals , Steve Outlaw	X	Brian Lawson, Dow Chemical DP
X	Kristina DeWitty, SJC	X	Intercontinental Terminals , David Wascome, rep. by Michael Bargar	X	Betty Lemley
	Christine DiCosimo, TX Hse. Dist. 128	X	Lubrizol , Hector Acosta	X	Bradley Lyons, Westlake Epoxy
X	Ken Donnell		NOVVI , Alan Kominek, rep. by Bob Wolff	X	Yayma Martinez, TCEQ
	Jamie Galloway, DP OEM	X	OxyVinyls PVC/KOH , Jeff Koetitz, rep. by John McPhaul	X	MaryJane Mudd, EHCMA
X	Sherry Garrison	X	OxyVinyls VCM , Josh Munn	X	Stuart Mueller, Harris Co. Pollution Control
X	Tommy Ginn	X	Pemex Deer Park , Guy Hackwell, rep. by Gary Guilhas	X	Duke Ogega, Evonik
X	Karen Guidry		Pemex Deer Park , Jennifer Walsh	X	Debbie Westbeld, Deer Park Economic Development
X	Paul Guidry	X	Shell Deer Park , Nathan Levin		
X	Cara Herbeck		Shell Deer Park , Jessica Blackmore		
X	Steven Horton	X	Texas Molecular , Jimmy Bracher, rep. by Frank Marine		
X	Gretchen Knowles, Harris Co. Pct. 2	X	Valvoline , Robert Shelton		
	Mayes Middleton, TX Sen. Dist. 11	X	Vopak Moda , Jeff Sanford, rep. by JD Abernathy		
	Paula Moorhaj, DP Chamber		Vopak Terminal Deer Park , Kathy Stewart, rep. by Gary Jackson		
X	Wanda Morris	X	Westlake Epoxy , Marlene Mercado		
	Tyler Padgett, SJC				
	Bill Patterson, DP City Council				
	Ariel Pena		Support Staff		
	Randon Pierson	X	Anne Gowan, Facilitator		
X	Darrell Pinckard	X	Marilyn Bass, Secretary		
	Vickey Roberts				

X	David Sanchez			
X	Maria Sanchez			
X	Andy Smith, San Jacinto Battleground			
X	Angela Smith, City of Deer Park			
	Charles Thomas			
	Cheyenne Valdez			
X	David Wade			
	Ernest Weedon			

Roads and Traffic in Deer Park

Deer Park Police Department (DPPD) Officer Clint Jackson spoke about commercial vehicle-enforcement. DPPD’s Commercial Vehicle division started 2.5 years ago because the city knew truck traffic would increase due to Port Houston’s Ship Channel Expansion Project. The City of La Porte estimates that between 20,000 to 30,000 trucks travel on SH 146 each day. Truck traffic on SH 225 is very similar to that of SH 146.

Jackson said that 49% of commercial vehicles fail inspection and are declared out of service. Once the repairs are made, the trucks can be put back in service. Companies that consistently fail inspections are flagged by the Department of Public Safety (DPS). When conducting commercial vehicle inspections, officers focus on enforcement and education. Officers take time with drivers and explain exactly how their vehicle is out of compliance so that the drivers know how to conduct their own inspections prior to starting the vehicle.

In Deer Park, the designated truck routes are on SH 225 frontage road between the east and west city limits, and on Battleground Rd. between SH 225 and Underwood Rd. All designated truck routes are posted in the city. Trucks have to stay on a truck route, unless they are making a delivery. Once the delivery is made, trucks are expected to travel back to the truck route. Jackson said there have been issues with trucks in residential areas for various reasons. When this occurs, DPPD tries to educate and work with the drivers and/or companies when possible. Jackson said drivers are often required to follow their GPS system when making a delivery, and sometimes GPS systems route trucks through residential areas. DPPD strives to successfully resolve these issues, but when that is not possible enforcement is the last step. Additionally, DPPD has worked to get signage displayed in residential areas in order to prevent trucks from getting stuck and causing damage in neighborhoods.

Questions and Comments:

1. *Is there anything that can be done about the tire treads on the road?* If treads on a truck look significantly worn, DPPS can issue a ticket. However, often times tires on commercial vehicles can appear fine during an inspection and then blowout just down the road without warning. Jackson said it is best to not drive next to a commercial truck. He advised attendees to pass them as quickly as possible.
2. *What is the most common cause of trucks being put out of service?* There is not one single consistent issue on most commercial vehicles. However, some common issues include brakes that need to be serviced, paper license plates, and issues with the antilock brake system (ABS).

3. *Is there a common repository where citizens can look at compliance reports for various companies?*
Yes, you can go to www.fmcsa.dot.gov and enter the company name or Department of Transportation (DOT) number that is found on the trucks.

Warehouses in Deer Park

Debbie Westbeld of Deer Park Economic Development shared information about warehouses in Deer Park. The warehouse district is primarily in the northwest corner of Deer Park, just south of SH 225. There are also warehouses bordering SH 225 and Underwood Rd. Some of those warehouses border Deer Park, but are actually in La Porte. Unless making a delivery, all trucks in Deer Park should be on the truck route which consists of Underwood, Old Underwood, Battleground and SH 225. City Council has approved the building of 2 new warehouses, one on East Blvd between East 13th and East X Street, and one at East Pasadena Blvd and Underwood Road.

As new development comes into the city, new traffic studies are completed. The city uses Midtown Engineering for traffic and signalization studies. In order to receive a permit, developers must provide their own studies when a project is on a main thoroughfare. Westbeld believes the Shell Federal Credit Union expansion project will increase traffic because approximately 500 workers from other smaller branches will be housed in the new building. The project is scheduled to be completed in October 2023.

If you would like more information about economic development in Deer Park, join the Deer Park Economic Development Facebook page. There is also a newsletter distributed city-wide that you can sign up for by emailing your information to her at DWESTBELD@DEERPARKTX.ORG.

Questions and Comments:

1. *What is the warehouse on East Blvd going to be used for?* The warehouse is not leased yet, so not certain. However, per city code, it is not allowed to store hazardous materials.
2. *Aren't there other warehouses on Underwood that have hazardous materials?* Yes, some warehouses along Underwood that are in La Porte contain hazardous materials. There are others in Deer Park that have been grandfathered in and contain hazard materials.

Updates

Written Facility Updates - Members received regular periodic plant updates in advance of the meeting but the facilitator asked the plants who reported this month to share one or two highlights from their update that they wanted members to know about.

- OxyVinyls Deer Park PVC/KOH— No recordable injuries during this time. John McPhaul reported a release of ammonia on June 12, 2023. However, after calculations were completed, OxyVinyls determined that they were below the reportable quantity and updated the report. No injuries or off-site impacts were reported or observed. No environmental incidents during this time. The facility celebrated a milestone achievement of One Million Safe Work Hours in February 2023, which includes Oxy employees as well as contractors. The facility is celebrating their 75th Anniversary in October.
- OxyVinyls Deer Park VCM - There were no environmental incidents during this time. There was 1 injury reported when a scaffold builder received medical treatment after a piece of refractory brick

fell and contacted his back. The contractor returned to work shortly thereafter. The Deer Park VCM site received four Texas Chemistry Council awards for worker safety and process safety performance. Since January, the facility has hired four new employees (1 production manager, 1 maintenance engineer, 1 construction supervisor, and 1 electrician) and hosted 1 intern from Texas A&M University.

- Texas Molecular – Frank Marine reported no releases or spills or permit modifications. There were no violations or areas of concern during agency inspections. One OSHA recordable injury occurred during this period.
- Vopak Moda – JD Abernathy reported an EPA inspection and Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) inspection, no violations were reported. No employee or contractor injuries during 2023.

Ozone Exceedance Days – Yayma Martinez reported in May there were thirteen exceedances of the Houston Region 8-hour ozone standard, one exceedance of the Houston Region 1-hour standard, five exceedances of the Deer Park 8-hour standard, and zero exceedances of the Deer Park 1-hour standard.

In June, there were nine exceedances of the Houston Region 8-hour standard, one exceedance of the Houston Region 1-hour standard, one exceedance of the Deer Park 8-hour standard, and zero exceedances of the Deer Park 1-hour standard.

In July, there were four exceedances of the Houston Region 8-hour standard, zero exceedances of the Houston Region 1-hour standard, zero exceedances of the Deer Park 8-hour standard, and zero exceedances of the Deer Park 1-hour standard.

In August, there were eleven exceedances of the Houston Region 8-hour ozone standard, two exceedances of the Houston Region 1-hour standard, four exceedances of the Deer Park 8-hour standard, and zero exceedances of the Deer Park 1-hour standard. These numbers may change once the data has been validated.

Totals for 2023 include 40 exceedances of the Houston Region 8-hour ozone standard, 4 exceedances of the Houston Region 1-hour standard, 10 exceedances of the Deer Park 8-hour standard, and 0 exceedances of the Deer Park 1-hour standard.

Host Plant – Vopak Moda was the plant host for the August meeting. They have a ship dock and a barge dock to import ammonia and pipeline it to customers. Ammonia is used in purification of water supplies and in the manufacture of plastics, fertilizer, textiles, dyes and other chemicals.

Treasury Committee

An additional Community Member is needed on the Treasury Committee. The Treasury Committee develops, proposes, and administers the budget. They normally meet three times a year via Zoom. Ruth Boyd volunteered to serve on the Treasury Committee. Cara Herbeck was confirmed as Treasurer for the next 3 years.

2024 Meeting Dates

The May meeting date falls on Memorial Day in 2024. Members agreed to meet a week early on May 20th.

The November meeting date falls during the week of Thanksgiving. DPCAC will meet the Monday after Thanksgiving on December 2nd.

Plans for Future Meetings

DPCAC meets at Republic Grill at the City of Deer Park Battleground Golf course from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

September 25th – Shell Plant Tour (limited attendance)

October 23rd – Annual Report on Emissions. (Please turn in your data to Gary Jackson at Vopak.)

Dates for 2023 - all Mondays

Jan. 23	May 22	Sept. 25
Feb. 27	No June meeting	Oct. 23
Mar. 27	No July meeting	Nov. 27
Apr. 24	Aug. 28	No December meeting

Dates for 2024 - all Mondays

Jan. 22	May 20	Sept. 23
Feb. 26	No June meeting	Oct. 28
Mar. 25	No July meeting	Dec. 2 (for November)
Apr. 22	Aug. 26	No December meeting

Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC)

Input on Roads and Traffic in Deer Park

8-28-2023

1) What were you happy to hear about from the Deer Park Police Department and how they are managing truck and container truck traffic?

- A plan is in place to manage truck traffic.
- Commercial Vehicle program exists.
- Defined truck routes
- Working to enforce
- Yes. 50% need repairs. Incredible.
- Educate first.
- Following up with owners to reinforce the driving routes.
- They are on guard and addressing issues
- Very pleased to hear that they are actively working on the situation.
- That they are finding unsafe vehicles.

2) What are you still concerned about with regard to truck and container traffic?

- Only major concern is the execution of managing the traffic in residential areas.
- Traffic on St. Augustine due to stoppages on 225.
- Number of trucks out of compliance. Also, number of trucks that will increase. Can police keep up?
- Retread tires. Speeding trucks.
- Volume with respect to infrastructure.
- Will the truck routes be able to handle any increased traffic?
- More warehouses being built.
- What will be the plan to address commercial vehicle traffic when 225 is repaved?
- Volume of truck traffic and its growth.
- Retreads are a safety hazard on trucks. Believe they are illegal in TX. If not, they should be.

3) What questions do you still have for the police department?

- How many stops per day? (Approximate)
- Where do they (police) perform the inspections?
- If 49% have issues, how many are stopped?
- How can we keep up with growth of truck traffic?
- How much do “regular” patrol officers interact with trucks, especially at night?
- Is the truck traffic compliance crew 24 hours?
- Have they contacted Google maps, etc. to get the maps updated to show truck routes?
- How many officers are on the commercial vehicle team? How many shifts do they work?
- Which police depts are working commercial vehicle traffic along 225? What are the jurisdictional boundaries?
- How do you find vehicles in question? Don’t have to have a reason but usually see something.
- Appreciate what they do.

4) What were you happy to hear about with regard to warehouses in Deer Park?

- Zoning process.
- Not an abundance of hazardous materials.
- No hazardous materials in new warehouses.
- Restricted to certain areas. Truck routes. All hazardous material North of 225.
- Limited locations allowed.
- Bringing in jobs.
- Glad trucks have designated routes and cannot go through the city.

5) What concerns do you still have about warehouse development in Deer Park?

- Do we need a different truck route on Underwood and East Blvd?
- Surprised the East Blvd warehouse got approved.
- Thru traffic. Storage hazardous materials.
- Is there any reoccurring inspection of warehouses?
- Existing truck traffic still exists. Concerns about the 500 employees coming with the new Shell FCU.
- Additional Traffic

6) What lingering questions do you still have about warehouse development?

- Does City Council consider what is in it prior to approval?
- How do we find out what is being stored in warehouses?
- Who is responsible for Underwood Road? Truck traffic is on the border of Deer Park and La Porte.
- Can the city get with GPS companies to have the truck routes outlined better and defined?

7) Input on any other topics?

- People don't know all the stuff the city does. Deer Park Messenger will not be printed anymore.
- Chickens – raising for eggs in Deer Park?
- Timing on Ship Channel bridge? ETA on direct connect 225 to Beltway 8?
- Very good speakers and valuable interaction.