

South End NRZ Zoom Minutes
February 11th, 2025

Draft

Participants: 16

The meeting began at 6:30 pm

Luke Daniel the active Coordinator for Environmental Justice in Stamford gave an overview on the sources of traffic pollution in the Stamford South End:

Traffic Pollution

- Cars
- Trucks
- Highways
- Intersections

Health Impacts of Traffic Pollution:

- Greenhouse gas emissions and air quality
- Health issues caused by pollutants like PM2.5
- Asthma, COPD, Heart & Lung Disease

Environmental Justice Implications:

- Traffic pollution disproportionately affects low income and minority communities
- Proximity to highways and bus depots.
- Limited access to clean public transportation.

Luke mentioned that he submitted a request to the Stamford Department of Transportation to post “No Idling “signs on Canal Street, Harbor Street and Rugby Street.

Jake Felton Director of the Air Quality Enforcement Division of DEEP gave an update on their air quality endeavors in Stamford. Jake advised they mostly respond to public complaints.

The Scope of the bureau of Air Management:

- Regulate primary sources of stationary air pollution i.e. (power plants, chemical facilities, etc.)

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- Prorogate rules
- Issue permits
- Maintain and inventory of emissions statewide
- Conduct inspections
- Issue enforcement actions and settle enforcement cases that involve a substantial amount of money.
- Incentive programs to initiate electric vehicles and e-bikes.
- Limited authority to regulate mobile sources
- Perform air quality monitoring throughout the state.

Sue Halpern commented we have the purple monitors and would be interesting to get the monitors up and running so we can see what's going on down in the South End.

Jody Bishop-Pullan the Stamford Health Director did a slide presentation on Enhanced Air Quality Monitoring in Stamford's South End and West Side Neighborhoods.

Project Title: Enhanced Air Quality Monitoring in Stamford's South End and West Side Neighborhoods.

Funding Source: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Award: \$68,755

Project Duration: 11/1/2024 – 10/31/2025

****Funding has been impacted by the President Executive order but in any case, Jody advised they are proceeding.***

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Air Quality Monitors:

- Three (3) highly sensitive Aeroqual AQY-R air quality monitors.
- Continuous measurements of O3(Ozone) NO2 and PM2.5 will be collected and averaged into hour intervals
- Three stationary locations to be determined around the South End and West Side neighborhoods to characterize spatial and temporary variability of air pollutants.
- An online air quality dashboard will allow the public to interface with the air sensor data

Progress:

- RFP process.
- Contract execution
- QAPP Writing
- Address EPA revisions on QAPP
- Final QAPP approval by EPA on Oct 11th, 2024
- Community meeting November 19th, 2024.
- Sites identified and working with City Operations Department to prep for installation.

Jody stated they have the monitors stored in the conference room at the government center. They are ready to be installed as soon as they can get power.

Sue Halpern asked: Have spots been picked for placing the monitors.

Jodi answered: They want to put one at the Lathan Wider Community Center since the building has the available power. The amount of power needed is equivalent for powering a laptop.

Sue Halpern asked: Is there going to be another location in the South End?

Jodi Answered: The Lathan Wider location is the only location in the South End. The other locations are Selleck Street and Jackie Robinson Park.

John Wooten asked: Has anyone thought about the exhaust from the parking garages? Since the South End has several large apartment buildings with parking garages.

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Jodi answered: Exhaust from parking garages has not been a part of the Health Department discussion.

Jake Felton suggested posting “No Idling” signs in the garages with the permission of the owners.

Tammy asked: What is the determining factor for placing the monitor at the Lathan Wider Center verse’s other locations in the South End?

Jody answered: Had to find a location with power.

Terry Adams asked: Couldn’t you get power from the light poles?

Jody Answered: No, most of the streetlights are not city owned. The poles are owned by Eversource

John Wooten inquired about solar panels which he felt could be easily erected, since the city has easements along Canal Street it shouldn’t be a problem.

Jody Answered: She is working within her parameters, but she would ask about solar panels although she don’t know how that would work.

Sheila Barney inquired about monitors being placed along the I-95 corridor which stretches along the main streets entering the South End creating a concern of air quality.

Jody answered: The I-95 corridor is also a concern of hers as well. Jody advised that she would look at all alternatives.

Jodie’s contact information: jpullan@stamfordct.gov 203.977.4396

Jake Felton presented a PowerPoint of the GMAP vehicle which is a custom-built Hybrid Ford Explorer:

- The GMAP consist of 5 ambient air pollution analyzers which can measure and record in real time the concentration of 16 air pollutants.

Overall Goal of the GMAP:

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- To better understand emissions and exposure to emissions at a hyperlocal level
- To promote environmental Justice and the equitable enforcement of air quality law.
- To foster community engagement and transparency

GMAP is used for Environmental Justice, Monitoring and Enforcement.

Rebate programs for Hydrogen & Electric Automobiles: The Connecticut Hydrogen & Electric Automobile Purchase Rebate (CHEAPR) provides cash incentives at point of sale to Connecticut residents who purchase or lease an eligible electric vehicle with base MRP of \$50k or less from a Licensed Connecticut Automobile dealership.

3-ways to qualify for the rebate:

1. Income under 300% of FPL
2. Participate in certain income-based assistance programs.
3. Live in an EJ distressed area.

Note: The standard & Rebate +New incentives are stackable

Permitting requirements in EJ areas:

Goal: To facilitate meaningful public engagement in the air quality permitting process for new/expanding facilities in EJ areas prior to submitting applications.

Julian Taborda of DEEP Air Quality has been conducting site visits in Stamford mostly at the asphalt plant on Canal Street and at O&G on Harvard Avenue. O&G has done some plant upgrades. It seems odors are the most typical complaint. If odors are coming from asphalt trucks just receiving loads there isn't much DEEP can do since the truck is a mobile source.

4-Criteria for odors:

1. Intensity-strong at any given time.
2. Duration- how long
3. Characteristic – Offensive or less offensive tells what the odor is.

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4. Frequency- how many times of day.

Recent Updates:

- Received complaints of emissions 2-weeks ago on the O&G on Davenport Street plant. Observations revealed steam emissions. The vent is facing the houses across the street. Didn't observe any drag out or dirt.
- From observing there were no odors from the concrete plant and the asphalt plant is currently closed.

Terry Adams mentioned that covers are not on the sand barge at O&G on Davenport and is there a regulation to keep covers on the Sand Barge?

Julian answered: Yes, there is a regulation for fugitive dust and covers and water must be used.

Jody advised if there are issues with fugitive dust the Health Department can assist.

Julian mentioned that O&G implements street sweepers, water trucks 3or 4 mobile sprinklers to prevent dust.

Julian advised he visited Rubino Brothers in 2019, and they use a soap powder mixed in with their shredder which captures dust. Julian has not seen dust from their shredder operation. The 14-acre boat yard site is being held as a material yard and **has been just sitting there being unused.**

Tammy asked: Are there specific intervals for complaints since he mentioned he last visited Rubino Brothers in 2019?

Julian Answered: He routinely monitors Rubino Brothers and keeps an eye on their operation.

Julian Contact information: julian.taborda@ct.gov; 860.424.3464

Complaints: 860.424.3436 deep.aircomplaints@ct.gov

Terry Adams mentioned that car seat materials from Rubino Brothers operation is found in the water at low-tide and it seems to accumulate over time.

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Jake advised he will follow-up with their remediation division about the issue with the car seat material.

Terry Adams mentioned the sludge coming from the waste plant that is turned into pellets being used as fertilizer for the animals and plants. How can this be stopped?

Jake mentioned that this should be regulated by the State Department of Agriculture. Jake will send Terry's concern to the Department of Agriculture. Jake agreed to come back to the May 13th NRZ meeting with updates.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.