

A. EXISTING CONDITIONS

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted for the project site in July 2001. The primary objective of the Phase I ESA was to identify the presence or likely presence, use, or release of hazardous substances or petroleum products that are defined in American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard Practice E 1527-00 as recognized environmental conditions (RECs). Other environmental issues or conditions such as radon, asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, and PCB-containing equipment were also evaluated.

The Phase I ESA identified the following RECs associated with the project site: historical usage of the site as a rail yard, four debris mounds on the project site, pipe insulation that was considered asbestos containing material (ACM), and a suspected underground storage tank (UST). The Phase I ESA also identified RECs associated with properties adjacent to the project site, including: the historical presence of upgradient automobile service/filling stations with potential USTs, the historical presence of an upgradient laundry facility which may have used cleaning products that impacted the subsurface, and the historical presence of an upgradient former manufactured gas plant (MGP) with manufacturing by-products that could have impacted the project site.

A Phase II Environmental Site Investigation (ESI) and a remedial investigation (RI) were completed at the site in August 2001 and November 2005, respectively, to investigate the RECs identified in the Phase I ESA. The combined ESI and RI activities included three geophysical surveys, a collection of 11 surface soil samples, advancement and sampling of 64 soil borings, installation and sampling of 20 monitoring wells and three temporary piezometers, excavation and sampling of 19 test pits, installation and sampling of 23 soil gas implants, seven single-well hydraulic tests, and laboratory analysis of soil, groundwater and soil gas samples.

The laboratory analytical results identified soil and groundwater contamination above New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Recommended Soil Cleanup Objectives (RSCOs) and groundwater quality standards, specifically associated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and semivolatile organic compounds (SVOCs). The majority of the contamination identified was generally confined to the northwest portion of the project site as well as upgradient to the north and off site at a depth corresponding to the top of the saturated zone (water table). The VOC and SVOC contamination identified in the soils and groundwater at the project site is related to historic operations of the project site and adjoining properties. Specifically, the presence of SVOCs in the northwestern portion of the project site is concluded to be associated with the historic operation of an MGP. SVOCs on the remainder of the project site are attributable to historic rail yard operations and the presence of historic fill. The presence of VOCs on the project site is concluded to be associated with the historic operation of a filling station/auto repair facility adjacent to and immediately upgradient of the project site.

B. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT

In the future without the proposed project, no construction activity would occur on the project site and conditions on the project site are expected to remain unchanged.

C. PROBABLE IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

In the future with the proposed project, a school facility would be constructed on the project site. To ensure that none of the constituents of concern described above would pose a hazard to workers, future school occupants, and/or the environment during and after construction of the proposed project, the remediation measures below would be implemented in accordance with NYSDEC Brownfield Cleanup Program requirements. These measures were approved by NYSDEC in consultation with the New York State Department of Health in a letter dated July 5, 2006.

- Construction of a hydraulic barrier along the northern and western boundaries of the project site to prevent contaminated groundwater from entering the site and to limit dewatering during site excavation;
- Removal and off-site disposal of contaminated soil (approximately 19,000 cubic yards in a 40,000 square foot area) from the northwestern portion of the project site and backfill this excavated area with environmentally clean soil;
- During the construction of the school, monitor groundwater quality downgradient of the hydraulic barriers and at the downgradient property line to confirm that there are no changes in the existing groundwater quality;
- Installation of a 24-inch layer of environmentally clean fill over any landscaped or exposed soil areas of the site after construction activities are completed to prevent direct contact with the subsurface soils; and
- As an added safeguard, construction of a vapor barrier and active sub-slab depressurization system beneath the proposed school to prevent any potential residual vapors from entering the school in the future.

The greatest potential for exposure to any constituents of concern at the project site would occur during the implementation of the remediation phase of the proposed project (specifically, during installation of the hydraulic barrier and excavation of the contaminated soil in the northwestern portion of the project site). These activities may result in a short-term increase in potential exposure for construction workers at the site to VOCs and SVOCs present in the soils. Exposure to these constituents would be through direct contact, incidental ingestion of soils, or inhalation of dust or vapors.

Construction of the proposed facility will not begin in the area of contamination until the contaminants are removed as detailed in the Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP). To minimize construction workers' exposure, standard industry practices for the removal of contaminated soils will be utilized, including the employment of an appropriate health and safety plan (HASP). The HASP will include periodic air monitoring and personal protective equipment, as warranted. In addition, measures will be taken to prevent exposure of residents or workers in the area to any fugitive dusts or vapors during construction. The excavation of contaminated soil will be completed within temporary enclosures kept at a negative pressure that will contain and treat (i.e., remove) fugitive dusts and vapors from the air prior to discharge to the outside. The practice of spraying water to suppress any airborne dust outside the enclosures (roadways) will also be

conducted. The contaminated soils excavated and removed from the project site will be handled and transported off-site to a licensed and permitted disposal/recycling facility in accordance with all applicable local, State, and Federal regulations. The NYSDEC will monitor the remediation program and receive daily site monitoring information. With these measures in place, no significant adverse impacts on soil and groundwater conditions would occur. *