

CITY OF  
**BENSON** MINNESOTA  
CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL

**Minutes  
Citizens Advisory Panel  
June 3, 2002**

Members present: Renee Hayden, Carolyn Lee, Brian McNeill, Leroy Noreen, Jan Lundebrek, Bruce  
Holgate, Ray Millett, and Barry Jungwirth,  
Members absent: Allen Saunders, Lynette Hofland, Steve Verhelst, and Bill Lee  
Present from -  
City: City Manager Rob Wolfington  
Fibrominn: Anne Donato, Terry Walmsley and Greg Langmo

**The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Brian McNeill.**

Minutes were approved from the previous meeting on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

**MPCA Permit Status**

Terry Walmsley explained the history of the air permit with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). MPCA is responsible for evaluating how the air quality will be impacted by the Fibrowatt power plant. Discussions began a year ago. The air permit application was subsequently completed and submitted in September 2001. Four weeks later, the power plant stack emissions was approved.

In the time between September 2001 and June 2002, Fibrominn has cooperated fully with the ongoing process of review for the air permit. Part of the challenge for MPCA is that it had never permitted a similar power plant. Basically, new categories needed to be created for evaluation. Simultaneously, the modeling group required a significant amount of additional modeling (studies to evaluate air quality impacts from various specific sources).

Fibrominn complied with all the requests including standard modeling of stack and boiler emissions as well as a significant amount of additional air quality modeling including: road dust, cooling tower and backup fire pump modeling which has been ongoing since October 2001.

Nine months later, Fibrowatt believes that they have complied fully with MPCA's modeling requests and that this process is complete. At this point the language of the draft air permit is nearly finalized and ready to issue for public comment. At today's meeting with MPCA, Fibrowatt learned that additional road dust modeling is required.

It is important to Fibrominn to develop a good long term relationships with MPCA and all other regulatory agencies. While this process has taken longer than expected, we feel that we are close to having a draft ready to issue for public comment.

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## **Airport Status**

Rob Wolfington gave an update on the variance required for the airport due to the proximity of the Fibrominn power plant. The stack of the power plant is not directly in the path of the runway, but would affect planes in their flight approaches. The Swift County Monitor article update on May 22<sup>nd</sup> which gives a full account of the process was distributed.

In January 2002 the Benson Airport Board of Adjustment approved a variance allowing Fibrominn to construct the plant's stack within the conical approach zone of the airport. To receive approval from the FAA while minimizing the impact on the local airport, the city hired an experienced consulting group called Aviation Systems, Inc. to help develop a plan. The plan which has been submitted to the FAA for approval, includes simple operating changes for pilots in take-off and landing.

## **Well Installation Status**

Terry Walmsley described the well installation process. Last month, the drilling was conducted for two wells required for the development of the Fibrominn power plant. The drilling of the first well #43 took longer than expected and the second location for well #42 on the edge of the park was unsuccessful. A new location closer to route nine north of Rob's motel was chosen and subsequently successfully drilled. Testing on both wells was subsequently completed. These wells will now be capped until they are needed. A map showing the locations of the wells was distributed.

## **New Benson Fibrominn Office/Visitor Center**

Anne Donato gave an update on the status of the Visitor's Center. Fibrominn is in the process of finalizing a lease with the Johnson's who have recently renovated a building on Atlantic Avenue in Benson. The site, next to Back Street Media at 1204 Atlantic Avenue was chosen because of its good visibility for visitor's coming to Benson. Fibrominn plans to sub-lease a portion of the site to The Chamber of Commerce who will occupy the front portion of the space. Fibrominn considers this a win-win situation. The Chamber will handle initial inquiries for Fibrominn and gain a greater visibility with their new location on Atlantic Avenue. The space will be used as a site office for the Fibrominn project during construction with plans to convert the space into a visitor's center once the plant is built. The Chamber hopes to move into the building before the end of the month. A plan of the site and a photo of the façade showing potential signage was distributed.

## **Community Support**

Anne Donato gave an update on recent events that Fibrominn has participated in as part of the Business Community. Over the past few months, Fibrominn has been approached to give presentations to many local organizations such as : The Swift County Annual Meeting. The company has joined and supports local environmental organizations such as Clean Up the River Environment (CURE). Local contributions have been made to community events such the Benson Band Festival sponsored by the Benson Chamber of Commerce. Support for the addition to the Benson Hospital was made through participation in the Emerald Eve Silent Auction. Fibrominn is proud to become a part of the Benson Business Community and looks forward to ongoing participation.

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## Participation in National Conferences

Anne Donato and Greg Langmo gave an update on attendance at recent conferences. The conferences range from a focus on the poultry industry, and alternative fuel to animal residuals. This is part of Fibrowatt's plan to become a nationally recognized company.

## Benson Web Site Update

Anne Donato has developed the Fibrominn and Citizens Advisory Panel presence on the Benson Web Site. She gave an update on recent additions to the site. Over the past month, Anne has put together a list of Fibrominn Milestones that show how far the project has come over the past few years. It's a good reminder for all of us who have been anxiously awaiting the beginning of construction to see all the steps along the way and the steady progress Fibrominn has made. The Milestones handout was distributed at the meeting and is posted on the Fibrominn section of the Benson web site @ [www.benson.org/fibrominn](http://www.benson.org/fibrominn).

A Question and Answer section was also added to the site. The questions for this section were developed by the Citizens Advisory Panel who will provide Fibrominn ongoing input for periodic updates. Citizens Advisory Panel meeting minutes are posted on the CAP site as a regular update for the community. The Citizens Advisory Panel Web site address is [www.benson.org/cap](http://www.benson.org/cap).

## Fibrominn Employment Inquiries Procedure

Anne Donato has developed a procedure for addressing inquiries for employment at the Fibrominn Power Plant. The Fibrowatt web site suggests that anyone who is interested in employment send their resume to Anne Donato. Resumes can be sent by mail, fax or email. Details are available on the Fibrowatt web site @ [www.fibrowattusa.com](http://www.fibrowattusa.com). Every inquiry is answered and all resumes will be kept on file. Fibrominn will be hiring staff during the course of construction, so that the entire staff is in place and fully trained when the plant becomes operational. There will be about 30 full time jobs and a number of related employment opportunities. All job openings will be posted in the Swift County Monitor.

## Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be scheduled to coincide with an Open House which will be held during the public comment period for the air permit. Fibrominn will advise CAP members just as soon as the permit has been issued.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.