



Facts About...

Former Koppers Company Parcel (Voluntary Cleanup Program)

Site Location

The 125.34-acre former Koppers Company property is comprised of the former Koppers site and various undeveloped parcels. The property is primarily wooded and vegetated except in the former Koppers Company area, where dirt roads, building foundations and railroad tracks remain. Wesel Boulevard bisects the property, including the former Koppers Company area. The property is zoned for commercial and industrial use.

Surrounding properties include to the north, Western Maryland Railroad tracks; to the northeast and east, residential properties; to the south, wooded land, railroad tracks and commercial properties; and to the west, commercial properties. Lowes purchased a 51.65-acre portion of the property on the northern side of Wesel Boulevard and to the west of the former Koppers Company area.

The property is underlain by predominantly carbonate rocks where ground water has moved through fractures and bedding-plane separations that have been enlarged by dissolution of rock by the circulating ground water. Ground water occurs under both confined and unconfined water table conditions. Public water and sewer are available for the area. The nearest surface water body is a pond located at the city park.

Site History

Western Maryland Railway Company (a predecessor company to CSX) purchased the property in a series of transactions dating from 1906 to 1944. In April 1930, Western Maryland Railway Company leased a 40.94-acre portion of the property to Maryland Wood Preserving Company. The lease was then assigned to Century Wood Preserving Company in December 1932. Koppers apparently acquired Century Wood Preserving Company sometime after 1932. The former Koppers facility site was used to manufacture and treat railroad ties with creosote from April 1930 to January 1953, when the lease expired.

Until the early 1980s, Western Maryland Railway Company used a portion of the property as a staging and switching yard for railroad cars. A review of the historical records indicates that the remainder of the property was never developed with the exception of a former farmstead to the northwest of the former Koppers facility.

Environmental Investigations and Actions

During construction of Wesel Boulevard in the 1980s, a terra cotta pipe containing creosote was discovered. At that time, the section of pipe within the road right of way was removed, along with the associated creosote contamination. Additional environmental investigations were completed in the 1990s. Areas of contaminated soil and ground water were identified as associated with the former wood treating operations and former rail yard. The soil contaminants that exceed the MDE cleanup standards at the property consist of metals and carcinogenic polycyclic hydrocarbons (cPAHs). The ground water contaminants that exceed the MDE cleanup standards at the property consist of benzene, metals and cPAHs.

In March 2006, the City of Hagerstown submitted plans for a storm-water management system that utilizes a portion of the property to convey storm water. The VCP responded to the plan indicating that the property owner would be held responsible for any disturbance or off-site transport of the on-site contamination. Construction of the storm-water management system was completed in 2007.

The property remediation in 2008 and 2009 included the removal of an estimated 21,000 tons of contaminated soil and concrete, 50 tons of scrap steel, and over 2000 railroad ties.

Current Status

On May 17, 2002, RDC Projects, LLC submitted a VCP application seeking a No Further Requirements Determination (NFRD) as a responsible person for the property at the above address with a total acreage of 203.89 acres. On February 10, 2003, RDC Projects, LLC submitted a revised VCP application removing parcels with a resulting property size of 174.39 acres. On May 16, 2003, RDC Projects, LLC submitted a revised VCP application removing some additional parcels with a resulting property size of 169.89 acres. On April 12, 2005, RDC Projects, LLC submitted a revised VCP application removing additional parcels with a resulting property size of 125.34 acres.

On January 5, 2006, the VCP accepted the 125.34-acre property into the program and required the development and satisfactory completion of a response action plan (RAP) for the identified risks. The participant submitted a proposed RAP on July 6, 2006 and the public meeting was held on July 18, 2006.

In September 2006, the VCP issued comments requiring the completion of the proposed additional site characterization prior to approval of the proposed RAP. In December 2006, a work plan was developed and submitted; the VCP approved the work plan on January 23, 2007. The additional site characterization work was performed in March 2007. A second proposed RAP was submitted in September 2007 and a third proposed RAP was submitted in February 2008, the plan was approved by the VCP on March 31, 2008.

In 2009, the participant completed the work in the RAP and on October 6, 2009 they submitted the request for issuance of the certificate of completion (COC) for the property. On December 21, 2009, the Department issued a restricted COC to RDC Projects, LLC for future commercial or industrial use of the property. The COC restricts future ground water use, excavated soil, maintenance of the stormwater conveyance system, and the requirement for an environmental covenant. The groundwater at the property will be monitored for five years beginning in 2010. The COC was recorded in the land records office of Washington County on January 18, 2010.

Planned or Potential Future Action

The proposed future use of the property is commercial or industrial.

Contact

For additional information, please contact the Land Restoration Program at (410) 537-3493.

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