

Meeting #56
June 21, 2017
MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Attendees

Community Working Group members present:

George Martin – JF Ranch
Lynn Martin – JF Ranch
Jeff Bunkleemann – Central Arizona College
Bruce Wittig – Queen Valley Fire Department
Jim Schenck – Rebuild Superior
Hank Gutierrez - Superior Copper Alliance
Sylvia Werre – Top of the World
Pam Bennett – Queen Valley Community Liaison
Karen Kitchayan Jones – San Carlos Apache Tribe
Fernando Shipley – Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center Board
Pamela Rabago – Superior Chamber of Commerce

Community Working Group members not present:

Roy Chavez - Concerned Citizens and Retired Miners
Nancy Vogler – LOST Trail
Bill Vogler – Superior Copper Alliance
Tom Spridgen – Rotary Club of Superior
Anthony Huerta – Town of Superior
Fred Gaudet – Arizona Trail Association
JoAnn Besich – Superior Optimist Club
Cecil Fendley – Queen Valley Water Board
Rick Cartier – Superior Chamber of Commerce alternate
Tiffany Rowell – Superior resident
Arlynn Godinez – Superior Unified School District Board / Maricopa County

Resolution Copper Company:

Michael Betom

Facilitators – Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA)

John Godec
Debra Duerr

Speakers:

none

Public Guests:

Michelle & Joe Schaffner

Introductions & Housekeeping

John Godec welcomed everyone to the 4th anniversary meeting of the CWG. He asked members to introduce themselves, noting that there is a new member present as well as guests.

Godec reported that Douglas Wolfe, the Pinal County Assessor, declined to come tonight to speak with the group, as he had concerns about possible opinions or discussions that might be expressed. A member asked if we would ever be able to find someone who can talk with the group on the topic of real estate, noting that this is the second time an invited guest has cancelled. Godec speculated that government officials are reluctant to say anything that might be controversial, since the Resolution Copper Project could spur lawsuits in future. Godec told the group that he has called the Gila County Assessor's (Debra Hughes) office and spoke with Joseph Williams, who said he would discuss it with his staff and respond. Regarding real estate, CWG members reported that real estate in the Queen Valley area is selling very quickly at high prices, and that prices in Superior have gone up in the past couple of years although they have been relatively flat this year.

In community news, Lynn Martin announced that she is opening a restaurant in Superior, which will be open for breakfast and lunch and will have a bakery. It will be called the Superior Café and Bakery, and will open in September, across the street from the Chamber of Commerce building. It was noted that several restaurants in the area are closing.

Members noted that Oddonetto Construction has purchased a local company and will be building a concrete batch plant, which could provide more jobs.

Jim Schenck announced that he is now a VISTA volunteer working for *Rebuild Superior*.

A member said that the Copper Area News did an article that Resolution closed Hewitt Station Road, which was incorrect. It was privately closed as it's on private property. This goes to the issue of rumor control.

Godec reported that the same Forest Service international land managers conference group with which he and Hank Gutierrez spoke last year has requested that they come back to this year's conference on October 23. He asked if Hank and perhaps another CWG representative would be willing to go and speak with them. Jim Schenk said he might be interested. Godec is unable to attend.

It was noted that Frank Deal, tailings engineer for the Resolution Copper Project, is leaving for a job in Mexico. The group wished him well and expressed gratitude for the time and information he has always provided to the CWG.

Discussion of Resolution Copper / Rio Tinto Social Commitment

Based on several examples and recent events, CWG members raised a number of issues and concerns about Resolution's current level of commitment to its stated 'social license to operate'. Topics mentioned involved staffing changes in the local Communities group, local hiring practices, changes in community investment practices, and shift of the company's focus to the Forest Service and Native American consultations. The group discussed some possible reasons for this including budget and economics, staffing of key positions in Superior by non-Americans not familiar with the area, replacement of 'local financial handouts' with a more centralized investment strategy, the lack of 'hot topics' at the moment that present controversy, the past shift of responsibility for the Community Working Group away from Vicky Peacey, and changes in personal relationships between staff and the community with Rio Tinto having more control. Most members present expressed opinions that this has resulted in a feeling within the community that they are not valued as much as in the past, are not considered as important, and that their opinions don't matter.

Several suggestions were made for addressing this concern. Godec noted that the CWG is again under Peacey's jurisdiction, which may help in information exchange. It was pointed out that the company has a written policy called *The Way We Work*, which the CWG could review and compare to what their concerns are. The group is aware that several studies have been commissioned recently from consultants regarding human rights and social investment, and would like to obtain copies of those reports. The CWG would also like to have another update from Resolution management soon on Resolution's current hiring and contracting policies and practices, as well as a confirmation of their philosophy regarding the social license to operate and policies being used to implement it.

A member suggested that if we're in a lull, maybe the CWG shouldn't be meeting. Godec responded that if the group doesn't feel they're serving a purpose there's no need to continue; but if they feel that the community still has questions and concerns, then they are serving a good function. Several members observed that this group is a great information resource that others rely on, and though there may not be much going on right now, and members may not agree with everything that's going on, the CWG still needs to keep engaging. All agreed with this assessment.

Clarification of Recent Forest Service Public Meeting

Godec pointed out a note from Vicky Peacey included in tonight's meeting packets that provided updates on several Forest Service activities. At the recent public meeting on the Tonto National Forest plan update that many were unaware of, Pablo Burghard and Tom Torres were there. There is confusion over the purpose of this and how the public was notified. It was pointed out that a new Forest Plan would affect the Town of Superior and the region. The RUG should also be interested and involved. It was suggested that we invite Forest Service representatives to talk with the CWG about the forest planning process and other ongoing studies during the fall, possibly in September.

Subcommittee Updates

RUG

The RUG meeting was cancelled this morning. The group is waiting for data from the International Mountain Bicycling Association to complete the next draft of the recreation plan. Once a plan is agreed on, there is a suggestion that the RUG might want to sponsor a public meeting to engage a larger audience.

Community Monitoring

CWG members reported on the recent well monitoring conducted in May. It was noted that members were not impressed with the Resolution sampling process, from a safety and protocol perspective. For example, the open well at the Arboretum was not protected and could result in accidents. The sampling bottles were left around haphazardly. The sampling procedures at Castlebury took a long time and it seemed like time was wasted. It was thought that the use of the truck battery was unsafe, as the battery could explode or other accidents could result. It was observed that the CWG is not there not by invitation but to conduct parallel samples, so it was suggested that our group might want to think about our own safety procedures and protections. It was also suggested that we get a commitment in writing from Resolution that the independent monitoring program will be continued, as it also helps them to fulfill their social license. Members wondered whether Resolution would be responsible if there was an accident during this sampling. Godec said that he will let the company know about these concerns. We could ask them to address this before the next sampling session. The group suggested that a solution might be to make the Arboretum well safer. Another could be to use a generator at Castlebury or install electricity for a stand-alone pump.

Historic Preservation

Pamela Rabago and Jim Schenck met with Vicky Peacey to discuss the group's questions and suggestions about the smelter stack and other historic buildings at the West Plant site. Other attendees included Casey McKeon, Diego Ortega, Melissa Rabago, and Mila Lira. The conclusion is that the stack will not be preserved or rehabilitated by Resolution due to safety and cost concerns. Cleaning the buildings would also cost several million dollars. Resolution has committed to cleanup on the West Plant by 2020, which could be precluded by leaving the stack in place due to safety concerns. The decision is that the stack and powerhouse will be demolished. Resolution will do more investigation of the other buildings on site. If these can't be saved, the group asked about a mining museum somewhere else in town, possibly Harding School. Another idea is that the rail line could possibly be extended into Superior to encourage tourism. Another subcommittee meeting is planned for September. The CWG encouraged subcommittee members to keep thinking about ideas and suggestions for preserving the historic resources of the community and encouraging tourism in this way.

CWG Future Meeting & Task Planning

Godec pointed out the running list of meeting topics that is included in the Annual Report. He asked members to suggest additional topics if they have ideas.

Kami Ballard should be invited to present a video for the subsidence area, as she noted at the previous meeting.

The group asked the facilitator to let them know of any information of interest, or upcoming meetings of other organizations that they might be interested in.

Public Comments

A visitor said she heard about the group when they did a mine tour last week, and wanted to see what it's all about. She has moved here recently and loves this town. She said that the stack represents Superior to her, and is saddened that it can't be saved. She wishes that there was some other entity who could step in with funding. Jim noted that it's not just a question of money but of time; when Resolution started this project they accepted the environmental liability of Magma, and must remediate the site.

Next Meeting

There will be no CWG meetings in the months of July and August. The next meeting is scheduled for:

*Wednesday, **September 13**, 2017*
Superior Chamber of Commerce
6:00pm