

# City of Rochester

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**Department of  
Environmental Services**

Office of the Commissioner  
Division of Environmental Quality  
30 Church Street, Rm 300B  
Rochester, New York 14614-1278  
Tel#: (716) 428-6011

January 6, 2004

Mr. Timothy Walsh  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Division of Environmental Remediation  
6274 East Avon-Lima Road  
Avon, New York 14414-9519

Re: Charlotte Street Redevelopment Project, Rochester, New York

Dear Mr. Walsh:

Enclosed is a copy of the Day Environmental, Inc. (DAY) report entitled Groundwater Monitoring Study, 14-60 Charlotte Street, Rochester, New York dated July 2003. DAY was retained by the City of Rochester's (City's) Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to perform supplemental groundwater monitoring of six existing wells, and collect groundwater samples for analytical laboratory testing from two existing off-site monitoring wells located in Haags Alley, and one existing well located on the northeastern portion of the 14-60 Charlotte Street site.

The results of the supplemental groundwater sampling are documented in the enclosed DAY report. The highest concentration of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and total petroleum hydrocarbons were detected in wells MW-12 and MW-13 located in the Haags Alley right-of-way (ROW) adjacent to a former dry-cleaning plant and a former auto painting garage. A sheen and/or a layer of light non-aqueous phase liquid (LNAPL) were observed in both wells located in Haags Alley. The groundwater potentiometric contour map (refer to Figure 2 in the DAY report) illustrates that groundwater elevations are generally highest on the western portion of the study area and lower on the eastern portion of the study area, indicating a groundwater flow direction across the site from west to east under a relatively flat hydraulic gradient of 0.01 to 0.02 ft/ft. The results of the supplemental groundwater monitoring concur with previous subsurface investigations conducted by the City that indicate that the primary source or sources of VOC groundwater contamination are located off-site north of Haag Alley. Previous environmental investigations indicate that a contaminated groundwater plume originating from source areas north of Haags Alley has migrated onto a portion of the 14-60 Charlotte Street redevelopment site. Based on the information obtained to date, contamination in the Haags Alley ROW was encountered in the vicinity of the following three privately owned parcels:

- 527-533 West Main Street (Elite Service Launderers & Dry Cleaners Inc. with two solvents tanks shown on a Sanborn Map),
- 17-19 Richmond Street (former auto painting shop shown on a Sanborn Map),
- 29-33 Richmond Street (formerly used as a photographic studio and printers, and BIS permits indicate the installation and removal of several tanks).

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Enclosed is a copy of a circa 1950 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map which shows the former dry cleaner facility

EEO Employer/Handicapped

located at 327-533 East Main Street, the auto painting garage at 17-19 Richmond Street, and a warehouse at 29-33 Richmond Street. Also enclosed is City Building Information System (BIS) Property Summary information which identifies the current property owner(s) for each of the three parcels referenced above. Included are printouts of pertinent BIS permits for 29 Richmond Street which reference tanks on this parcel.

As you know, the City has invested a significant amount of time and resources in assembling and preparing the Charlotte Street development site. The City has completed the Interim Remedial Measures (IRMs) listed in the approved Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for the Charlotte Street development site. The IRMs have included the demolition of structures, the removal of underground tank systems, removal of underground hydraulic lift systems, the excavation and off-site disposal of approximately 1,900 tons of contaminated soil, the collection and laboratory analysis of 23 confirmatory soil samples, and conducting post-IRM groundwater monitoring. The CAP also included the design of "generic" environmental engineering controls (i.e., vapor barriers and venting systems) to mitigate residual contamination from entering future buildings to be constructed on the site, as well as institutional controls.

As discussed during a recent telephone conversation, the City has been actively working with a developer regarding the purchase of the site by the developer and the subsequent construction of residential townhouses on the Charlotte Street site. However, the negotiations with the developer came to an impasse due primarily with issues of potential liability associated with the off-site groundwater plume that is impacting the Charlotte Street site. It is not technically feasible for the City to address the off-site source(s) of contamination, since the actual source or sources of contamination appear to originate on properties which are not currently owned or managed by the City. The potential for VOCs to infiltrate into existing structures north of Haags Alley is unknown.

The City has recently obtained \$200,000 in grant funding from the USEPA to remediate petroleum contamination at 80-100 Charlotte Street which is located immediately west of the 14-60 Charlotte Street site. It is anticipated that the initial phase of the cleanup at the 80-100 Charlotte Street property will begin sometime in 2004, and once adequately remediated, the 80-100 Charlotte Street parcel will be incorporated into to the 14-60 Charlotte Street development site. However, the City is concerned that the failure to address the source of the groundwater contamination plume will continue to jeopardize the development of the Charlotte Street site.

It is requested that the NYSDEC attend a meeting with the City, USEPA, and the Monroe County Department of Health to be scheduled for sometime in winter 2004 to discuss the environmental conditions associated with the Charlotte Street site. The City will be contacting you to set up the meeting. Thank you for your assistance with this project, and if you have any questions, please contact me at (585) 428-6649.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Biondolillo  
Sr. Environmental Specialist

c: Joseph Albert, MCDOH  
Lya Theodoratos, USEPA  
Bruce Finster, NYSDEC (w/o attachments)  
Linda Luxenberg, City of Rochester (w/o attachments)  
Curt Colombo, City of Rochester (w/o attachments)  
Robert Zimmer, City of Rochester (w/o attachments)  
Mark Gregor, City of Rochester (w/o attachments)  
Johanna Brennan, City of Rochester (w/o attachments)  
Jeff Danzinger, Day Environmental, Inc. (w/o attachments)