



Community Liaison Committee

National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories

MEETING NOTES

Thursday, June 29, 2006
6:30 pm.

Members Present: Dolly Battle, Glen Berkowitz, Christopher Brayton, Sheila Grove, Michael Kozu, Sandra Silver

Speaker(s): Mark Klempner, M.D., John Murphy, Ph.D., Co-Principal Investigators, National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratories (NEIDL)

Staff: Carla Richards, Director of Community Relations, Boston University Medical Center (BUMC)

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

The first quarterly meeting of the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) of the NEIDL was held Thursday, June 29, 2006. Richards welcomed the CLC and gave an overview of the selection process. The CLC members were solicited through open nomination that took place between March and April 2006 and included advertisements in community newspapers and posting on the NEIDL website. Fifteen eligible applications were received. CLC members were chosen based on a number of considerations including, but not limited to, local residence, meeting availability, participation and/or leadership in other community groups or associations, and interest and/or experience with the industry or project. Members identified their affiliations as the following:

- *Dolly Battle, Roxbury, Roxbury Neighborhood Council, Whittier Street Tenant's Association*
- *Glen Berkowitz, Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association.*
- *Christopher Brayton, Blackstone/Franklin Square Neighborhood Association*
- *Sheila Grove, Washington Gateway Main Street*
- *Michael Kozu, Project Rebuilding and Improving Grove Hall Together (Project RIGHT)*
- *Sandra Silver, Ellis South End Neighborhood Association*

ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Murphy led discussion on the vision and role for the CLC. The CLC will serve as a window into the operations and activities at the NEIDL and provide for open exchange and dialogue between the community and the same. Murphy emphasized the importance of a two-way exchange process with the Director of Community Relations serving as the initial point of contact and access for CLC members to engage the project.

ABOUT THE NEIDL

Klempner provided updates on the NEIDL including updates on construction, administration, funding, timeline, research activities and legal affairs. These were:

- *Construction*

One of the first key pieces of construction involved redirecting a storm drain that ran under the NEIDL site into the former Roxbury Canal. Members inquired about construction impacts, particularly as it relates to groundwater issues. Grove suggested members read “Gaining Ground by Nancy Seashells” to get a good overview of the depth of the issue. Klempner and Murphy agreed to have members of the construction team attend the next meeting to provide more detailed information on construction impacts along this area.

Koza asked for further details on employment and recommended use of a diversity plan and compliance monitor to ensure Boston residents are well represented during construction. Klempner noted that the NEIDL must comply with all federal, state and local guidelines with respect to hiring. Compliance falls under the purview of three entities: University Associates, the owner’s representative, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the general contractor, Turner/McCarthy. At the local level, the project must also comply with the City of Boston’s job residency policy. Additional information on details of the diversity and compliance plans will be discussed at a future meeting.

- *Administration*

Klempner noted that the NEIDL is one component of an overall Boston University (BU) effort to expand the biosafety program. Recruitment is currently underway for a Director of Biosafety, a newly created position at a vice president’s level to lead compliance in this area.

- *Funding*

In response to member questions involving funding for NEIDL operations going forward, Klempner noted that there are three basic sources with the bulk of the funding coming from the NIH. Klempner anticipates that the first five-year NIH operations grant for the NEIDL will be close to \$60 million. The three primary funding sources for the NEIDL are:

- Individual Project NIH grants
- Programmatic NIH grants (UC7 grant)
- Corporations, Foundations, and Philanthropy

Timeline

Klempner noted the NEIDL is under a 30-month construction schedule. The outline of the building should be visible this fall.

- *Research Activities*

Klempner and Murphy assured the CLC that members will have access to information on research projects at the NEIDL. Silver inquired about oversight of research operations and Klempner mentioned that various entities will fulfill this function including the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), a mandated internal review group that approves all Boston University projects that involve recombinant DNA or biohazardous materials. Klempner also stated that community representation is a component of the IBC. Members asked for further details on selection, charge and appointment of IBC members. It was suggested that IBC members be invited to attend CLC meetings to give updates and presentations on research projects. Richards will follow-up and forward a link to the IBC website.

Klempner also noted that the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), the City's public health agency, has oversight of the operations at the NEIDL. New BPHC guidelines will require registration of all research laboratories that study select agents. Through its registration and inspection program, the Centers for Disease Control also oversees all select agent research. No research can be done on select agents until they are registered with both of these agencies. Silver expressed concern about the feasibility of disclosing information about agents being researched and asked for more information on the reporting process.

Members inquired about emergency preparedness and response plans for the facility. It was agreed that representatives from these areas would make a presentation and answer questions at the next CLC meeting. In the interim, Richards will forward a link to emergency preparedness documents posted electronically by BUMC.

Grove asked for clarification on whether any of the research conducted at the NEIDL would be classified or whether the facility would be used to make bioweapons. Klempner noted that neither is the case and the CLC will have access to information on the operations and activities that take place at the NEIDL.

- *Legal Affairs*

Klempner mentioned that late afternoon he received notification that an injunction had been filed against NIH to stop funding for the NEIDL. No further information was available at this time. Koza requested the CLC receive an update on the legal issues at the next meeting.

CITYLAB RECRUITMENT

Richards announced that recruitment for the fall class of CityLab Academy is currently underway and encouraged members to forward the information to interested students and parents. CityLab is a free BUMC academic and job skills training program for those with a high school diploma or GED that are interested in pursuing a successful career in biotechnology.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- *Membership Terms*

CLC members serve two-year staggered terms. Specific member terms were determined randomly at the June 29 meeting. They are: Dolly Battle-2 Years; Glen Berkowitz-1 Year; Christopher Brayton-1 Year; Sheila Grove-1 Year; Michael Koza-2 Years; Sandra Silver-2 Years.

- *Communication*

Members asked for clarification on access to information on the NEIDL and contact with the principal investigators. It was noted that Richards will staff the CLC meetings and serve as an access point for information and dialogue between the NEIDL, the CLC and the Community.

- *Minutes*

Richards will draft meeting minutes for review by the CLC prior to issuing a final draft. The CLC indicated interest in sharing meeting minutes with other interested residents and stakeholders. Some suggestions included publishing minutes in community newspapers or sending out notices to community groups/individuals that minutes are available. (Website?)

- *Meeting Schedule*

The CLC will meet quarterly. Richards will make every effort to accommodate the schedules of the membership.

7:45 p.m. Meeting adjourned.