

Hills Group Meeting Summary November 4, 2011

In Attendance: Larry Davis, Linda Feduik Rotondi, Juanita Holler, Jaun Jarrett, Ed Mientka, Pam Monn, Don Robinson, Harry Rockland-Miller, Christine Rogers, Karen Schoenberger, Larry Snyder

D. Robinson informed the group that two informational sessions were held this past week, including an active session with staff of the Center for Counseling and Psychological Health and a lightly attended open forum.

C. Rogers, who has been extensively involved with Hills issues, provided a review of her observations, testing, results and analysis. She indicated that she has conducted an on-site review of Hills 105 finding what appears to be dampness along the south ceiling. Physical plant will check the area. All second floor samples were found to be normal with no elevated mold levels. On the 1st floor, room 122 had slightly elevated levels of 575 spores/m³ of *Penicillium/Aspergillus*-like no visible problems were evident. Room 129 test results indicated greater than 1,000 spores/m³. Some mustiness was sensed in the stairwell. Room 131 showed some discoloration on the window sill most likely from plant watering. Test results here were 280 spores/m³ *Penicillium/Aspergillus*-like. Four other samples were taken in the area, all with levels between 80 and 160 m³. Room 105 tested at 160 spores/m³. The basement area (after remediation) tested at 200 spores/m³ *Penicillium/Aspergillus*-like spores. K. Schoenberger asked about Elizabeth Brabecs's office. C. Rogers reported that testing showed a *Penicillium/Aspergillus*-like level of about 600 pores spores/m³. It was however noted that samples were taken prior to carpet removal. It was noted that room 113, 114, 115, 118, 121 and 125 are awaiting results.

An observed leak from a unit ventilator in room 113 was reported.

Room 149 and 149A with peeling paint and dead roaches was reported.

It was noted that the deodorizers that spray out particles should not be utilized (one was removed) as they tend to mask potential problems.

Room 227 test results for P. A. were about 200 spores m³ therefore not a significant problem. H. Rockland-Miller asked about the implications and recommendation concerning the occupant in room 129 (with spore counts above 1,000m³). C. Rogers responded that with no set standards, some people use 700 spores/m³ as an action level. She recommends using 1,000 as a guideline. What should happen in this case is that the water source needs to be found. It was her opinion that anyone experiencing symptoms in an area with test results over 1,000 should be relocated. If occupants do not experience symptoms then relocation is not necessary. DC. Rogers will continue to testing as necessary.

L. Snyder will follow-up with his staff on potential moisture sources.

Occupants need to be cautious when watering plants.

C. Rogers recommends that existing vents be cleaned, and that she noted higher levels of particles in the 1st floor corridor which is warranting the cleaning program.

It was confirmed that E. Brabec's office has had the carpet and existing tile removed and new tile has been installed.

An in depth discussion centered on the waxing of this tile. L. Snyder indicated that wax allows for the tile to be protected and more easily maintained. P. Monn asked if waxing can be done on weekends with appropriate ventilation. H. Rockland-Miller reminded the group that occupants have been told that no chemicals will be used in the building. It was again noted that wax serves as a protectant and makes it easier to remove dust particles. Some occupants actually want increased waxing as the frequency of waxing has actually been reduced.

C. Rogers reminded the group that during a time period of heightened concerns and reported chemical sensitivity, the "no chemical" proposal was made. J. Jarrett asked if waxing could wait until intersession. P. Monn confirmed that could be scheduled. She also indicated that products used are not toxic and are about as clean as they can get. She also has MSDS sheets on cleaners (5) and waxes used. L. Snyder indicated his concern for the limitations on what is typically done to maintain buildings. C. Rogers discussed the nature of chemical sensitivity and the process of attempting to rule out chemical sources. Sealants and adhesives can be a concern. Building occupants need to be kept informed. Physical Plant is aware of the no chemical policy. H. Rockland-Miller indicated that he understands that we need to proceed with caution, continue with air assessments and evaluations but reiterated that 15 members of his department are feeling acute symptoms.

The question was raised on the impact from chemicals used and brought in by LARP students. D. Robinson confirmed that products brought in by occupants could be a complicating issue.

It was emphasized that communication with and advance notice to occupants is important. An incident at Berkshire House where a contractor utilizing chemicals caused health issues for occupants was discussed.

Dan McCarthy is getting a price for first floor carpet removal / tile installation.

J. Jarrett raised the issue of precedence setting for relocating occupants. The concern is that the trend may grow to a point where relocation can't be accommodated. It was pointed out that relocation of some occupants has already occurred. C. Rogers confirmed that if spore counts are found to be elevated within a particular room, and if the occupant of that room experiences symptoms, then relocation of that occupant is recommended.

As the cleaning program continues, additional investigation of moisture and heat sources is warranted. P. Monn reviewed the status of the cleaning program. C. Rogers conducted an on-site review this past Saturday and took sample from a wood section which appeared to be mold.

The carpet cleaning process was discussed. Boxes for belongings are still available. Microfiber cloths that had an unusual odor were changed out.

C. Rogers plans on taking additional samples from Hills South and will take follow-up samples after the cleaning program is complete.

D. Robinson indicated that no forums or Hills Group meeting are currently scheduled. C. Rogers suggested that the next forum be scheduled after our Hills Group meeting. D. Robinson is available to meet with the Mental Health staff again. It was suggested that next meetings be held after cleaning is complete and when sample results are available.