

Los Alamos

Los Alamos National Laboratory
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87545

ERID # 58986
memorandum

TO: P. Gary Eller

DATE: August 13, 1993

FROM: William C. Francis

MAIL STOP/TELEPHONE: J534/7-0835

INC-9/93-00043

SUBJECT:

History of the Development of the Land North of DP Road and East of The Knights of Columbus Hall

An aerial photograph of DP Road titled Sandia Lab-0-2-4 Dec. 46-1100-12-Var. Alt. - Los Alamos (Attachment A) shows that a strip of land was cleared and graded between the intersection of Trinity Drive and the entrance to TA-21. This strip of cleared land started about 0.20 of a mile east of the Trinity Drive intersection and extended for about a quarter of a mile to the east. Harry Smith, a retired operating engineer for the Zia Company, recalls that one use of this area was to park jeeps, sedans, personnel carriers, trucks, etc. that were transferred to Los Alamos from Ft. Carson at Colorado Springs, Colorado. These vehicles were stored in this area until they could be mechanically checked and serviced before being assigned to the Los Alamos motor pool.

In 1947, the Zia Company constructed what was known as the "fuel yard". This fuel yard was located between the east boundary of The Knights of Columbus' property line and the west boundary of the DP Road Fire Station. There was a perimeter road that started off DP Road, dropped down to the edge of the small canyon to the north, parallel the edge of the canyon and then came back to DP Road. Gerald Huber, a retired supervisor of the Zia Company's Warehouse Division, had charge of all fuel storage and deliveries. Mr. Huber informed me that there were thirteen storage tanks installed below ground and two installed above ground. The two above ground tanks had a capacity of approximately 22,000 gallons each and stored diesel fuel. The underground tanks stored white gas, kerosene, no. 1 distillate, no. 2 distillate, cleaning solvent, gasoline, and in the late 1970s and 1980s gasohol (a mixture of 10% alcohol and 90% gasoline). The entire system was a gravity feed system. The vendor's supply truck would pull off DP Road onto a wide shoulder on the north side and attach to the fill line of the storage tank to be serviced and fill the storage tank by gravity. Each of the storage tanks on the hillside had a loading ramp for the Zia Company's distribution trucks. The discharge line from the storage tank to the distribution truck had a valve at the tank and a valve at the loading ramp. All valves were padlocked at all times. In 1947 or 1948, a leak developed at the loading ramp gasoline valve, but the valve at the tank held and was not leaking. The ramp valve was replaced. Some gasoline leaked to the ground, but Gerald Huber does not remember how much. The most that could have leaked would have been the volume in the pipe between the two valves. All tanks, roads, and fill pipes were removed in 1988 or 1989.



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David Caballes and Pat Dugan of the Los Alamos County Utilities Department tell me that all of the private businesses on the north side of DP Road have their own septic systems. The County does not service them. The County utility Department does not know the location of any of the septic tanks except one. This septic tank services the Rapid Machine Works that is owned by Don and Pat Rabie. The tank is exposed and partially excavated. I obtained permission from Mrs. Rabie to locate the tank and made a sketch (see Attachment B). Each business has water and gas service.

A 1960 Zia Company drawing, Eng-C46572, sheet 4 of 5 locates tracts F-F, 208 DP Road, and G-G, 216 DP Road. There is a note on this drawing that states that there is a septic tank of unknown location on what I believe is tract F-F. I recall that an AEC building existed close to what is now tracts F-F and G-G in 1947 and 1948. This building was a driver testing facility. At that time, a person had to pass some physical tests before being issued a government drivers license. The septic tank mentioned on the Zia Company drawing could have been for the old AEC facility and abandoned. The businesses that are now on tract F-F are Glover's Auto Parts, Kingdom Hall of Jehovahs Witness, and Allied Foods. Tract G-G is occupied by the Rapid Machine Works.

I was interested in the location of the septic tank at the Rapid Machine Works because I thought that there was a chance that it could be the septic tank of unknown location. I do not believe that the tank that I located is the old septic tank. I believe that the tank that I located was built when the Rapid Machine Works building was constructed. I believe this because the exposed septic tank is immediately adjacent to the east property line of tract G-G and located very close to the rear wall of the building. This would be a logical place to locate a new septic tank that was to service the new building being constructed.

Two or three hundred feet east of Hezzies Auto Glass, the most eastern business on the north side of DP road, is a wood ramp setting on the ground. This ramp has been abandoned and was used by the Zia Company to load and unload heavy equipment such as bulldozers, trenching machines, etc. from and onto lowboy tractor trailers. It has not been used for many years and is now fenced off from DP Road.

Gerald Huber also remembers that the used oil dump pit would be east of the wood loading ramp and west of the turnoff to DP East, which I show in a possible location on my drawing sheet TA-21 ER-2 (see Attachment C).

*Per telephone conversation with W. E. Francis
August 31, 1998; 1330 hrs.*

*The cleaning solvent referred to above was, to
the best of his recollection, called Stoddard Solvent.
The Merck Index, 12th Edition, shows Stoddard Solvent
(#6288) to consist of Mineral spirits, various types
of hydrocarbon solvents, primarily petroleum distillates,*

*Joe Ormer - LATA
September 1, 1998*