

# Malden River is Beyond Dirty Water!

By Karen Buck, Malden Resident and Friend of the Malden River

The Friends of Malden River (FoMR) is changing the tune of Malden River! We hear the rhetoric of a polluted river, but do we have to accept this Dirty Water as our anthem? We say “No” and Massachusetts Laws support our efforts.



Illustration by: Lenni Armstrong

The Mass Department of Environmental Protection protocols enable citizens' involvement through a prescribed method known as a Public Involvement Plan (PIP). Ten local residents and/or officials potentially affected by a contaminated site can petition the state to designate the property as a (PIP) site. A PIP gives the community key information it needs in order to understand and evaluate the remediation process. A PIP must provide a local information repository, a site mailing list, and opportunities for individuals to comment on site assessment and cleanup efforts, including the state's responses to those comments. A PIP also includes input from a community meeting. As a result, its scope can go beyond the minimum required by law.

**Please come and support public health and our river!** Update: Honeywell International, Inc. has responded timely to the petition signed by Malden residents. **This plan will be presented to the citizens on June 4<sup>th</sup> at the Malden Public Library (Maccario Room) at 6:30PM.** All documents pertaining to the 378 Commercial Street site will be sent to the library for citizen viewing prior to the meeting.

FoMR is targeting one of the most contaminated sites on the Malden River (378 Commercial Street). Historic industrial operations have left subsurface soil and groundwater at the Site contaminated with metals and petroleum constituents.

A Release Abatement Measure (RAM) was initiated in 2007, which allowed the removal of several tons of contaminated soil. Following the soil removal, the site was closed with a Temporary Solution. Some of the contaminated soil could not be accessed because it is under existing buildings. It wouldn't be cost effective to demolish these buildings if the covered contaminated soil posed no risk to workers or visitors to the Site. Therefore a Temporary Solution was adequate.

Also, in 2007, naphthalene (a product of coal tar manufacturing), a possible carcinogen (a member of FoMR chimed in, “think of mothballs”) was detected at a very high concentration of 1,400 µg/L in a groundwater monitoring well (RIZ-8) which is located very close to the Malden River. DEP requires that such a site be evaluated every 5 years to determine whether a permanent remediation of its contaminated state is possible. Again, it was found that the pavement was intact and therefor does not impose risk to above ground use.

In 2012, during the mandated reevaluation, a concentration of 360 µg/L of naphthalene was detected in groundwater from the same monitoring well (RIZ-8). This poses a question: *Where did the naphthalene leach?* FoMR is striving towards a complete remedial plan and a permanent solution to this site. This remediation plan can be a model for other contaminated sites on the Malden River.

The law allows that the company can wait five years for a reevaluation of sampling unless community members file a petition asking that the designation of the site becomes a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) site. Once the petition is received, the owners of the site must acknowledge it within 20 days and then write a draft PIP within 60 days which is presented at a public meeting. The public has 20 days after the meeting to review and suggest changes to the PIP. The final PIP must be completed and publicized within 30 days of the close of the comment period. The PIP is implemented throughout the cleanup process.

Let's sing a different tune: *Take Me to the River!*

For more information regarding this process, visit: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/cleanup/factpi2.pdf>  
For updates, you may contact the Friends of Malden River: [friendsofthemaldenriver@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofthemaldenriver@gmail.com)