

Visual Reconnaissance of Self-Lume and Nearby Properties

8:00 AM — Visited Building Department of the Moraine Municipal Government Complex and obtained maps of all properties in the vicinity of the Self-Lume property.

8:30 AM - Began drive-through at intersection of Pitch Pine Lane and Boulder Boulevard (aka Route 66E) - drove NE on Boulder Blvd. - "No Hunting / Property of Moraine Township" signs posted on both sides of the road - both sides of road have "pine barrens" vegetation (dominated by scrub oak and pine) with light-colored or beige soils that are visibly sandy and gravelly. About 0.3 mile further down the road is a narrow clearing on both sides of the road, ~20 feet wide extending NW-SE; stopped car on side of road; there is little vegetation in these cleared strips except for low, scraggly weeds; to the NE 40-50 feet from road is a brick building (20 ft. square) sitting in the middle of the clearing; on the building is a sign stating "No Trespassing/ Township of Moraine/ Division of Water Supply" - the building is possibly a pumping station because the clearing runs straight up hill all the way to the water tower (clearly labeled "Township of Moraine"); the clearing on the other side extends straight downhill (about two football fields away) to another brick building which (with my binoculars) looks to be several times the size of the first building; I'll try to check this building out when I close my loop at the end of the day.

9:10 AM - Back in the car - 150 yards further up the road is a BTEX gas station - where I pull in for a full tank of regular gasoline - the address is 21-172a Boulder Boulevard (aka Rt. 66E) - the E is for Esker County as this is a county road and the 21 is the 21st segment from the road's origin in Assiniboine 23 miles to the SW (this as told to me by Al Milankovitch, the brother of Tillie Terrain who owns both the diner next door and the gas station) - this I find out when I go get a cup of coffee and a buttered roll from Tillie's Diner (21-172b) - the only 24 hour diner in Moraine. Tillie - very friendly and chatty, pushing 60 (?) - told me that the property and the diner were bought by her parents back in 1958 - that the diner was renamed Tillie's at that time - that she has worked there ever since - that the gas station was built in 1968 - and that she purchased the property in 1971 after her husband died in 1970. Her brother Al runs the gas station. The Firn Freeze across the road she says was opened in 1979 - it closes down at the end of September and reopens every April Fool's Day.

9:40 AM - From the diner I pull across the street into Firn Freeze (22-11 Boulder Blvd.), a local "Dairy Queen" type operation - a bit run down, dusty gravel parking lot - the property sits on a triangle formed at the intersection of Rt. 66E and Loess Lane. Directly S across Loess Lane is what appears to be more Township property that ran all along the E side of Rt. 66E on my way up to BTEX - however, the vegetation has changed to a deciduous forest (second or third growth) with the older trees maybe 50 to 75 years old - the soils are visually finer and dark brown in color.

9:45 AM - As I proceed E on Loess Lane there is a small strip of land with a few trees that appears distinct from the asphalt parking lot of Kilroy's Bar (7 Loess Lane) - the frontage of this bar is about 200 feet - just beyond the bar is another open area with more trees and

undergrowth (~100 feet of frontage) - directly across from this open space is a large asphalt driveway /entrance to the parking lot for the Wedging Nursery (at 10 Loess Lane) - as I pull into the parking lot I find it to be a bustling place with the small trucks and vans of local landscapers loading sod, dirt, chips, etc. There are three long greenhouses on the W side of the Wedging parking lot (i.e., directly across from Kilroy's Bar) and one large and two smaller buildings around the lot - outback (to the S) from what I could see from the lot was a large sod farm with other growing areas for trees and shrubs (somewhere between 5 & 10 acres); just at the S end of the parking lot is a small square shed (a well?) with old hose, pipe, and other irrigation equipment laying around - there are several large trees interspersed on the site and many trees and low growth bordering the site. Just before leaving the nursery I picked up a business card in the main office which says "Wedging Nursery/ serving landscapers and gardeners since 1980/ Flora Blume, Proprietor."

10:05 AM - Turning right onto Loess Lane heading E again - about 100 yds. down on the N side is a paved entrance to Plucker's Scrap Metal (15 Loess Lane), an auto wrecker and scrap metal business - there is a large fence surrounding the property - the front gate was open - the paved road extends straight in to the N ending about 150 yds. in the distance in a 30 ft. high pile of scrap metal (fenders, hoods, doors, etc.) - on the right is a long building with stalls containing cars in various stages of being stripped - on the left is a small office building - there are cars everywhere, some piled on each other - a dirt road extends to the W between more piles of parts, barrels, tires, etc. - a crane is operating off behind the office building lifting metal into a compactor - a real junkyard complete with yelping junkyard dogs that have announced my now unwelcome presence.

10:25 AM - I leave Plucker's turning left onto Loess Lane. Directly across from Plucker's is (according to the name on the mailbox) the Wedging family homestead (12 Loess Lane), a large 2 1/2 story edifice with mansard roof, two chimneys and eight gables - a paved driveway leads to a two car garage. The site is nicely landscaped with numerous shrubs and several large trees. Just 100 ft. or so down from the Wedging family driveway on other (N) side of Loess Lane is a dirt road leading back into the junkyard but a metal gate blocks the way though it does not completely obscure the many cars and piles of sorted (and sordid?) debris.

10:30 - I've finally arrived at the front entrance to the abandoned, Self-Lume factory site Lane (20 Loess Lane) which is about a football field away from the Wedging driveway and also on the S side of Loess. My key to the building itself is for the padlocked door in the rear parking lot but I also have keys for the chain link gates at both entrances. The property is surrounded by an eight-foot chain link fence. The 200 ft. entrance driveway extends straight to the S and is surrounded by dense deciduous forest with many large and intermediate trees and heavy undergrowth especially along the sides of the road. Coming down the road I can see part of a water (?) tank on the roof. The foilage is the same around the parking lot. Both the road and the parking lot are littered with twigs, leaves and the like. The parking lot is about 150 ft. wide and 300 ft. long with a rectangular island (approx. 30 x 200 ft.) of trees and undergrowth right in the middle of the parking lot. From the S end of the lot are two sidewalks about 100 ft. apart, the W one leading to the main entrance (with a slightly rusted "Self-Lume, Inc." sign still in place over

the entrance portico) and the E sidewalk leading to a smaller less imposing entrance probably for workers. Nothing seems unusual - single story, cinder block construction, a flat roof not visible from the ground level, the windows are all still intact and closed - the tan paint is weathered and peeling in places - empty office rooms (no furniture, no debris) are all one can see through the dirty windows. Large weeds, overgrown shrubs, and several young, invading trees now surround the building at the front and along the W wall; however, at the SE corner of the parking lot is a cleared area about 40 ft. wide running along the E wall of the factory - all that is growing here are weeds and grasses - the substrate consists of 3/4 inch diameter gravel with some dirt in the pore spaces - it looks like an old access road but it is inaccessible to vehicles because seven large glacial erratic boulders have been moved into place at the edge of the parking lot in front of the cleared area. With binoculars I can see that this old road extends to the rear parking lot where I will have a better look.

11:05 AM - Leaving the Self-Lume site and turning right onto Loess Lane heading E. On the N side of the road about 200 ft. down from the Self-Lume entrance is a road running straight to a large red barn then another 150 ft. down the road is a driveway and a garage followed by a large two story red sandstone home. There is a sign near the mailbox that indicates that this home is an Esker County historic site and was built in 1837 as part of the Fallow Farm. The mailbox also says Meredith and James Fallow (25 Loess Lane) so I presume that some part of the family continues to live here. The home sits on the NW corner of Loess Lane and Erratic Avenue and is nicely landscaped with several very large elegant oaks. On the NE corner there is a second or third growth forest with dense undergrowth and many intermediate trees. The same can be seen on the SE corner but older trees dominate the SW corner which is the NE corner of the Self-Lume site.

11:15 AM - Turning S on Erratic Avenue - about 220 ft. down on the E side of the road is a relatively new condominium development (16, 20, 24, 28, and 32 Erratic Avenue) - these are two story, wood frame, rather ordinary - the development is under the aegis of the so-called Kame Kondo Association - there are five units, each with driveway and garage under the second story - landscaping is severe at present with a few sparse planting of trees along the edges of the property.

11:30 AM - About 100 ft. down from Kame Kondos on the W side of Erratic Avenue is the factory (delivery) entrance to the Self-Lume site. After unlocking the padlock and opening the gate and driving down the long (300-400 ft.), wide (50 ft.) road I enter a large, rectangular paved area (about 200 x 300 ft.). Both sides of the entrance road are guarded by the same forest and undergrowth as the other entranceway. I drive in straight ahead at the W end of the lot where I find a concrete pier (about 10x30 ft.) on which are two gas pumps (old, rusted, no hoses or nozzles, and no markings, seemingly empty metal shells). There are two steel caps, almost certainly the covers for refueling pipes of the UST for these fuel pumps, visible in the asphalt. Both of them are about 7 1/2' to the E of the concrete pier and 5' down from the N end and S end of the pier. Most of the lot is bordered by the same forest and undergrowth previously mentioned. There was once a cleared zone (lawn?) about 40 ft. wide along the W side of the building which I can see from the old pumps but this is now replaced with considerably new

growth, weeds and small, invading trees, etc.- I'll walk this area after lunch. Just to the S of the old fuel pumps at the edge of the parking lot is a wide area (about 100 x 100 ft., but irregularly shaped), once cleared (there is no old growth), with similar vegetation to that along the W wall of the factory - this disturbed area extends out into the older forest. Upon closer inspection the substrate of this area is dirt and gravel mixed with chunks of concrete, pieces of cinder block, asphalt, and other debris (a piece of 2 by 4, metal flashing, an old pail, a half-buried bucket of tar) - this is a fairly recent landfill of some sort. I return to the car by the pumps and drive to two old trailers (rusting, rodent infested with flat, rotting tires) in the far SE corner of the lot - they are empty except for piles of flattened, bundled, and now rotted cardboard boxes that the animals seem to love. I return to the car and drive to the back entrance after passing the two loading docks in the right rear (facing N) of the building. The large metal back door is in the center of the building close to westernmost loading dock. Rather than begin an interior inspection I decide to have lunch.

12:15 PM - Retrace (Erratic to Loess and back to Boulder) to Tillie's Diner for lunch. When I inquired about Kilroy's Bar, Tillie told me that Jack Kilroy was the former Chief of Police and that he bought the former PAL building and converted it into a bar and grill about ten years ago - it's now a popular place for locals, especially Moraine's uniformed services. She also told me that Hector Fowler, the owner of Plucker's, and Jack Kilroy go way back and are regulars early in the morning — and that Plucker's was established in 1962 the year she graduated from Moraine High. Good food and good stories at Tillie's Diner that I am now leaving in order to return to the back entrance of Self-Lume.

1:10 PM - I decide to finish examining the exterior before entering the building - along the west wall which I inspected by walking from back to front and back again I confirmed the initial observation of a 40 ft. cleared zone (now overgrown) extending from the W wall outward. Now, however, I have found in addition a much larger area that was once cleared (not visible to me before). This area is about 100 ft. wide centered on the middle of the W wall and extends out from the building 120-140 ft. to the W. Thus, there is an additional cleared zone 100 x 80-100 ft. jutting into the forest from the cleared zone mentioned before. Again the vegetation in the once-cleared but now overgrown area is about ten years old (based on the age of the oldest invading trees) and is about 50 ft. lower in height than the canopy of the surrounding forest. Closer inspection of the surface of this zone reveals that the soil structure has been disturbed compared to the surrounding forest (which has a surface silt loess layer 1-3 feet thick) which is missing or mixed with sand and gravel in the cleared zone; other than this there is nothing else to report on the W side of the building.

1:50 PM - After retracing my steps I walked along the E wall of the building noting again the probable access road. The first significant find on the E side of the building is the soot that stains the cinder block above a section of six consecutive windows. These windows begin about 100 ft. from the NE corner of the building and extend down another 50 ft. from there. The windows are missing and a brief look inside indicates a significant fire (which from outside seems confined to one room inside). There is a gaping hole (about 4 x 7 ft.) visible in the partially collapsed roof as well. At the S end of these six windows is an exterior pipe only a

couple of inches from the wall extending vertically about 2 ft. from the ground - this is a pipe used to refill an oil fuel tank probably underground here. Also, about 100 ft. from the SE corner of the factory is a stone wall (that has largely collapsed into a pile of stones) beginning about 10 ft. from the edge of the gravel access road along the side of the building and running to the E another 250 ft. The wall is broken in two spots for about 15 ft. dividing the wall into three roughly equal sections. There are no obvious changes in vegetation. I did find an old rusted tire rim along the wall and about 150 ft. out found several concrete footings but the brush and the poison ivy were so bad I turned back to concentrate the rest of my time on the interior of the building.

2:35 PM - Except in three instances the interior of the building is largely unremarkable. I inspected every room shown on the floor map and, without the exceptions noted below, each room was empty and clean except for dust and some soot especially closer to the fire. By empty I mean walls, floor, and ceiling - no furniture, no benches, no fixtures; where there had been sinks, drains, etc. all that remained were pipes jutting from the concrete floor that were capped off. Other pipes extend down from overhead (also capped off) that would not be visible except for the fact that all of the dropped ceilings had been removed. The room with the fire has been marked with a * on the map. There is a charred hole in the roof but the room itself, except for stains of smoke and charring has been cleaned like the others and all debris from the fire as well as furniture, fixtures, etc., has been removed. There is a considerable pile of leaves, twigs, and decaying organic matter beneath the hole in the roof as well as standing water on the floor. The room itself appears to have been the boiler and utility room. I see no evidence of gas lines. There is no obvious oil storage tank so there must be a UST here. The second item, marked on the floor plan with an "X" in a very small room, is a capped well with a concrete pier, a capped pipe, rusty valves, an old well pump, and the faded words painted on the concrete wall "main water feed"; clearly the tank on the roof is a water tank. The third items (marked on the map with a small triangle) are the triangular "danger radioactive materials" signs on two doors in the main hallway. Both of these doors lead into similar empty rooms containing several smaller rooms each with the same "danger radioactive materials" signs on the doors. Again, except for overhead pipes and capped pipes coming up through the concrete floor, everything has been removed from these rooms including the dropped ceilings.

3:15 PM - Exiting the factory entrance to the Self-Lume property after locking the gates - turning right on Erratic Avenue. About 300 ft. down on the W side of Erratic is the end of the Self-Lume property where the chain link fence makes a ninety-degree turn to the W. On the S side of the Self-Lume property is a well-groomed vineyard operation clearly demarcated from the Self-Lume property by the chain link fence and the dense wild vegetation behind it to the N. On the left (E side of Erratic Ave.) are four homes (at 90, 92, 94, and 96 Erratic Avenue); they are all the same layout (two-story wood frame with paved driveways and detached garages on lots approx. 100 ft. x 150? ft.); these were probably all built at the same time. 96 Erratic Ave. is at the NE corner of the intersection of Erratic Ave. and Pitch Pine Lane. Directly across from the driveway of #92 is a dirt road guarded by a padlocked metal gate. The dirt road extends into the grape vineyards; the vineyards property extends on the W side of Erratic Ave. for about 500 ft. N of the Erratic-Pitch Pine intersection right up to the S boundary of the Self-Lume site.

3:20 PM -Turning right (E) on Pitch Pine Lane - there is another dirt road and padlocked metal gate about 200 ft. down on the N side of Pitch Pine; another 400 ft. down there is the paved entrance to the Roche Moutonnee Vineyards (47 Pitch Pine Lane). The entrance road leads to the winery, a large, two-story brick building (~200 ft. long x 100 ft. wide) surrounded by asphalt on all sides; there is another ~150 long maintenance/equipment shed to the E of the main building; there is a shop and sales office - tours and wine tastings are by appointment. In the main office I literally ran into the owner, Tom Verde, very friendly, mid-fifties, a hands-on person — he said that the vineyards are fifty years old next year for which he is planning some big celebrations/promotions. More significantly, there are two brick sheds, one to the E and one to the W of the main building, both with pipes and hoses and irrigation equipment attached and nearby. These are probably both active wells.

3:35 PM - Exiting the vineyard and turning right (W) on Pitch Pine Lane - about 300 ft. down on the N side of the road is another dirt road into the vineyard with a closed metal gate. Another 250 ft. past this dirt road is Pleistocene Court, an entrance to Eolian Acres, a development of 24 private homes. Each of these home is split level with interior garage. Pleistocene Court is a “U” with the other end of the “U” meeting Pitch Pine Lane about 200 ft. down from the other entrance. On the E side of one arm of the “U” are 10 homes, 5 on one side and 5 on the other exactly opposite each other and exactly alike (#’s 2,6,10,14, 18 on the east & 3, 7, 11, 15, & 19 on the west); the same situation is to be found on the W arm of the " & “U” (#’s 38,42,46,50,54 on the east & 39,43,47,51,55 on the west); four homes are located in the top of the “U” (#’s 57,56,21, & 20) with #’s 57 & 20 (located in the W & E corners of the “U”) being much larger homes. The property line of these last four homes is next to a portion of the Wedging Nursery that can be seen through the backyards of these homes.

3:50 PM - Exiting Eolian Acres and turning right (W) on Pitch Pine Lane - about 500 ft. on the N side of the road is Scrub Oak Street, a paved road leading to Township Well #4 (as it says on the door), which is housed in a 40 ft. x 40 ft. brick building with a sign reading "Township of Moraine, Division of Water Supply". Surrounding Scrub Oak Street and the building is sandy soil and scrub oak and pine vegetation. Out behind the building is a cleared path through the vegetation about 20 ft. wide extending uphill (and with my binoculars) all the way to the water tower (previously mentioned).

4:10 PM — Leaving Scrub Oak Street and turning right onto Pitch Pine Lane. The land on the other (S) side of Pitch Pine Lane (from Erratic Ave.) all the way back to Rt. 66E (Boulder Boulevard) is undeveloped Drumlin State land; the only remarkable feature here is the change in vegetation about midway along this stretch from dense deciduous growth (much like that around the Self-Lume site to scrub oak and pine like that around the Township Well. At this point I have completed the loop around the roads circling the Self-Lume Site.