

Edgewater expects plan for park cleanup soon

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Wants soil to meet



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Veterans Field, Edgewater's showcase park, has been closed more than two years over concerns about contaminated soil.

toughest standard

EDGEWATER - With the results of tests to determine contamination levels in the soil at Veterans Field now validated by an independent company, the borough's environmental consultant says he hopes to have a remediation plan drafted by next week.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will have up to 30 days to comment on the plan once submitted, and the soil-removal portion of the project should take no more than two months, said Ronald Dooney of TERMS Environmental Services.

The borough's premier park shut down in September 2011 after officials learned of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and polychlorinated biphenyls in the soil.

The Mayor and Council hired Waterside Construction to clean up the site, but work came to a halt in October, when the borough's consultant found new traces of the potentially cancer-inducing contaminants. Further investigations revealed that

Waterside had trucked in PCB-laced crushed concrete the site of the former Alcoa aluminum plant on River Road.

Representatives for Waterside and its owner, the local developer Fred Daibes, said at the time that the state Department of Environmental Protection allowed contractors to reuse materials from Alcoa and that they weren't aware contaminants were still present.

Nevertheless, the imported material was brought to Veterans Field before undergoing mandatory testing, according to TERMS.

As for the latest contaminants, borough officials said they prefer to have the PCBs at a level of no more than 0.2 parts per million - the state's strictest standard, which is applied to residential land.

Officials could also leave the contaminants at a level of 10 parts per million provided the soil is capped properly - an alternative that Waterside proposed. The contractor previously agreed to pay for the cleanup.

Rodger Ferguson, a licensed site-remediation professional hired by Waterside, said his client proposed the alternative solution since the initial plan called for a cap over the original contaminated soil anyway.

While the contractor "is committed to removing the material that he brought onto the field," Ferguson said, "my client doesn't think it's his responsibility to clean up what was already there."

He added that capping would reduce the number of trips needed to haul away contaminated materials, thereby reducing overall risks and limiting the number of trucks on River Road. Capping would also shorten the time needed to reopen the park, he said.

Ferguson said it was his understanding after meeting with TERMS and borough representatives last week that the council ultimately would be presented with both options for remediation. The proposals would include cost analyses and factor in issues like the amount of soil to be hauled away.

On Wednesday, Borough Administrator Greg Franz said he does not believe elected officials would support Waterside's proposal.

Council members are "unanimous in their direction" that the contaminants should be brought to the lowest level, Franz said. "They do not seem to want to consider the alternative."

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- See more at:

http://www.northjersey.com/news/243218611_Edgewater_expects_plan_for_park_cleanup_soon.html?page=all#sthash.RlxNtR9b.dpuf