

Edgewater soil remediation in review

JUNE 22, 2014, 9:41 AM LAST UPDATED: SUNDAY, JUNE 22, 2014, 9:41 AM

BY LINH TAT
STAFF WRITER
THE RECORD

EDGEWATER — The borough's new environmental consultant for Veterans Field will submit a new remedial action work plan to state officials once the results of 920 soil samples come back in about two weeks.

The consultant was expected to wrap up soil collection last week and will use the results to determine the depth of the contamination on-site and how much soil must be removed, borough officials said.

The state Department of Environmental Protection will have 30 days to review the action plan after it is received, officials said. Not enough samples were collected as part of a previous plan submitted by the borough's former consultant, they said.

As efforts are under way to get the Veterans Field project back on track, officials reported last week that activity has resumed on the old Alcoa site, where contaminated concrete was transferred to the ball field last fall.

The borough issued a stop-work order for 660 River Road, part of the Alcoa property, in mid-April, but later lifted it to allow remediation work, including site grading and the erection of a retaining wall due to erosion concerns, officials said.

And last week, the council approved a developer's agreement with The Heaven LLC, permitting plans to move forward for a health spa, restaurant and 72-room hotel on the property.

Borough Attorney Philip Boggia said the licensed site remediation professional for The Heaven, Rodger Ferguson of Pennjersey Environmental Consulting, advised him that workers are wearing protective equipment, that air monitoring is in force, and that they are complying with state regulations.

Ferguson is also the remediation professional for Waterside Construction, the contractor that imported tainted fill to Veterans Field. Waterside and 38 COAH Associates, which bought the Alcoa property, are owned by developer Fred Daibes.

Borough officials said they have been advised that Ferguson submitted the necessary paperwork to the DEP and that a remedial action work plan for the Alcoa site exists.

“The borough is satisfied that all the safety measures that are required are in place, and the remediation can continue,” Boggia said.

The investigation into Alcoa began after it was identified as the source of tainted crushed concrete imported to Veterans Field, which is undergoing cleanup for polychlorinated biphenyls and other carcinogens in the soil.

Representatives for Waterside said the company wasn't aware the concrete was tainted when it imported the material.

The borough and contractor are in mediation.

Edgewater officials have recently severed ties with TERMS Environmental Services, questioning how its former consultant allowed Waterside to slip past inspection and why the action plan it submitted to the DEP was incomplete.

TERMS did not return a call seeking comment.

Its replacement, First Environment, entered into a contract with the borough last month, with an initial cost of service estimated at \$46,950.

Email: tat@northjersey.com