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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "PANEL HEARS UPDATE ON SHIPYARD CLEANUP" NSY
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COASTAL

Panel hears update on shipyard cleanup

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KITTERY, Maine — The shipyard restoration advisory board met in Portsmouth, N.H., last Thursday to receive an update on the status of the Jamaica Island Landfill.

The meeting was attended by board members, Navy representatives, members of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and several interested community members.

At the meeting the board heard from Marty Raymond, a member of the shipyard's environmental office. He told the board that two weeks ago the second of two mercury burial sites located at the Jamaica Island fill had been successfully excavated.

During the excavation eight concrete vaults containing 23 55-gallon

drums of materials tainted with mercury were removed from 17 feet below the surface.

The contents of the vaults were repackaged in new 55-gallon drums and transferred to the shipyard's hazardous waste transfer station. Samples taken from the soil in and around the excavation site did not contain any abnormal mercury levels.

The first mercury burial site was excavated in 1997. Both burial sites at the landfill were placed there between 1973 and 1975. The excavation is the result of the shipyard's installation restoration program.

Deb White of the public affairs office at the shipyard said the Navy, the EPA, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the shipyard restoration board have been engaged for several years in identifying and studying

environmental sites at the Shipyard, including the mercury vaults.

The Navy's proposed feasibility study for final remedial action for the Jamaica Island landfill site will be selected and presented to the public in early 2001. The board was presented with drafts of possible studies in May.

Also at last Thursday's meeting the board heard a presentation on the use of wetlands as a method of erosion control at the Jamaica Island landfill. Four of the five alternatives presented in the draft copy of the final feasibility study use wetlands as a component for shoreline erosion control.

During the presentation, given by Peyton Doub, a senior wetlands scientist from Tetra Tech NUF, the contracting company working with the Navy, the board was told that wetlands would protect the

landfill's shoreline from erosion due to normal wave action, storm surges, and boat wakes.

Peyton presented three options at the meeting. The first was to create a naturally vegetated tidal marsh by planting marsh grasses and other plants in a biodegradable fabric to hold soil in place until the plants have grown.

The second option was to use a rock breakwater in front of a naturally vegetated tidal marsh. The third option was to use rip rap along portions of the landfill where it is not possible to create tidal marshes due to steep slopes.

The Navy will select its preferred alternative and issue a draft of the proposed remedial action plan this fall. The next board meeting will be held Sept. 21 at the Courtyard Marriott in Portsmouth from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The meeting is open to the public.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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