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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "SHIPYARD GROUP DISCUSSES POLLUTION SOLUTIONS" NSY
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Shipyard group discusses pollution solutions

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PORTSMOUTH — The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard's Restoration Advisory Board met in the city Thursday to discuss the ongoing effort to address environmental contamination from the old Jamaica Island Landfill.

The 25-acre site is under review for remedy under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act commonly known as Superfund.

Gathering at the Courtyard Marriott, concerned area residents joined scientists, engineers, shipyard, Navy and environmental officials to discuss the several components of the ongoing project, including a feasibility study to address groundwater migration in and around the landfill.

Previously, the Restoration Advisory Board settled on a possible remedy for the site as a geotextile, virtually impermeable cap to prevent water seeping into the site. However, that part of the solution does not address the sides of the site or the movement of tidal water and ground water in the areas

surrounding the site. In this case, the groundwater in question is not drinkable water but brackish or "saline" water that migrates into the Piscataqua River.

With an October deadline for submission of a final feasibility study on the area in question fast approaching, the board met for several hours Thursday to look at potential remedies presented by engineers from Tetra Technologies.

In a feasibility study, the options presented must range from little or no action to possible solutions, depending upon what type of contamination is found in the area and what is determined to be the necessary course of action later in the process.

In the report as presented, potential remedies ranged from doing nothing more than monitoring the site to assessing whether action need be taken at a later date to build a "slurry wall" of soil and clay to contain groundwater within the site and help prevent contamination of the Piscataqua River.

The specific design of such a remedy would not be worked out until much later in the process, if the solution were to be determined

as the best one for the site.

"Any remedy that leaves waste in place requires the situation be monitored," noted Megan Cassidy of the Environmental Protection Agency. "We at EPA realize at least that things do change," she said, noting whatever method selected for dealing with the Jamaica Island Landfill would be adjusted in the future if it were found to be inadequate as time passed.

The contaminants found to be present in the saline groundwater at the site include copper, chromium, lead, nickel, mercury and zinc.

Under current conditions, however, Tetra Tech engineers have found that the offshore contamination risks from the flow of groundwater in the area of Jamaica Island Landfill are low.

A public hearing is expected to be held within the next calendar year once a decision is reached by Navy, state and environmental officials on which course of action will be selected to protect the surrounding area from contaminants at the site.

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