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NEWSPAPER ARTICLE "SHIPYARD CLEANUP EFFORT UNDER FIRE" NSY PORTSMOUTH
ME
12/7/2000
PORTSMOUTH HERALD

Cleanup a concern

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Before 1944, Jamaica Island was separated from the main area of the shipyard by a tidal wetland. However, between 1944 and 1978 the Navy used that area as a dumping ground for a number of different types of wastes.

By the time the practice ended, a 25-acre area of new ground had been created, connecting Jamaica Island with the main island.

According to a report given by Caroline LePage, of LePage Environmental Services Inc., the materials contained within the landfill include construction debris, solvents, asbestos, incinerator ash, dredge spoils from other areas of the shipyard, waste paint and gas cylinders.

Toxins that have been detected at the site include volatile organic compounds, semivolatle compounds, metals, PCBs, dioxins, pesticides and petroleum hydrocarbons.

The cost of removing the hazardous materials, said LePage, would be approximately \$500 million, which is more than the Navy feels is reasonable to spend. Before choosing the cap as its preferred option, the Navy did review other alternatives, but removal was not among them.

"Here the Navy is asking for public input," said one attendee at the meeting, "but there are not really any alternatives. It sounds as if the alternatives are not really up for discussion."

In his response, McLeod said that of the five alternatives that were reviewed, the first two were: doing nothing and site monitoring. Neither would have achieved any kind of long-term protection for the public and the environment from the contaminants.

The Navy selected option three, which includes the hazardous waste cover, shoreline erosion controls, long-term monitoring, inspections and five-year site reviews. Options four and five were the same as number three, but with enhanced barriers.

Another member of the audience commented, "The Navy are the ones with the problem and they are the ones writing the reports on the problem and essentially deciding on the outcome."

Shipyard cleanup effort under fire

■ Anti-Pollution League hears public concerns, comments on Navy plan for hazardous waste site

By James Buchanan
Staff Writer

PORTSMOUTH — With the Navy's announcement that it plans to cap, not clean up, the Jamaica Island Landfill, come concerns from the public that a cap may not be enough protection.

Concerns and comments about the hazardous waste site were heard Wednesday evening at a panel discussion held by the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League at the South Church.

Responding to comments from the public were panel members Doug Bogen, New Hampshire program director of Clean Water Action; Iver McLeod, of the Maine Environmental Protection Agency; and Meghan Cassidy, of the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

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Ports Herald
12/7/88