

Fall Completion Eyed for Marjol Site Project

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Mar. 21--THROOP -- The return of spring also means the return of construction equipment to the Marjol Battery site as excavation and restoration activities resume.

Barring unforeseen delays, the lead-contaminated site will be dug up and toxic materials contained, covered by topsoil and sprinkled with grass seed by early November, officials said at a pre-construction meeting at the Marjol community relations office Friday.

And at least one attendee called for greater information on air-quality testing as part of the process.

"I'd like to have more data for the borough," said Michael Baltrusaitis, a contractor with Cocciardi & Associates, hired by the borough to monitor the cleanup with an eye toward public health. Mr. Baltrusaitis requested air-monitor filters be sent out for analysis daily.

Various air-quality monitoring devices are employed at the site, some of which provide on-demand results about the general level of dust particles in the air, and others called PAMs, or personal air monitors -- which Mr. Baltrusaitis referred to -- that can differentiate between lead and regular dust but which require laboratory analysis. Currently, PAM samples are sent for analysis only occasionally.

The request "will be discussed," said Kevin O'Rourke of Advanced GeoServices, which represents property owner Gould Electronics.

Attendees also included Maureen Essenthier with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Throop Councilman Ray Jarosh and state Rep. Kevin Murphy, D-113, Scranton, among others.

In addition to the on-site excavations scheduled throughout the year, in April work will begin at the adjacent borough-owned property commonly referred to as the "48 acres." The state Department of Environmental Protection has granted a permit for the work, and another from the Lackawanna County Conservation District is expected soon, Mr. O'Rourke said.

"This will be a great benefit to the borough, because we want to develop that land into a park," Mr. Jarosh said.

The contractors will shape the land, and next year the borough can begin working on its transformation, he said.

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