

2-7-07
Handout

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February 3, 2007

Mr. Rod Doherty – Senior Editor
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Citizen Commentary on waterfront project.

I would like to draw the attention of Dover taxpayers to the seriousness of the contamination of the waterfront area. The State of New Hampshire has defined this area as a Brownfields site.

This means that there are materials buried in this area dangerous to humans. Included are radioactive materials from a company that manufactured luminescent dials. The former tannery left behind concentrations of Chromium above state standards. Other drillings indicate the presence of Mercury at high concentrations. Lead is present in some of the core drillings four times higher than state standards. In some of the cores there is the presence of Arsenic, Cadmium and Selenium.

As far as volatile organic compounds are concerned - MTBE, Benzene, Ethel benzene and Naphthalene the concentrations of these materials run as high as 10 times acceptable levels. There is also evidence of medical wastes and asbestos.

In the executive summary of the GZA GEOENVIRONMENTAL INC report of August 30, 2000 the company states that prior to site redevelopment, additional explorations should be undertaken to further characterize the nature and thickness of the contaminants. They warn that this report is only preliminary and recommend a more complete evaluation of the site. City Councilors should obtain and read the GZA report of August 30, 2000 which can be obtained in the library.

At this point no one knows how many cubic yards of contaminated soil is present in this site and a further study is required to determine that number. The report also warns that "construction over contaminated materials will include release of methane gas... due to decomposition of organic materials"

To put the potential cost of remediation in perspective, a few years ago the town of Needham Massachusetts (population 28,000) was compelled to remediate and cap a land fill of similar size and the price tag was many millions of dollars. Until a detailed study of the extent and depth of this Brownfield site is determined Dover taxpayers do not know what the total cost of the cleanup of this site will be. No contract should be made with any developer without a clear identification of the total cost to the taxpayers of Dover. Without this cost identified no reasonable person can come up with a cost/benefit analysis to the taxpayers of Dover.

Nothing should be done before this further study is completed.

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