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75¢

Feds bust a move to break ground



Courtesy John A. Grillo Architect, Port Jefferson

Front elevation of the EPA's Caroline Avenue Park pump and treatment plant.

Urged by PJ Village, EPA ends waiting game, will build groundwater pump & treatment plant at Caroline Ave Park

BY DAVE WILLINGER
dave_w@tbrnewspapers.com

The federal Environmental Protection Agency later this month is set to begin construction of a groundwater pump and treatment facility in Port Jefferson on the western edge of Caroline Avenue park. The facility will remove harmful pollutants from the toxic underground plume that has traveled down to the harbor from the Lawrence Aviation Industries federal Superfund site on Sheep Pasture Road.

Project manager Keith Glenn told residents at Monday's business meeting of the Village Board the plant would be built by Christmas and operational early next year.

Glenn spoke along with the plant's contractor and architect at the Village Board's

business meeting Monday at the invitation of Mayor Margot Garant.

"We will not interrupt any of the recreational activities that are going on," Glenn said. The facility is expected to operate 24/7 for the next 20 years.

The design is intended to blend in with the neighborhood and has an "antique-y feeling" to it, according to architect Ryan Thomas of John Grillo Architects, who designed the plant and cooperated with the Port Jefferson Architectural Review Committee on the exterior design.

The fully automated plant will pump groundwater from five wells dug by the EPA in December 2008, filter out pollutants and discharge the treated water into the Old Mill pond and creek. A similar facility has already been built on the Lawrence Aviation site, where it began operation last month, EPA community involvement coordinator Cecilia Echols told The Port Times Record Tuesday.

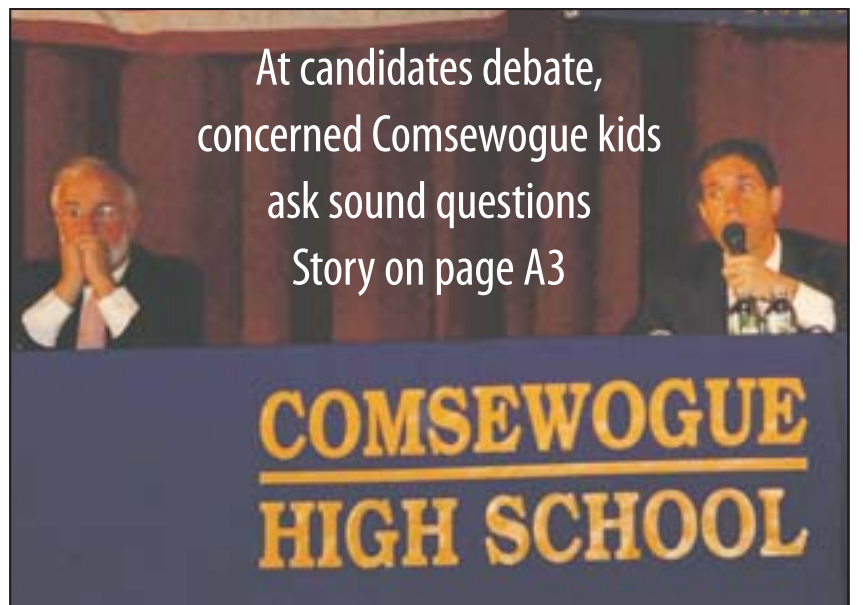
The two groundwater treatment plants are part of the EPA's Record of Decision from Sept. 2006 that details the remedial

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Deadly plume?
Story on page A6



These students want answers



Photos by D. Willinger

Comsewogue junior Colin Gironda, top, Tuesday asks Rep. Tim Bishop and challenger Randy Altschuler, above, where they stand on the Ground Zero mosque.

Goober-natorial debate

Seven do stand-up at Hofstra — our report from the scene & an opinion from one who was there

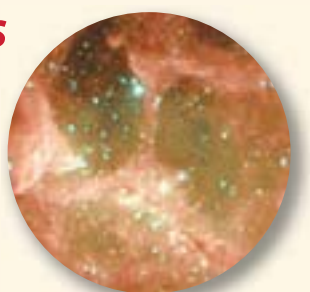
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Haunted Skies at Vanderbilt

Also, 'Man of La Mancha' opens in Smithtown, SBU Sportsweek, crossword puzzle and lots more
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Where the North Shore clicks: www.northshoreoflongisland.com

PJ residents await EPA results

In April of this year, the EPA performed the latest round of tests on residences that may have been affected by the Lawrence Aviation plume. Residents involved in the testing have yet to see those results.

Brigitte Demes, a resident of Beach Street, said she had to call the EPA to confirm there were no positive results. Demes said she spoke to the project manager, who “said she would send results.” Still, as of early this week no documentation has been received.

Port Jefferson Deputy Mayor Adrienne Kessel also had testing done on her home. “I haven’t heard since,” Kessel said. “They said several months [to report the results], and it’s been

way past that.” As recent as Monday, the deputy mayor was still waiting to get those test results.

Elias Rodriguez, press officer for the EPA, said that “all sampling results to date indicate that there has been no public health issues related to indoor air quality inside any of the buildings sampled within the plume area.”

However, vapor intrusion mitigation systems have been installed at three residences and at the Port Jefferson High School, according to Rodriguez.

At right: Brigitte Demes of Beach Street points to the small boring the EPA made earlier this year in the floor of her basement to test for vapor intrusion from the Lawrence Aviation plume. Demes and other Port Jefferson homeowners are still waiting for a written copy of those test results.

Photo by Sam Kilb



— SAM KILB

Did LAI plume kill man’s best friend?

BY SAM KILB
news@tbrnewspapers.com

Mike Francis of Port Jefferson used to walk his dog Holly from his house along Brook Road to the baseball diamond on Caroline Avenue, where the two would have a game of fetch.

“She really looked forward to it,” Francis said. “And so did I.” They made the journey three to four times a week for 10 years. Along the way, Holly would stop to take a drink from Old Mill Creek. Francis thought nothing of it. “It wasn’t posted then,” he said.

About 13 years ago, Holly contracted tongue, mouth and throat cancer, and it got so bad she couldn’t swallow. Holly had to be put down. Francis said his vet had never seen anything like it.

“I can’t guarantee it was the water,” Francis said. “But there’s nothing else around here that she was in contact with.”

The pond from which Francis’ dog had been drinking was later found to be contaminated with trichloroethylene, an agent that studies suggest can cause cancer and damage to the central nervous system, according to the State Department of Health. “It’s something no one wants to admit exists,” Francis said.

A report by the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry indicates the county’s Department of Health Services sampled water from the Old Mill Creek in 1991 and 1992. DHS found TCE in levels far exceeding the surface water limits — 1,700 mcg/L in 1992, well above the standard of 5 mcg/L. According to the ATSDR report, concentrations of TCE greater than 795 mcg/L put an individual at risk for cancer.

The TCE was in the groundwater from spillage at the Lawrence Aviation plant in 1980. According to federal Environmental Protection Agency documentation of the site, which has been designated a Superfund site, Lawrence Aviation “crushed more than 1,600 drums, allowing the liquid contents to spill on unprotected soil.” The drums contained TCE, which leaked into the groundwater.

Maureen Wren, spokesperson for the Department

‘If you can’t make contact, why are you putting people right where they’re going to make contact?’
— MIKE FRANCIS

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As seven buck for guv, mudslinging is king

Verbal WrestleMania at Hofstra

BY ELANA GLOWATZ
glowatz@tbrnewspapers.com

It was an evening of one-liners as the seven candidates for governor faced off at Hofstra University Monday.

Between Democrat Andrew Cuomo, Republican Carl Paladino and five minor party candidates, there was no time for lengthy arguments but the forum did offer an opportunity for some candidates to put down their opponents.

Warren Redlich, a libertarian, introduced himself as different from most politicians because "I've never been caught with a prostitute, my dad wasn't governor and I've never been convicted of a crime."

Kristin Davis, with the Anti-Prohibition Party, provided the most main comic relief. She called

career politicians "the biggest whores in the state" and said she was the only person on the stage qualified to deal with them. When the discussion turned to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Davis compared it to her former escort agency. She said, unlike the MTA, her agency only had one set of

books and offered "on-time and reliable service."

Many members of the audience seemed to think that those joking insults made the debate more entertaining. Kristin Pezzuti, 22, said she enjoyed "the general mudslinging."

But Paladino and Cuomo mostly stayed away from talking about the other debaters, not even responding to their remarks. The exception came after Freedom Party candidate Charles Barron said, "Cuomo's gonna be the king of layoffs, trust me." To that the attorney general riposted, "They go with you, Charles; they have no jobs."

Some in the audience found a political upside to the large number of candidates at the event.

Warren Redlich proposed fixing some state problems over a six-pack and pizza.

TOXIC PLUME

Continued from page A6

of Environmental Conservation, said if the contamination is thick enough, contact with groundwater could be harmful.

"If it is concentrated then it could cause issues to wildlife," Wren said. She said that in such a situation, the wildlife staff would work with the remedial staff to correct the problem.

Francis expressed concern about the building of an apartment building right next to the contaminated Old Mill Creek. "I'm concerned about kids," Francis said, arguing that in its current condition, Old Mill Creek is not the best location for hundreds of apartments. "If you can't make contact, why are you putting people right where they're going to make contact?"

In 1993, the state Department of Health first posted signs along Old Mill Creek and Pond warning against prolonged contact with the surface waters as a precaution. Those signs had to be replaced in 1997 and in 2003, health department records show. In 2007, The Port Times Record alerted officials no signs were posted at the pond and creek.

Francisco Cebada, 22, said it forced him to consider the other platforms. Cebada said he went into the debate thinking he was going to support Cuomo but now plans to cast a vote for Redlich. "He was the only one I thought had a substantive platform," while the other candidates spoke more of problems than solutions, Cebada told The Port Times Record.

During the debate, Redlich proposed, among other ideas, that he could fix the some state problems over a six-pack and a pizza once a month.

Partly because of performances like those, the minor party candidates stole the show. Jimmy McMillan, of the Rent is 2 Damn High Party, talking quickly, periodically said with gusto that "rent is too

damn high." He also told the audience he supports gay marriage by quipping, "If you want to marry a shoe, I'll marry you."

The only candidates who did not voice support for gay marriage were Paladino and Barron, which latter explained his party has not yet taken a position on the issue.

Despite the shared attention on the stage, a Paladino supporter said the debate went well for the Republican candidate. Meanwhile, Eddie Walsh, the Suffolk chair of the Conservative Party, told The Port Times Record following the debate that people saw Paladino's "not crazy ... just passionate."



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EPA

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actions designed “to bring levels of volatile organic compounds to an acceptable level for protecting human health and the environment,” according to an EPA community update available at Monday’s meeting.

Garant lauded the EPA for cooperating with the ARC, noting that as a federal agency it is exempt from such constraints. As for the facility’s impact on other senses, Glenn said the plant’s operation would generate “a subtle hum,” lower than 50 decibels and in compliance with town noise ordinances, which are stricter than the village’s, according to Glenn. That hum will come from air intake, contractor Tom Williams of New England Industrial Engineering said. People are “not going to hear motors,” Williams assured residents.

The water treatment plant measures 74’ by 31’ at its widest and is 25’ tall at its highest point. The main room comprises about 1,000 square feet. There is an additional 900 sf for office space, storage and a bathroom. When the facility first becomes operational it will be staffed during the day, according to Glenn. Later on, it will likely be controlled remotely by computer with only periodic onsite inspections. Glenn said the plant will have a secure access and be protected by alarmed perimeter fencing.

The goal is to begin eliminating the groundwater contaminants as soon as possible, Glenn told residents, and thus “elim-



File photo by D. Willinger

Good advice from the EPA, which seeks to remediate pollution in Old Mill Pond by 2032.

inate some of the fears” about the plume voiced at the meeting.

Alienation in Albany

The construction of the Caroline Avenue park facility was originally scheduled for the summer of 2009. It has been delayed repeatedly, most recently by pending state parkland alienation legislation. That bill, required because the site of the plant is on village-designated parkland, is currently languishing in the senate rules committee. According to the office of Sen. Ken LaValle (R-Port Jefferson), the bill must be given a new number and re-introduced in January before it can be voted on. In the meantime, EPA and village officials have determined there is legal precedent for a federal agency to proceed without such authorization, which is precisely what is about to happen.

If, this time, the water treatment plant goes online according to schedule, Albany may just end up rubber stamping the project at about the same time.

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