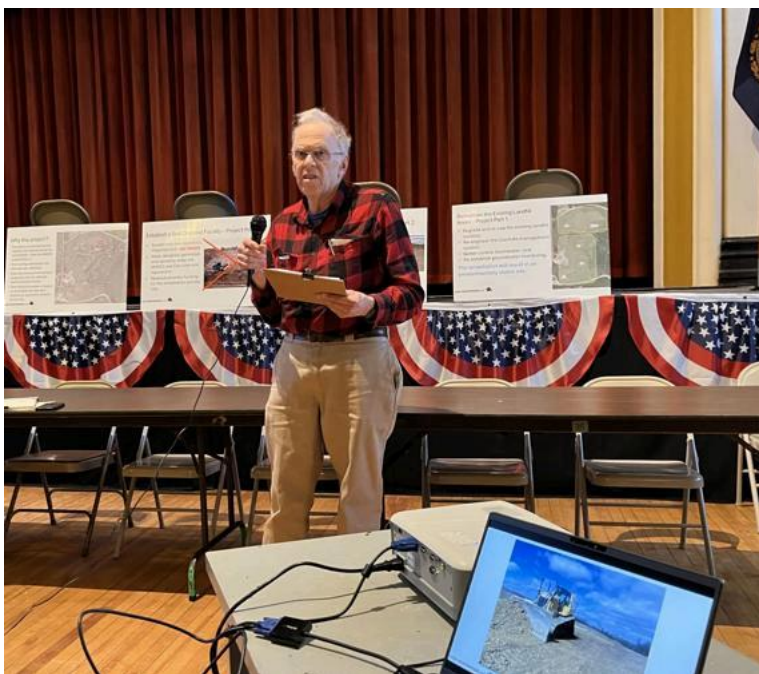


[https://www.conwaydailysun.com/berlin\\_sun/news/local/large-crowd-turns-out-for-hearing-on-dummer-yard-proposal/article\\_a289615d-a5e1-4afb-951e-4c65702fbb14.html](https://www.conwaydailysun.com/berlin_sun/news/local/large-crowd-turns-out-for-hearing-on-dummer-yard-proposal/article_a289615d-a5e1-4afb-951e-4c65702fbb14.html)

## Large crowd turns out for hearing on Dummer Yard proposal

Barbara Tetreault  
Apr 1, 2025



Raymond Danforth, former environmental director for the paper company, raised some questions and made some suggestions at the Thursday, March 27, Dummer Yard proposal hearing. (BARBARA TETREAU PHOTO)

BERLIN — The company proposing to develop a soil disposal facility and use some of the revenue to remediate the existing Dummer Yard Landfill heard concerns about truck traffic, environmental contamination, dust containing asbestos and property values at the March 27 public informational hearing on the proposal. A large crowd filled the city hall auditorium for the hearing.

Opening the hearing, N.H. Department of Environmental Services Director of Waste Management Michael Wimsatt specified that the proposal is a conceptual project and there is no permit application from LFOD Northwoods LLC. Wimsatt said the company is still doing its due diligence and may not be able to get into specifics about its plans for the property.

1 of 8



LFOD Northwoods is a combination of W.L. French Excavating Corporation and North and South Construction with Sanborn, Head & Associates, Inc. providing its expertise in remediation and solid waste.

Mary F. Daun, an engineer with the NHDES solid waste management division, outlined the history of the Dummer Yard landfill, which received waste from the paper mill from the early 1900s until 1997. The bond posted by the bankruptcy court had run out of money by 2018 and there is no money to pay for corrective measures and continue post-closure care.

Daun said the leachate management system needs improvement, possible leachate seeps need to be addressed, cap system requires regrading and repairs due to multiple areas of differential settlement, and the cap system, security system, leachate system, stormwater system, LFG vents and groundwater monitoring wells require repairs and continued monitoring. The landfill also needs to renew its groundwater monitoring permit.

Eric Steinhauser of Sanborn, Head & Associates said the entire Dummer Yard property is about 400 acres with 105 acres occupied by the landfill. Unlike other projects that have been considered for the property, Steinhauser said this proposal will deal with the environmental problems at Dummer Yard.

"But we have environmental liability at that site for the reason they talked about — there's leachate seeps. The landfill cap is substandard. The leach management system is not working, and the funding that would otherwise help manage that is gone. So, there is a real problem here," he said.

Steinhauser said LFOD would remediate the existing landfill by regrading and repairing the existing landfill surface, re-engineering the leachate management system, better control of stormwater and re-establishing groundwater monitoring. The result, he said, will be an environmentally stable site.

To cover the cost of the remediation work, LFOD would establish a soil disposal facility that would accept only non-hazardous, impacted soil. Materials that would be accepted there include asbestos soils and building materials, incinerator ash, street sweepings, catch basin waste and sewer grit. All soils would be tested to NHDES regulations.

The disposal facility would conform to all state and city rules and regulations. It would require Berlin site plan review as well as state air resources, alteration of terrain, oil remediation and compliance, solid waste, and wetlands permits. Leachate from the soil disposal site will be discharged to the city's wastewater treatment plant.

The disposal facility would have a lifespan of five to 10 years, and the city would receive a \$2 per ton tipping fee or about \$10 million over the life of the soil disposal facility. Plus, LFOD would pay property taxes for the property. There would be about 65 trucks per day using the truck route across the Cleveland Bridge to Unity and Coos streets onto Hutchins Street. Work hours would be from 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

An existing snowmobile trail would have to be moved but LFOD said it would build a replacement trail as well as a drop off area for trailers for OHRVs.

Asked about the possibility that dust containing asbestos will spread from dirt deposited at the facility, Jarrett Everton, director of environmental services at W.L. French, said there are strict regulations on handling asbestos. The asbestos is put in a lined dump trailer and wrapped, and the trailer itself is covered with a tarp. At the disposal site, it is in a double bag that has a 50-year life span. Then it is covered with dirt and eventually the landfill cap.

Some residents of the city's East Side complained about the added noise of the trucks and equipment on-site. Others expressed fear that the addition of a soil landfill will reduce the value of their property.

One speaker questioned the need for the soil disposal site, saying the housing boom hasn't really come. Several people noted most of the material for the soil disposal will come from southern New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

Raymond Danforth, former environmental director for both the paper mill and Mount Carberry, said LFOD has to demonstrate the need for the landfill including a public benefit.

"If they can't demonstrate public benefit, that permit is dead. Public benefit can be 1,000 different things. It does not include dollars in their pocket. That is not public benefit," Danforth said.

He also cautioned residents about the \$2 per ton tipping fee generating \$10 million for the city, pointing out that while they project 500,000 tons per year, that number could be less. He recommended the city negotiate a minimum payment per year "so at least the city has something coming in that they know about."

Danforth also suggested the developers be required to post a bond as part of the permit in case the parties go bankrupt there will be money to cap and close the landfills. He also asked if Route 16 could handle all the extra traffic.

One man said he understands that they have stopped maintaining Dummer Yard landfill and there are issues there. But he said he wondered if accepting the proposal would be shortsighted and the soil disposal site could create greater issues.

LFOD officials said they will continue to seek input from stakeholders and undertake in-depth studies of the site.

*barbara@berlindailysun.com*

**Barbara Tetreault**

Editor

[Learn more about your privacy options](#)