

# Lewiston nets aid for LOOW waste dispute

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By DON DEPERRO  
Gazette Staff Writer

LEWISTON — The Erie and Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board offered the Town Board its help Tuesday in blocking U.S. Department of Energy plans to turn the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works into a radioactive waste repository.

In a related matter, the board adopted a plan devised by board member Alvin Ogg to combat the federal government's proposal.

Planning Director Leo Nowak said he would offer the town all possible assistance in acquiring information it might need to prepare a lawsuit against the DOE and its consultant, Bechtel National Inc.

Nowak made his comments during a special board meeting to discuss the Bechtel report, which recommends that the LOOW site be turned into a regional storage area for radioactive wastes.

Some radioactive materials already are stored there, left over from the Manhattan Project, which led to the development of the first atomic bomb in the early 1940s. The government had begun work to clean up the site.

The DOE, which owns the 191-acre Fletcher Road site, has to develop a Draft Environmental Impact Statement if conversion will affect areas adjacent to the property. A final impact statement would follow local review.

Nowak told board members that Bechtel has purchased 16 reports, containing more than 70,000 pages, from the planning board for use in preparing the preliminary report.

Any information the town wants regarding what Bechtel requested will be forwarded by Nowak's office, he said. He added that the DOE has to submit its final plans to the two-county board as part of the process.

Ogg's plan seeks to prevent further wastes from being shipped into Lewiston, and advocates that remedial work be completed at the site to return the acreage to a "productive and taxable base."

The measure calls for the board to "maintain its role of leadership" in the coming battle against the DOE. It also requests assistance in writing from President Reagan and other federal, state and county officials.

Among other recommendations, Ogg's plan calls for establishing communications between the town and Bechtel public relations personnel in an effort to determine the company's "weekly activity schedules" concerning the LOOW site.

Town Attorney Benjamin Hewitt said he would contact Scott Schwartz, a Washington, D.C.-based environmental lawyer, and Dr. Marvin Resnikoff, a local physicist, to determine how much it would cost to hire both men.

Hewitt and the board agreed that the town needs experts knowledgeable about aspects of the LOOW site that may be considered in a possible lawsuit.

Schwartz previously completed an evaluation of the LOOW site for the town. Resnikoff was a member of Rep. John J. LaFalce's, D-Tonawanda, oversight