

Lewiston Requests Legislation Against Nuclear Dump Site

By JOANN SCELSA
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LEWISTON — The town Tuesday asked for state and federal legislation permanently ruling out use of the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works as a regional radioactive waste repository and promising decommissioning of the site.

Supervisor James Lombardi, who made the request at a meeting of representatives of state and federal officials, said the town wants more than a letter from a U.S. Department of Energy official saying the plan has been abandoned.

The town made its call for the prohibitive legislation despite assurances two weeks ago, from Franklin Coffmann, acting director of the Office of Terminal Waste Disposal, that the department had dropped the plan.

Representatives of State Sen. John Daly, R-Lewiston and Assemblyman Joseph Pillittere, D-Lewiston, immediately said they would prepare joint legislation for the State Legislature.

No similar offer was made by federal representatives.

Town officials said no response was received from the U.S. Department of Energy, the state Department of Environmental Conservation or state Attorney General Robert Abrams. County Legislator Lee Simonson, R-Lewiston, blasted Mr. Abrams for "avoiding this issue like the plague."

The Town Board agreed to send Councilman Alvin Ogg as its representative to a meeting in Albany Dec. 20 of representatives of the federal department, the state Energy Resource and Development Agency, the state Health and Labor departments, the state attorney general and the New York City Department of Health.

Mr. Ogg said the purpose of the meeting is to review the status of the ordinance site and to discuss the energy department's Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action program. Later that same day Department of Energy officials will come to Lewiston to brief members of Rep. John J. LaFalce's Citizen Oversight Committee. Mr. Ogg said the town should have representatives at both meetings "to see if the stories are the same."

Ruling on Illegal Discharge Of Waste Likely by Dec. 16

A state attorney said Tuesday he expects a ruling by Dec. 16 on the illegal Nov. 11 discharge of 700,000 gallons of liquid wastes from the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works.

State Department of Environmental Conservation attorney Peter Burke, said he is negotiating with the legal counsel for the federal Department of Energy "to settle the matter."

He said he hopes the outcome of the negotiations will be a consent order entered into by both governments. Mr. Burke said the state also will be looking for some type of fine to be paid by the federal government.

While technically only a state or federal court can impose a fine on the federal government, Mr. Burke said it is subject to "reasonable service charges" for the additional work its actions have caused. The state department has not established what amount it will ask for.

Mr. Burke said the state and federal governments are in agreement that the Federal Department of Energy needs the state discharge permit.