

Norwalk officials remain confident that Ryan Park will be upgraded, pollution addressed

By Nancy Chapman 12 : 26 am EDT April 20 2017

NORWALK, Conn. — There's contamination more than 10 feet below Ryan Park, a team of licensed environmental professionals said, in summarizing their Phase III environmental study.

Weston & Sampson's full report is not yet available to the public, Norwalk Redevelopment Agency Senior Project Manager Susan Sweitzer said last month. On Wednesday, she said further questions can be addressed at a public meeting to be held at 6 p.m. April 27, in the Choice Neighborhood Initiative office at 149 Water St.

Ryan Park was closed in November because a "significant environmental hazard" was discovered by further testing.

"We have a situation where we have PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyl) in soils within the top two feet of soils in concentrations at or about 15 parts per million," Jeffery Wilson of Weston & Sampson said in November. "That triggers a reportable position to the Connecticut DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection).

Wilson said that the final report would be complete in January, but Sweitzer, in February, said the deadline had been extended.

Sweitzer, in late March, said she would have Weston & Sampson summarize

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

For a project status update on the design of **RYAN PARK**

at Choice Neighborhoods Office
149 Water Street, 2nd Floor

Thursday, April 27th
6:00 - 8:00pm

Planning by **Stantec**

www.norwalkcni.org

Please join us to review the latest plans for site remediation and park improvements

For more information please contact:
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NORWALK DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency has scheduled a meeting to discuss Ryan Park.

“in regular English” what the report said.

Much of it is a rehash:

“The Ryan Park Phase III study has revealed site soils are polluted with a variety of chemicals related to past industrial land uses, and include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semivolatile organic compounds (SVOCs), petroleum hydrocarbons, metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Groundwater beneath the park site is also polluted with similar compounds. The levels in soil and groundwater for the above described pollutants are above CTDEEP standards in certain areas but not across the entire park site.

“The PCB soil concentrations are also above EPA standards. Soil impacts have been identified in both shallow and deep soils (i.e. less than 2 ft and greater than 10 ft beneath the ground surface), and the groundwater impacts are attributable to the on-site soil impacts and (to a lesser degree) from upgradient off-site sources migrating onto the park site. The discovery of these conditions also led to closing the park until the new park is constructed in order to comply with applicable CTDEEP requirements.”

Ryan Park is planned to be upgraded in connection to the reconstruction of Washington Village, the beneficiary of a \$30 million U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant.

In December, Redevelopment Agency Executive Director Tim Sheehan said, “We are not going to be at a level that we are going to be shutting down (the park) and changing the use. ...Based on what we know right now we are not going to have a number that we are not going to be able to address.”

“I stand by that statement and add that because of the State Brownfield Grant Award the City’s ability to quickly implement the RAP (Remedial Action Plan) for the park once approved has been significantly enhanced,” Sheehan said on

April 4.

In February, the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) awarded Norwalk a \$2 million grant to deal with contamination in Ryan Park.

The total cost of renovating the park is \$3 million, the Redevelopment Agency said in a legal notice published this week.

“The Agency intends to renovate the existing John H. Ryan Park (Ryan Park),” the notice said. “Renovations will include updating the park, environmental remediation and raise it above the flood plain as well as incorporating playgrounds, pathways, a basketball court, parking, picnic areas, green open space, lighting, a water play area, trees and shrubs.... The park needed updating and renovating because it is being remediated for hazardous wastes and it is expected that more local residents will be utilizing the park.”

Weston & Sampson also provided an explanation of the pollutants involved:

“VOCs are organic compounds that easily become vapors or gases, typically from burning fuel, such as gasoline, wood, coal, or natural gas. Examples of products that contain VOCs include gasoline, paint thinners, lacquer thinners, moth repellents, air fresheners, hobby supplies, wood preservatives, aerosol sprays, degreasers, automotive products, and dry cleaning fluids.

“SVOCs are a subgroup of VOCs defined by having a higher molecular weight and higher boiling point than other VOCs, and they also behave differently than VOCs. They are used in plastics, rubber, detergents, furniture, building material components and recognizable examples include moth balls, waste oil, roofing tar, asphalt pavement and shingles, and exhaust from combustion engines.

“Petroleum hydrocarbons is the name given to a very broad range of

chemicals that comprise oil and products refined from oil, such as gasoline and diesel. They are found in numerous applications including combustion engines and many consumer products, and examples include motor oil, gasoline, grease, home heating oil, diesel fuel, and kerosene.

“Most people recognize metals thanks to their obvious physical properties such as a metallic luster and a solid, yet soft, feel. Metals are natural elements found throughout our planet, and there are over 70 metals listed in the periodic table of the elements. Examples of metals detected on the park site include arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury and silver.

“PCB is an organic chlorine compound that was added to hundreds of building products due to their chemical stability, nonflammability, insulating properties and high flash point. Because of PCB’s environmental toxicity and classification as a persistent organic pollutant, PCB production in the US was banned in 1979. Many rivers and buildings including schools, parks, and other sites are contaminated with PCBs, and there have been contaminations of food supplies with the toxins. Recognizable examples of materials/products that contain PCBs include oils used in electrical devices (i.e. transformers), motor and hydraulic oils, and select building materials (i.e. caulking, sealants, adhesives, plastics, paints, etc.).”

[Ryan Park Public Information Meeting_21070427](#)