

COMMENTARY - A sentimental and mercenary look at mills; [All Edition]

Patrick T. Conley. Providence Journal. Providence, R.I.: Dec 15, 2003. pg. A.17

Abstract (Article Summary)

Our mills are monuments to Rhode Island ingenuity to such technological giants as Samuel Slater, David Wilkinson, Zachariah Allen, Jabez Gorham, Lucien Sharpe, William Nicholson, George Corliss, and Joseph Banigan, to name a few and to Rhode Island's preeminence as America's first urban-industrial state. These distinctions should be a source of local pride.

The mill experience in Rhode Island was an ethnic chorus. Providence's industrially variegated Woonasquatucket Valley offers an example of this economic confluence of cultures: typically, Yankee inventors and entrepreneurs furnished the concepts and the capital; Irish laborers, especially the skilled bricklayers, built the structures; recruits from the farm villages of Qubec took jobs in textiles at Weybosset Mill, the Monohasset Mill, and the Providence and National Worsted Mills. Later arrivals, such as the Polish and Lithuanians, often opted for work in the base-metals and machine-tool industries, at Brown and Sharpe, Builders Iron Foundry, Congdon and Carpenter, Rhode Island Locomotive Works, and Nicholson File. Italians showed an affinity for the jewelry industry, at such factories as Uncas and Ronci. The Italian-Americans displayed more entrepreneurial drive than other Catholic ethnic groups, soon dominating the industry of their choice.

By 1900, economically diverse Providence ranked among the nation's 10 biggest industrial centers, and its board of trade boasted (perhaps without exaggeration) that the city contained the world's largest tool factory (Brown and Sharpe), file factory (Nicholson File), engine factory (Corliss Steam Engine Company), screw factory (American Screw), and silverware factory (Gorham). These were exuberantly proclaimed as Providence's Five Industrial Wonders of the World.

Full Text (1014 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Dec 15, 2003

RHODE ISLAND'S mills are monuments and memorials. They must be preserved!

This thought was inspired by the destruction last month of Pawtucket's Greenhalgh Mill. It was reduced to ashes shortly before it could be demolished into dust.

The mill buildings that dot our rural landscape and dominate sections of our cities are more than brick and mortar; they are reminders of who we were and who we have become.

Our mills are monuments to Rhode Island ingenuity to such technological giants as Samuel Slater, David Wilkinson, Zachariah Allen, Jabez Gorham, Lucien Sharpe, William Nicholson, George Corliss, and Joseph Banigan, to name a few and to Rhode Island's preeminence as America's first urban-industrial state. These distinctions should be a source of local pride.

If America's current world leadership, its technological superiority, and its lofty standard of living are due, in part, to the transformation of its economy in the late 19th Century from an agricultural to an industrial base, then those who spearheaded that transition merit remembrance. Rhode Island's surviving mills are silent reminders



of our contribution to America's achievement.

Whereas the mighty merit monuments, all those who engage in worthy endeavor deserve appreciation. Certainly the successive waves of immigrants who manned (and "womanned") Rhode Island's mills should not have toiled in perpetual obscurity; the mills are their memorial.

Woonsocket's Museum of Work and Culture, appropriately housed in a recycled mill, is a giant step in the right direction, but one facility does not exert the impact on our memory and imagination of a landscape and streetscape containing well-preserved, refurbished factories of architectural merit and historical significance.

The mill meant employment to the immigrant generation. Here the newcomers executed their contact with America. Here their unremitting labor financed the education of their children and launched their families on a journey into the middle class and beyond.

The mill experience in Rhode Island was an ethnic chorus. Providence's industrially variegated Woonasquatucket Valley offers an example of this economic confluence of cultures: typically, Yankee inventors and entrepreneurs furnished the concepts and the capital; Irish laborers, especially the skilled bricklayers, built the structures; recruits from the farm villages of Qubec took jobs in textiles at Weybosset Mill, the Monohasset Mill, and the Providence and National Worsted Mills. Later arrivals, such as the Polish and Lithuanians, often opted for work in the base-metals and machine-tool industries, at Brown and Sharpe, Builders Iron Foundry, Congdon and Carpenter, Rhode Island Locomotive Works, and Nicholson File. Italians showed an affinity for the jewelry industry, at such factories as Uncas and Ronci. The Italian-Americans displayed more entrepreneurial drive than other Catholic ethnic groups, soon dominating the industry of their choice.

On the hills surrounding the Woonasquatucket Valley, these immigrant workers built their churches a few feet closer to heaven than the sweatshops in which they labored.

Radical historians have railed against the mill owners, charging them with exploitation of the masses. One zealot even suggested that New England's mills should be leveled, because they are symbols of capitalist greed. Such an unbalanced view exalts ideological rhetoric over historical reality. The rich are often seen through the green eyes of envy.

Mill owners were human beings, the same as policemen, politicians and priests. Some were benevolent and socially concerned; others were ruthless and self-absorbed. Among the former were industrialist Gov. Philip Allen, who bought the bells for Providence's first two Catholic churches; Edward Harris, who established an education and cultural institute in Woonsocket for his workers; the Hazards of Peace Dale, who built the school, the library, and the townhouse in their factory village; and rubber king Samuel P. Colt, of Bristol, who built a high school for his town and allowed the public recreational pursuits on his Bay-front land, now Colt State Park.

This list could be extended substantially.

By 1900, economically diverse Providence ranked among the nation's 10 biggest industrial centers, and its board of trade boasted (perhaps without exaggeration) that the city contained the world's largest tool factory (Brown and Sharpe), file factory (Nicholson File), engine factory (Corliss Steam Engine Company), screw factory

(American Screw), and silverware factory (Gorham). These were exuberantly proclaimed as Providence's Five Industrial Wonders of the World.

In addition, the city ranked first nationally in the manufacture of jewelry and in the production of woolen and worsted goods, and third (behind Philadelphia and Cincinnati) in the production of base metals. And it contained the home offices of the famed Knight brothers' cotton-textile empire.

The titans and the toilers combined to make Rhode Island first nationally in per-capita wealth and a leader of America's Industrial Revolution. Our mill buildings are their monument and memorial, and the structures that best typify our history.

Thus far, I have written as a sentimental historian, emphasizing heritage and aesthetics. Now I don my hat as a practical and mercenary real-estate developer. There is gold in them 'thar mills, in the form of state and federal tax credits for certain sums expended in their rehabilitation and conversion to offices, residences, studios and shops what preservationists call their "adaptive re-use."

In March 2002, Providence amended its zoning ordinance, creating the Industrial and Commercial Buildings District, to protect nearly all of the city's surviving industrial sites from indiscriminate demolition. These once vibrant mills and factories, like those in other Rhode Island municipalities, were at risk of succumbing to the insatiable demand for chain stores, with their monotonous box design, and parking lots.

Those who rehabilitate the designated buildings in this new, ingeniously contrived district are now eligible for a 20-percent federal income-tax credit and a 30-percent state income-tax credit, plus a 10-year property-tax stabilization and valuation freeze.

In addition, a November 2003 Internal Revenue Service ruling has concluded that Rhode Island's historical tax credits can also be deducted from the federal income tax, making them as much as 40 percent more valuable. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission provides the information and monitors the process of historical renovation statewide.

If memories fail to move you, perhaps money will. Make a million: Save a mill.

Patrick T. Conley is a historian, lawyer and businessman.

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Section: *Editorial*

Text Word Count 1014

Plugging a river, again - Allendale Dam gets a second life; [Northwest Edition]

Providence Journal. Providence, R.I.: Sep 27, 2001. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

A new dam would allow Allendale Pond to return to historic levels, submerging about 28,000 cubic yards of tainted sediments under water. An estimated 415 cubic yards left exposed will have to be excavated and taken to an incinerator. The EPA describes the \$1.8-million job as an interim measure, pending studies that will allow the agency to make final recommendations about the future of the Superfund site.

The EPA awarded a contract for the dam reconstruction to LEA- Cianci Inc., of Plainville, Conn., which employs Miller, the project director. On a recent afternoon, while accompanied by EPA officials Dick Boynton and Anna Krasko, Miller, explained the project to visitors, including Eugenia Marks, of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. Meanwhile, it's so long to the old dam, whose exact age is hard to pin down. The earliest state record of the dam is an 1886 inspection report. The dam was built to help harness the power of the river for the Allendale Mill, built in 1822 and progressively converted to condominiums.

Full Text (793 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Sep 27, 2001

NORTH PROVIDENCE - The Woonasquatucket River meanders listlessly through the expanse of mud and grass flats before arriving at Allendale Dam.

It was a decade ago next month that the century-old wooden timbers that supported the earthen structure gave way in the middle of the night, allowing Allendale Pond to disappear in the darkness like bath water escaping down a drain.

Scott Miller stands on the bank of the river as water rushes past the debris clinging to the intact sections of the dam. But he isn't here to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the breaching of the dam, as a gaggle of Canada geese flies overhead and the sunfish swim in the shallows a short distance downstream.

Instead, Miller is overseeing the long-awaited reconstruction of the dam. The project began about a month ago and is expected to be finished by the end of the year, except for the landscaping work that will wait until the spring.

The goal is to rebuild the Allendale Dam and fill this back up to a pond, which is a minor river right now, Miller said.

After the 106-foot dam breached on Nov. 26, 1991, there was a great deal of planning and preparation for a replacement. But the discovery of dioxin and other contaminants upstream complicated matters.

The troublesome levels of toxins in the Woonasquatucket led the Environmental Protection Agency to cordon an area around the Centredale Manor senior apartment complex in 1999. A year later, the EPA designated the area a Superfund site, making it eligible for federal clean-up assistance.

While the discovery of dioxin has been anything but welcome news, it has assured the replacement of the dam. That's because EPA officials are counting on a new dam to

help reduce public exposure to dioxin-contaminated river sediments.

A new dam would allow Allendale Pond to return to historic levels, submerging about 28,000 cubic yards of tainted sediments under water. An estimated 415 cubic yards left exposed will have to be excavated and taken to an incinerator. The EPA describes the \$1.8-million job as an interim measure, pending studies that will allow the agency to make final recommendations about the future of the Superfund site.

The EPA awarded a contract for the dam reconstruction to LEA- Cianci Inc., of Plainville, Conn., which employs Miller, the project director. On a recent afternoon, while accompanied by EPA officials Dick Boynton and Anna Krasko, Miller, explained the project to visitors, including Eugenia Marks, of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island.

Miller said that the new dam will be made of concrete and, like the old one, will serve as a spillway. It will have a steel gate with two positions, opened or closed, to help control the water level.

Marks asked whether a fish ladder would be built to help fish migrate upstream around the dam. Miller said one was being designed with state money, but that no money was allocated yet for its construction.

Miller said the 13-foot tall dam will be modestly realigned during the project. While one end will remain in its original position, the other will be moved five feet downstream, Miller said. That will help cut down on how much sediment must be disturbed, he said, and allow the wooden pilings of the old dam to be buried under gravel, soil and a top layer of large rocks.

The dam reconstruction will cost about \$500,000, with another \$500,000 going toward the disposal of sediments excavated in the process. Following excavation, the sediments will be contained in an area at the end of Allendale Avenue while drying. It will take about two weeks, or 20 to 25 truckloads, to transport the material away, said Miller, who described the disruption to neighbors as minimal.

The removal of these sediments will be done separately from those that would be left exposed after Allendale Pond rises, Boynton said. That work has been postponed until next spring, he said. LEA-Cianci is negotiating to do that work as well. It will require much more intensive excavating and trucking, Boynton said.

Meanwhile, it's so long to the old dam, whose exact age is hard to pin down. The earliest state record of the dam is an 1886 inspection report. The dam was built to help harness the power of the river for the Allendale Mill, built in 1822 and progressively converted to condominiums.

Reporter Richard Salit can be reached by e-mail at rsalit@projo.com

* * *

REBUILDING: Environmental Protection Agency officials and a crew from LEA-Cianci, a contractor from Plainville, Conn., tour the soon- to-be-replaced Allendale Dam. At top is a section of the dam in need of repair.

* * *

LAST LEG: Sections of Allendale Dam are in dire need of repair.

EPA orders 5 firms to clean up Superfund site; [Northwest Edition]

RICHARD SALIT *Journal Staff Writer*. Providence Journal. Providence, R.I.: Mar 28, 2001. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

At public hearings last year, EPA outlined this preferred interim plan and won the support of environmentalists and local officials. The idea is to repair the dam so that the water level in Allendale Pond returns to historic levels and submerges most of the contaminated soils. Tainted soils left exposed, the estimated 2,500 cubic yards, would be removed and trucked to an incinerator.

Since pollution concerns about the site were raised in early 1999, EPA has spent approximately \$5.3 million on sampling soils, cordoning the area and capping contaminated soils near the parking lot of Centredale Manor, the high-rise apartment building for seniors. Brook Village apartments, another apartment tower, is also located next to the site.

Last year, the five companies obeyed an EPA order to place a second earthen cap over contaminated soils south of Brook Village.

Full Text (437 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Mar 28, 2001

NORTH PROVIDENCE - The federal Environmental Protection Agency yesterday ordered five businesses to remove dioxin-contaminated soil and sediment from the Superfund site on the Woonasquatucket River.

The federal agency issued the order because the businesses, which are being held responsible for the cleanup, have not responded to EPA requests to do the work.

Given the unwillingness of these parties to do the work voluntarily, we have no choice but to pursue this order, Ira Leighton, acting regional administrator, said in a statement. As with all clean-up cases, EPA would much prefer a private party cleanup than continuing to use taxpayer dollars.

The five companies have been ordered to excavate, treat and truck away 2,500 cubic yards of contaminated soil and sediment from an area between Route 44 and the Lymansville Dam. They have also been directed to restore Allendale Dam, which was breached nearly 10 years ago.

EPA announced earlier this year that this work would safeguard public health and prevent the spread downstream of contaminants while the agency studies a permanent response to the dioxin problem at the site.

At public hearings last year, EPA outlined this preferred interim plan and won the support of environmentalists and local officials. The idea is to repair the dam so that the water level in Allendale Pond returns to historic levels and submerges most of the contaminated soils. Tainted soils left exposed, the estimated 2,500 cubic yards, would be removed and trucked to an incinerator.

The project is estimated to cost about \$2.6 million.

Since pollution concerns about the site were raised in early 1999, EPA has spent approximately \$5.3 million on sampling soils, cordoning the area and capping contaminated soils near the parking lot of Centredale Manor, the high-rise apartment

building for seniors. Brook Village apartments, another apartment tower, is also located next to the site.

The five companies include property owners and former industrial companies that operated in the area: Brook Village Associates Limited Partnership, Centredale Manor Associates Limited Partnership, Crown Metro Inc., Emhart Industries Inc. and New England Container Company Inc.

EPA says it is actively seeking information regarding other possible liable parties.

Last year, the five companies obeyed an EPA order to place a second earthen cap over contaminated soils south of Brook Village.

Although pleased that the same five parties adequately complied with the first unilateral order issued for the site last spring, EPA is disappointed that the parties have repeatedly declined to perform work voluntarily, the agency stated in a news release.

This new order requires the businesses to submit plans by midsummer and to begin work immediately after EPA has approved them.

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Companies: Environmental Protection Agency
(NAICS: 924110, Sic:9500, Duns:05-794-4910)

Text Word Count 437

EPA to go ahead with river cleanup; [Northwest Edition]

RICHARD SALIT *Journal Staff Writer*. *Providence Journal*. Providence, R.I.: Jan 26, 2001. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

The EPA also announced yesterday that it had obtained favorable results from sediment samples taken last fall from downstream of the Superfund site. The samples taken from the Manton and Dyerville sections of the river, below Manton dam, revealed no soil with dioxin in excess of 1 part per billion.

EPA estimates the project will cost about \$2.6 million. The money will either come from the federal Superfund or from several businesses that EPA holds responsible for the cleanup. The agency has asked the businesses to voluntarily perform or finance the work.

EPA officials say that ultimately they must determine the best way to address the contaminated sediment left under water and that which will remain exposed next to industrial properties along the western bank of the river. The agency must also develop a permanent solution to the contaminated sediment it capped last winter next to Centredale Manor. These studies will take about two years to complete, he said.

Full Text (629 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Jan 26, 2001

* The plan calls for removal of about 2,500 cubic yards of dioxin- contaminated soil from the Woonasquatucket River and restoring the breached Allendale dam, resulting in another 26,000 cubic yards being submerged.

* * *

NORTH PROVIDENCE - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced yesterday that it will proceed with an interim cleanup plan, first announced last year, to reduce the threat of dioxin exposure at the Superfund site on the Woonasquatucket River.

The plan calls for excavating about 2,500 cubic yards of dioxin- contaminated soil, mostly along the residential eastern bank of the river, and trucking it to an incinerator in Canada. The sediment, which contains dioxin in excess of 1 part per billion, will be replaced with clean soil.

The plan also involves restoring the breached Allendale dam, resulting in a much larger amount of tainted sediment about 26,000 cubic yards being submerged under water.

Today's approval is a major milestone in the cleanup of the Woonasquatucket River, Ira Leighton, acting regional administrator for the EPA, said in a statement. For the first time, we'll be removing contaminated material from the site.

The EPA also announced yesterday that it had obtained favorable results from sediment samples taken last fall from downstream of the Superfund site. The samples taken from the Manton and Dyerville sections of the river, below Manton dam, revealed no soil with dioxin in excess of 1 part per billion.

In October, EPA outlined its preferred alternative for dealing with any imminent threat of exposure to dioxin, a confirmed carcinogen. During a public hearing one month

later, environmentalists and area officials expressed their support for the plan.

More support was voiced this week when EPA announced its decision. Those commending the decision included U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy and U.S. Senators Jack Reed and Lincoln Chafee.

This removal action will significantly reduce the risks to the residents and contribute to our long-term goal of making the Woonasquatucket River fully accessible for fishing and swimming, said Jan Reitsma, director of the state Department of Environmental Management.

The cleanup of the site, located near the Centredale Manor senior high-rise apartment building, is expected to begin in the summer and last nearly a year. EPA representatives will meet with area property owners to discuss how the work will affect them.

EPA estimates the project will cost about \$2.6 million. The money will either come from the federal Superfund or from several businesses that EPA holds responsible for the cleanup. The agency has asked the businesses to voluntarily perform or finance the work.

The EPA commissioned a study last summer to identify ways to reduce immediate threats to public health from dioxin and to prevent contaminated sediment from being carried any farther downstream.

The options EPA did not favor included:

n Restoring Allendale dam and placing earthen caps over contaminated soil left exposed. Estimated cost: \$1.8 million.

n Leaving the dam in its breached state and capping a much larger area of contaminated sediment. Estimated cost: \$2.6 million.

n Leaving the dam as is and excavating 28,615 cubic yards of exposed sediment. Estimated cost: \$4.5 million to \$14 million, depending on whether the material would be incinerated before disposal or simply consolidated on site and capped.

EPA officials settled on its preferred alternative because of the relatively modest cost and because it contributes to a permanent solution to contamination at the site.

EPA officials say that ultimately they must determine the best way to address the contaminated sediment left under water and that which will remain exposed next to industrial properties along the western bank of the river. The agency must also develop a permanent solution to the contaminated sediment it capped last winter next to Centredale Manor. These studies will take about two years to complete, he said.

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Companies: Environmental Protection Agency
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Section: News

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Woonasquatucket River cleanup effort lauded; [Northwest Edition]

RICHARD SALIT *Journal Staff Writer*. Providence Journal. Providence, R.I.: Nov 2, 2000. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

EPA announced earlier this month that it favors excavating and removing some sediments at the Superfund site, while allowing a much larger amount of them to be submerged following the restoration of the breached Allendale Dam. It will take another two years for EPA to determine the best way to address the contaminated sediments under water and those left exposed next to industrial properties along the western bank of the river, according to team leader Dick Boynton. The agency must also develop a permanent solution to the contaminated sediments it capped last winter next to Centredale Manor, the high-rise apartment complex. Eugenia Marks, spokeswoman for the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, said her organization supports the plans to excavate 2,365 cubic yards of contaminated sediments, which will be trucked to an incinerator in Canada. But, she said, I am concerned that we recognize this as an interim measure.

Full Text (593 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Nov 2, 2000

* The throngs that turned out when dioxin was first found in the river dwindle to fewer than 50 for a local hearing of the Environmental Protection Agency.

NORTH PROVIDENCE - When the Environmental Protection Agency discovered high levels of dioxin along the Woonasquatucket River nearly two years ago, hundreds of alarmed residents turned out at public meetings to ask questions and voice concerns.

Last night, one month after the EPA announced its clean-up plans for the Superfund site, fewer than 40 people showed up for a public hearing on the proposals. Of those, only a handful spoke. Most were government officials and nearly all applauded the agency's efforts.

Thank you very much, resident Steve Pitassi told EPA officials attending the hearing. You're doing a great job.

The meeting at Town Hall ended less than one hour after it began.

EPA announced earlier this month that it favors excavating and removing some sediments at the Superfund site, while allowing a much larger amount of them to be submerged following the restoration of the breached Allendale Dam.

The agency estimates that the project would cost as much as \$2.6 million. It would serve as an interim measure, reducing any immediate threats to public health from dioxin and preventing the known carcinogen from further spreading downstream. Work is expected to begin in the summer.

It will take another two years for EPA to determine the best way to address the contaminated sediments under water and those left exposed next to industrial properties along the western bank of the river, according to team leader Dick Boynton. The agency must also develop a permanent solution to the contaminated sediments it

capped last winter next to Centredale Manor, the high-rise apartment complex.

Eugenia Marks, spokeswoman for the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, said her organization supports the plans to excavate 2,365 cubic yards of contaminated sediments, which will be trucked to an incinerator in Canada. But, she said, I am concerned that we recognize this as an interim measure.

Audubon will continue to press for the return of the river to a condition where it can be used for fishing and swimming.

Don Asselin, who lives along the river, echoed those sentiments. He said the project might eliminate the threat of dioxin, but that it does not address other potential sources of pollution, including the sewage treatment plant upstream in North Smithfield.

If you want to make it swimmable, you can't pour raw sewage into it, he said.

Asselin said he also is concerned that raising the level of Allendale Pond, by repairing the dam, will cause flooding problems for area residents that went away when the dam was breached in 1991.

When that river swells up, it can get out of control, he said. I'd like to see what you are proposing for flood controls.

Boynton said the dam would be constructed with controls to moderate the pond's water level.

Marks and Pitassi suggested that the dam also be equipped with fish ladders, devices that allow spawning fish to swim upstream. Dams prevent fish from reaching spawning grounds.

Resident Paul McEloy, upon hearing that the sediments would be trucked away for incineration, said, My concern is we are transferring the problem to someone else.

State Sen. John Celona (D-North Providence) said EPA's plans for next summer keep the clean-up efforts moving in the direction of returning the river to the best condition possible.

Others who spoke in favor of EPA's plan included Johnston Mayor William Macera and a representative for the state Department of Environmental Management.

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Companies: Environmental Protection Agency
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Section: News

Text Word Count 593

Immersion would limit dioxin removal, EPA study says; [Northwest Edition]

RICHARD SALIT *Journal Staff Writer*. *Providence Journal*. Providence, R.I.: Oct 16, 2000. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

The EPA would excavate the dioxin-tainted sediments left above the surface of Allendale Pond as well as those downstream from the dam in Lymansville Pond and have them taken to be incinerated. They would then be disposed of at a landfill as non-hazardous waste.

[Dick Boynton] said the EPA must ultimately determine the best way to address the contaminated sediments under water and those left exposed next to industrial properties along the western bank of the river. The agency must also develop a permanent solution to the contaminated sediments it capped last winter next to Centredale Manor, the high-rise apartment complex. These studies will take about two years to complete, he said.

Anna Krasko, project manager for the EPA, said the money will either come from the companies the EPA holds responsible for the contamination or, if they resist, from the federal Superfund program.

Full Text (769 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Oct 16, 2000

* Raising the water level in the Allendale Pond would cover much of the tainted soil, reducing the amount that would need to be excavated.

* * *

NORTH PROVIDENCE - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is recommending a novel way to deal with a daunting amount of dioxin-contaminated sediments along the banks of the Woonasquatucket River.

Don't remove them, the agency says: Submerge them.

A key feature of the EPA's plan to clean up the Superfund site is restoration of the breached Allendale Dam, allowing the pond it holds back to return to historic levels. The rise in water would cover a substantial amount of contaminated soil now exposed near a residential neighborhood.

The EPA would excavate the dioxin-tainted sediments left above the surface of Allendale Pond as well as those downstream from the dam in Lymansville Pond and have them taken to be incinerated. They would then be disposed of at a landfill as non-hazardous waste.

EPA officials estimate that the project an interim measure meant to reduce any threats to public health would cost as much as \$2.6 million. Work is expected to begin in the summer.

This phase of the project is not the final phase for the Woonasquatucket, Dick Boynton, the EPA's team leader, cautioned at a public forum held last week at Town Hall. It's a residential response. We still have a long way to go.

A public hearing will be held on the proposal at 7 p.m. on Nov. 1 at Town Hall.

Boynton said the EPA must ultimately determine the best way to address the contaminated sediments under water and those left exposed next to industrial properties along the western bank of the river. The agency must also develop a permanent solution to the contaminated sediments it capped last winter next to Centredale Manor, the high-rise apartment complex. These studies will take about two years to complete, he said.

The EPA's strategy, according to Angela Bonarrigo, the agency's community coordinator, has been to ask, How can we take a bite out of the problem sooner?

The agency commissioned a study last summer to help answer that question. The study outlined four ways to address the exposed, contaminated soil on the eastern side of the river, where residential streets dead end off of Woonasquatucket Avenue.

The options:

- * Restore Allendale dam and place earthen caps over the contaminated sediments not submerged by the resulting rising waters. About 415 cubic yards of sediment would have to be removed as a result of repairing the breached dam. Estimated cost: \$1.8 million.

- * Leave the dam as is and cap a much larger area of contaminated sediments. No sediments would have to be removed. Estimated cost: \$2.6 million.

- * Leave the dam as is and remove all of the exposed sediments. About 28,615 cubic yards of material would have to be removed (about six trucks a day for a year). Estimated cost: \$4.5 million to \$14 million, depending on whether the material would be incinerated before disposal or simply consolidated on site and capped.

- * Restore the dam and excavate the contaminated sediments left high and dry. About 2,365 cubic yards would have to be removed (four trucks a day for a month). Estimated cost: \$1.8 million to \$2.6 million.

This last scenario is EPA's preferred option because it contributes to a permanent solution to contamination at the site, according to an EPA statement. Also, the cost is only slightly more than the first two choices, and significantly less than the third.

Anna Krasko, project manager for the EPA, said the money will either come from the companies the EPA holds responsible for the contamination or, if they resist, from the federal Superfund program.

I think it is the proper way to go. It's a great proposal, Mayor A. Ralph Mollis told the crowd of about 25 people.

Some in the audience wanted to know how clean the river will be after the work is undertaken.

My ultimate concern is that you bring this river to fishable and swimmable [conditions], said Grant DulGarian, of Providence. Whichever is the alternative that would do that, I would support that.

The interim work on the exposed sediments won't raise the river quality to levels that would allow for swimming and fishing, Bonarrigo said. But, she said, All four of these alternatives made the cut because they move forward in that direction.

Comments about the EPA's plans may be mailed to Anna Krasko, remedial project

manager, 1 Congress St., Suite 1100 (HBO), Boston, Mass., 02114. They may also be faxed to (617) 918-1281 or e-mailed to krasko.anna@epa.gov

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Section: *News*

Text Word Count 769

EPA wants tainted soil removed; [Northwest Edition]

RICHARD SALIT *Journal Staff Writer*. *Providence Journal*. Providence, R.I.: Oct 4, 2000. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

In January 1999, EPA officials announced that tests of soil sediments taken from the Woonasquatucket River revealed potentially dangerous levels of dioxins and other contaminants. Residents expressed concerns for children and others who use the river for recreation, and area home owners feared their property values would be harmed. This past February, the agency officially designated the site, near Centredale Manor and the Johnston town line, as a Superfund site, eligible for federal cleanup funds. The EPA, following Superfund protocol, then commissioned a \$200,000 study of the site to determine how to address the river contamination.

The public has until Nov. 3 to submit written comments to the EPA on the agency's preferred cleanup plan. The comments should be mailed to Anna Krasko, remedial project manager, 1 Congress St., Suite 1100 (HBO), Boston, Mass. 02114. They may also be faxed to (617) 918-1281 or e-mailed to krasko.anna

Full Text (496 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Oct 4, 2000

* The federal agency is also recommending Allendale Dam be restored to block the spread of dioxin along the Woonasquatucket.

* * *

NORTH PROVIDENCE - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced yesterday that the best way to deal with dioxin-contaminated sediments along the Woonasquatucket River is to thoroughly remove them.

The agency is recommending the excavation of 2,500 cubic yards of tainted soil and the restoration of Allendale Dam to eliminate the threat of dioxin exposure and to prevent the confirmed carcinogen from spreading downstream.

Now that we've taken short-term measures to stop the spread of contamination, we're focusing our attention on the long-term restoration of the flood-plain areas and Allendale Dam, beginning next summer, Mindy S. Lubber, regional administrator of the EPA's New England office, said in a statement.

In January 1999, EPA officials announced that tests of soil sediments taken from the Woonasquatucket River revealed potentially dangerous levels of dioxins and other contaminants. Residents expressed concerns for children and others who use the river for recreation, and area home owners feared their property values would be harmed.

The EPA cordoned off the area from the public and placed temporary earthen caps over pockets of contaminated soil. The agency continues to warn the public not to bathe in the river, not to drink from it and not to consume fish caught in its waters. People who come in contact with the river are advised to cleanse themselves with soapy water.

This past February, the agency officially designated the site, near Centredale Manor and the Johnston town line, as a Superfund site, eligible for federal cleanup funds. The EPA, following Superfund protocol, then commissioned a \$200,000 study of the site to

determine how to address the river contamination.

On Tuesday, the results of that study will be the subject of an open house from 4 to 6 p.m. and an informational meeting at 7 p.m. Both are being held in the council chambers of Town Hall, 1000 Smith St.

A public hearing, at which comments will be recorded by a stenographer, will be held at 7 p.m. on Nov. 1 at Town Hall.

The cleanup plan we're unveiling today brings us another major step forward in reclaiming the Woonasquatucket River as a resource for the community. We look forward to hearing from the public on this next big step in erasing dioxin contamination from the river, Lubber said.

The public has until Nov. 3 to submit written comments to the EPA on the agency's preferred cleanup plan. The comments should be mailed to Anna Krasko, remedial project manager, 1 Congress St., Suite 1100 (HBO), Boston, Mass. 02114. They may also be faxed to (617) 918-1281 or e-mailed to krasko.anna

During the comment period, the public is invited to review the study, formally known as an engineering evaluation/cost analysis. It is available by contacting the EPA Records Center at (617) 918-1440, or mailing correspondence to the attention of the Records Center at the above address.

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Companies: Environmental Protection Agency
(NAICS: 924110, Sic:9500, Duns:05-794-4910)

Section: News

Text Word Count 496

Woonasquatucket dams are under scrutiny *Inspections are planned to determine if dioxin is trapped behind the aging dams.; [METRO Edition]

BRIAN D. MOCKENHAUPT *Journal Staff Writer*. *The Providence*

Journal. Providence, R.I.: Apr 21, 1999. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

While the Environmental Protection Agency assesses the extent of dioxin contamination along the Woonasquatucket River, officials are preparing for another potential problem: dioxin-tainted sediment trapped behind aging dams along the river.

"These dams may be the only thing preventing the contaminants from flowing downstream," Mayor A. Ralph Mollis said at a meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers. The corps will inspect several dams along the river, from Smithfield into Providence, in the next few weeks.

While area residents wait for the government to announce a cleanup plan for the Woonasquatucket, the Army Corps of Engineers' work will deal only with the structural integrity of the river's dams.

Full Text (664 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Apr 21, 1999

While the Environmental Protection Agency assesses the extent of dioxin contamination along the Woonasquatucket River, officials are preparing for another potential problem: dioxin-tainted sediment trapped behind aging dams along the river.

"These dams may be the only thing preventing the contaminants from flowing downstream," Mayor A. Ralph Mollis said at a meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers. The corps will inspect several dams along the river, from Smithfield into Providence, in the next few weeks.

A group of federal, state and local officials toured two of the dam sites Monday. They gathered near the rushing water at the Lymanville Dam, just past a sign warning, "Fish Contaminated. Do not eat," posted in five languages.

The EPA has been posting such signs along the river since January, when it announced that troublesome levels of dioxin, a carcinogen, had been found in several spots.

Sen. Jack Reed and Rep. Patrick Kennedy were in town for the tour, two days after they attended opening day of Little League at Lee Romano Field along the river. The league decided to use the field after agency officials declared it was safe.

While area residents wait for the government to announce a cleanup plan for the Woonasquatucket, the Army Corps of Engineers' work will deal only with the structural integrity of the river's dams.

A final report from the corps, detailing the condition of the dams and outlining possible remedies, will be given to the Department of Environmental Management in June.

After that, deciding what to do with the dams will be up to the state.

"We really don't have a role beyond providing technical assistance," said John R. Kennelly, of the Army Corps of Engineers planning division.

While the corps could recommend repairing some dams, Kennelly said, removing a

dam could be an option if the structure no longer serves a purpose.

Mollis said the short-term goal is ensuring that the dams do not breach and send dioxin-contaminated sediment downriver. The long-term goal is cleaning up the dioxin and restoring the river.

Removing contaminated sediment from behind the dams would be part of an agency cleanup project.

The Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to spend \$50,000 assessing several dams along the river: the Allendale and Lymanville dams in North Providence and the Manton, Atlantic Mills, Paragon, and Rising Sun dams in Providence. The Corps of Engineers will work with the state Department of Environmental Management.

DEM inspectors earlier this year found that three dams along the river have structural problems and need immediate repairs.

The dams, all privately owned, were once used by the mills that lined the Woonasquatucket. They serve little purpose today other than providing a place for ducks and geese to swim and scenic views for people living along the river.

Because the dams are small, there is little risk to people or property if one breaks, but dioxin behind the dams could spread.

Tests conducted by the EPA earlier this year found troublesome levels of dioxin at the base of the Allendale and Lymanville dams. Lesser amounts of the chemical were found behind the Manton and Atlantic Mills dams.

As residents near the Allendale Dam can attest, the waters the dams hold back can be here today, gone tomorrow.

A section of the Allendale Dam broke apart eight years ago in the middle of the night, turning Allendale Pond into a vast mud flat littered with dead fish, old tires and soda cans.

Residents along the river wanted their pond back and worked for years to secure money to rebuild the dam. The Army Corps of Engineers in 1997 announced plans to tear out the old timber-and-earth dam and replace it with a concrete barrier. The project, paid for mostly through federal money, was expected to cost about \$425,000.

Dam work was put on hold when dioxin contamination was discovered in the Woonasquatucket that summer, until officials could determine the extent of the pollution. There is still a wide hole in the dam.

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Dateline: *NORTH PROVIDENCE*

Section: *NEWS*

Text Word Count 664

Tests confirm dioxin presence The latest results are "not a new cause for alarm" and no additional measures are needed to ensure public safety, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.; [NORTH WEST Edition]

THOMAS J. MORGAN *Journal Staff Writer*. The Providence Journal. Providence, R.I.: Mar 26, 1999. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

Another round of surface-soil testing of the banks of the Woonasquatucket River in Centredale has confirmed earlier findings of contamination by dioxins exceeding, in some spots, the "action level" concentration defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the EPA said yesterday.

"Not a new cause for alarm" and "not a surprise," EPA spokesman Peyton Fleming said in summing up the results. He said the next step likely will be to take samples from deeper in the soil.

Also yesterday, Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy said from Washington that at his request the Army Corps of Engineers will inspect five dams on the Woonasquatucket next month. He said dioxin concentrations have been found behind each dam, and the dams are perhaps all that is keeping the dangerous chemical from washing farther downstream.

Full Text (716 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Mar 26, 1999

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Kennedy said he will tour the dams April 19 with Col. Michael Pratt, the commanding officer of the New England division of the Corps, and with state and local officials.

The EPA "action level" is one part per billion }1 ppb{, and the agency said it showed up in samples from three properties in the quarter-mile stretch of the river from the Centredale Manor, a housing project for the elderly, to the Allendale Dam.

The Johnston side of the river, however, got a clean bill of health.

The highest concentrations were found on the grounds of the manor, at an adjacent wetland and at the tailrace of the dam, Fleming said.

"The fact that we are seeing hits at the Centredale Manor and the wetland area is not a surprise at all," Fleming said. "We knew from the beginning that we needed to collect samples from the floodplain areas immediately downstream."

All the contaminated areas lie within the river's floodplain.

"We're getting a sense of how widespread the contamination is, with an eye toward whatever work we are going to do to remediate," said Fleming.

He said the latest findings do not support taking further measures to ensure public safety beyond those already in place.

Environmental officials have erected warning signs and strung orange plastic fences along the riverbank - stronger fences will be erected next month, the EPA said - and have warned residents not to swim in the river or eat fish from it. The precautions apply only to the Centredale area and the parts immediately downstream.

The EPA spokesman said 240 samples were scraped from the surface in February, and yesterday's findings were based on the first 86 to be tested. Work continues on the remainder, he said.

John P. DeVillars, EPA New England administrator, said, "We need to continue our focus on floodplain properties, especially those above Allendale Dam."

Fleming said if other test results show concentrations greater than 1 ppb, then "it triggers the need to look at what sort of steps need to be taken."

He said however that the numbers would have to be "very, very high" to justify digging up the soil and sediments and disposing of them in an approved manner.

"These numbers are preliminary," he said. "It's too early to talk about specific numbers. The numbers we are seeing in some of these }test results{ are are very consistent with the numbers seen previously."

Sen. Jack Reed issued a statement from Washington in which he noted that the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease has recommended that the EPA remediate surface soil contaminated by dioxin exceeding 1 ppb.

"I would also hope that the EPA will begin plans for remediation in any areas where final results indicate high dioxin levels," Reed said.

Kennedy said his concern is for the structural integrity of the dams. He said he sought the help of the Corps March 18 after learning that a visual inspection by the state Department of Environmental Management found three of them were in need of immediate repair.

"We also need to discuss with state and local officials how the federal government can be of assistance in light of the fact that the ownership of the dams is uncertain and that the state has yet to make a thorough inspection of the dams," the congressman said.

The EPA said that anyone with health-related questions about dioxin contamination should call the Family Health Information Line at the Rhode Island Department of Health. The toll-free number is 1-800-942-7434.

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Dateline: *NORTH PROVIDENCE*

Section: *NEWS*

Woonasquatucket dams pose a dilemma *Several that may be holding back dioxin-laced sediment may be in bad shape repair but for now, the state can only request that their owners make the repairs.; [ALL Edition]

ARIEL SABAR *Journal Staff Writer*. *The Providence Journal*. Providence, R.I.: Mar 18, 1999. pg. A.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

Pushing past a tangle of brush as he strode onto the snow-laced embankment of the Lymanville dam, Paul Guglielmino, the state's new dams inspector, didn't have to look far to find problems.

Guglielmino recently surveyed five dams on the Woonasquatucket River from southern Smithfield to Providence and found that three are in need of immediate repair.

Dioxin-tainted sediment has been found behind those three, and the dams may be the only thing keeping dioxins and other pollutants from spreading downstream.

But Guglielmino gave the three others - the Lymanville, Manton and Atlantic Mills dams - mostly poor grades, citing broken gates, overflow channels clogged with rocks and dirt, and eroding embankments.

Full Text (1275 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Mar 18, 1999

Pushing past a tangle of brush as he strode onto the snow-laced embankment of the Lymanville dam, Paul Guglielmino, the state's new dams inspector, didn't have to look far to find problems.

"All this shouldn't be here," he said, waving a hand toward trees whose roots may be weakening a berm holding back about 7 million cubic feet of river water.

The problems at Lymanville - too much vegetation, inoperable overflow gates, eroding embankments - are not unique.

Guglielmino recently surveyed five dams on the Woonasquatucket River from southern Smithfield to Providence and found that three are in need of immediate repair. Dioxin-tainted sediment has been found behind those three, and the dams may be the only thing keeping dioxins and other pollutants from spreading downstream.

But with the ownership of these dams uncertain and legal limits on what steps the state can take to force repairs, fixing the problems may be tricky. Complicating matters is the fact that the last time the state inspected the three worst-rated dams was in the 1940s.

Guglielmino's report is a response to resolutions passed by the General Assembly in January amid concern about the discovery of the cancer-causing chemical dioxin along the river's North Providence stretch.

Lawmakers with districts downstream worried that a dam breach could release clouds of dioxin-tainted sediment into the river. They asked the state Department of Environmental Management to inspect the dams and develop "an aggressive action plan" for immediate repairs.

In Guglielmino's survey, the Upper Esmond dam, in Smithfield, and Greystone darn, in

North Providence and Johnston, earned "good" ratings. Both were rebuilt this decade.

But Guglielmino gave the three others - the Lymanville, Manton and Atlantic Mills dams - mostly poor grades, citing broken gates, overflow channels clogged with rocks and dirt, and eroding embankments.

At Atlantic Mills, in Olneyville, he even spied a small leak in the stone face of the spillway.

The surveyed dams are relatively small, and a collapse would be unlikely to cause much property damage or injure anybody, other than perhaps a canoeist immediately downstream. Built to power the mills that once lined the river, most do little more now than hem in mucky ponds.

Water flows over the dams, but pollutants tend to get trapped in the river-bottom sediment behind them.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency announced in January that it had found some of the highest levels of dioxin behind Allendale dam, another dam on the Woonasquatucket - one that breached several years ago.

Earlier tests showed similarly worrisome levels behind Lymanville, and a much lesser amount behind Manton and Atlantic Mills.

State Sen. David V. Iglizzi, the sponsor of the Senate resolution and the instigator of the one in the House, said Guglielmino's report confirms his suspicions.

"The dams are in extremely bad repair," said Iglizzi, a Democrat whose district covers riverfront neighborhoods in Providence and Johnston. "And I think repairs need to be done immediately, especially in the context of this potential further spread of dioxin downstream."

But that may be harder than it seems.

Guglielmino and his employer, the Department of Environmental Management, which is in charge of dam inspections, do not yet know who owns the three troubled dams.

Another problem, the DEM says, is that it was unable to conduct a complete safety check of the dams.

Guglielmino made visual inspections of the dams over two days in January and February. But he said this week that he was unable to gather enough information to gauge the dams' structural soundness or even their overall safety.

To do so, he said, the dam's owners would need to clear away the brush and trees and lower the dam's water level to allow a fuller look at the structures that hold back water. "We'll do the inspection if the dam is presented in a manner that we can do the inspection," he said.

Yet the state appears to be in a Catch-22: it says it cannot order the dam's owners to do those things unless it first determines the dams are unsafe.

A DEM official said the agency expects to clear up the ownership questions within a week. Then it will mail the owners letters that list recommended repairs. But because the DEM has seen no evidence that the dams are unsafe - that is, at risk of imminent collapse - the letters are recommendations, not orders.

That has prompted Igliazzi to accuse the agency of shirking its enforcement responsibilities. In an interview Tuesday, he pointed to a state law requiring the DEM to make periodic and "thorough" inspections of dams. Later that day, he wrote a letter of complaint to acting DEM director George Welly.

DEM spokesman Robert Ballou countered that the problems with the dams simply weren't dire enough to merit a brass-knuckled approach. "From what we have observed, there are deficiencies that need to be addressed, but they are not of the magnitude or seriousness that would warrant immediate compliance orders," he said yesterday.

As for the claim by Guglielmino that the safety of the dams remains unknown, Ballou said that the letters to the owners are a first stab at fixing the problems, and that other measures may be considered if this approach fails.

He said that the dams weren't inspected since the 1940s because public officials hadn't asked for inspections and larger dams took priority.

"Because they were low-hazard dams," he said, "they were not among the priority dams that were primarily subject to the regular inspection program."

Even routine inspections offer no guarantees.

In 1991, the Allendale Dam, an 8-foot-high dam on the Woonasquatucket in North Providence, collapsed. Earle Prout Jr., who was dam inspector then, said at the time that he had never seen any sign of trouble in at least a half-dozen inspections in the preceding 13 years.

A few years later, another dam on the river, the Dyerville dam, in Providence, also collapsed.

LYMANSVILLE DAM is impossible to see from the nearest road in North Providence.

But behind a sprawling mill complex, water glides over its edge in glassy sheets and plunges 14 feet to where the river resumes below. On a sunny afternoon earlier this week, the day after a storm draped Rhode Island in about a foot of snow, the spillway was one of the few features of the dam that seemed to be working, even if one side was partly covered in crude graffiti.

Guglielmino said that his report wasn't based on a rigorous examination of the dams but on signs of possible problems.

One sign is the rows of trees and bushes atop Lymanville. If they die or are felled by wind, Guglielmino explains, their roots will wither and thus threaten to undermine the carefully built earthen embankment. "This should only be covered by grass," he said Tuesday during a visit to the dam.

Near the trees are overflow gates that are supposed to be opened during storms. They are designed to prevent surges of storm water from overrunning - or, in the worst case, toppling - the embankment.

But as Guglielmino approached, it was clear that these devices would be more at home in a museum of industrial history than on a working dam. The metal rack and pinion that lifts the gates is rusted to a purplish orange, and the wooden beams supporting them are splintered by rot.

Gazing over the rushing water, Guglielmino said there are still many unknowns, including whether the Lymanville spillway is brawny enough to withstand a large storm.

"I haven't performed enough of a visual inspection to say whether the dams are unsafe," he said. "And that's the question everyone wants answered."

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Dateline: *NORTH PROVIDENCE*

Section: *NEWS*

Text Word Count 1275

Dam work falling into place *The Army Corps of Engineers hopes to replace the old Allendale Dam this summer.; [NORTH WEST Edition] C.J. CHIVERS Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer . Providence Journal - Bulletin. Providence, R.I.: Apr 29, 1997. pg. C.01

Full Text (382 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Apr 29, 1997

Six years after the old Allendale Dam ruptured in the night, letting the pond's water slip down the Woonasquatucket River into Narragansett Bay, the Army Corps of Engineers has announced its plan to build a replacement.

The work is set to begin this summer, if all of the project's many elements - funding, construction planning and acquisition of title - can come together in the next few months.

"Everybody has been really working in concert, and now it's all coming to fruition," said lawyer Robert A. Peretti. "Hopefully there won't be any snags."

Peretti is at work on the project's last significant hurdle: getting clear title to the land adjacent to the dam, which once harnessed power for the Allendale Mill.

He said a surveyor hired last month by the Allendale Dam Reparations Committee is due back soon with a precise survey of the area, which Peretti can use to approach banks and residents in obtaining a release for the project.

"It's a very positive project," Peretti said, adding that it has had support from every level: residents to the federal government, including Sen. John H. Chafee.

The other key piece in the equation, - money-, appears to be secure, according to town and state officials.

Most of the \$350,000 required for the repair will come from federal coffers, courtesy of the federal Water Resources Development Act of 1996. A quarter of the money-, about \$90,000-, will come from state and local budgets.

Sen. John A. Celona, D-North Providence, said yesterday that the state has earmarked \$50,000 in previous budgets, and is considering more funding in its current session.

Mayor A. Ralph Mollis said the difference will be provided by the town.

"I see this project getting off the ground very soon," Mollis said.

Once work begins, the repairs will be done in two phases, giving a modern look to the circa-1860 dam.

First, the current gate will be repaired and buttressed with stop logs.

Then the 105-foot timber spillway will be excavated and replaced with a dam made of reinforced concrete. This effort will require resetting the stones on the Johnston side of the dam.

Steven Pitassi, who has been active in the work of the reparations committee, said the final steps in the project appear at hand.

"This could happen very, very quickly if the transfer goes smoothly," he said.

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Dateline: *NORTH PROVIDENCE*

Text Word Count 382

Dam repair moves closer to reality *Raffle money is slated for title research on the historic Lymanville dam, which let go in 1991, reducing a scenic pond to a mudflat.; [NORTH WEST Edition]

C.J. CHIVERS Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer . Providence Journal - Bulletin. Providence, R.I.: Apr 19, 1996. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

After a recent raffle of free dinners at local restaurants, the Allendale Dam Reparation Committee is one step closer to restoring Lymanville's historic dam, which let go in 1991.

"I think this is very positive for the town," said Steven Pitassi, the committee's chairman. "If we can rebuild this dam and do some replanting there, we could restore a beautiful area of the town."

The group sold 80 raffle tickets at \$20 each in recent weeks, producing funds to search for a lawyer. The lawyer will research the title concerns - Pitassi called them "a tangle" - that must be resolved before reconstruction can begin.

Full Text (354 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Apr 19, 1996

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The group sold 80 raffle tickets at \$20 each in recent weeks, producing funds to search for a lawyer. The lawyer will research the title concerns - Pitassi called them "a tangle" - that must be resolved before reconstruction can begin:

Those who remember the old pond on the Woonasquatucket River seek new hope for a sad tale.

A small portion of the dam gave way one night in November 1991, allowing most of the water to drain downstream. By sunrise, a scenic pond had been reduced to mudflat diorama: gasping fish, feasting gulls and astonished residents.

Soon a group of Lymanville residents formed the Allendale Dam Reparation Committee, and began the drive to rebuild the dam and recapture the pond.

It has been a complicated and slow process. But over time, the committee has gained local and state commitments for reconstruction. State Rep. Bambilyn Breece-Cambio, D-North Providence, helped secure \$45,000 from this year's state budget. Mayor G. Richard Fossa has pledged \$30,000 from the town.

The Army Corps of Engineers has estimated a \$300,000 price tag for the project, Pitassi said, and U.S. Sen. John F. Chafee is trying to shepherd a bill for the remaining cash.

But clearance to rebuild the dam still requires sticky title work. The old Allendale Mill

complex has been converted to 51 condominiums, and each household and mortgage holder must sign off on the project. Pitassi said a lawyer, which the group hopes to retain at a reduced rate, will be looking into the matter.

The group has held meetings with residents and condominium owners, and Pitassi said the questions have been mostly technical.

"I really can't see anyone objecting," Pitassi said yesterday. "Bringing back the lake will enhance the value of the properties, and the properties in surrounding areas."

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Dateline: *NORTH PROVIDENCE*

Text Word Count 354

Allendale Dam in a race against the clock *If rebuilding plans are not in place by June 30, 1996, the state can withdraw \$45,000 it has promised for the reconstruction of the historical dam, which washed away four years ago.; [NORTH WEST Edition]

MICHAEL MAYNARD *Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer* . Providence Journal - Bulletin. Providence, R.I.: Sep 12, 1995. pg. C.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

State Rep. Bambilyn Cambio recently secured \$45,000 in state money to help rebuild the historical Allendale Dam that washed away almost four years ago.

But if the rebuilding plans are not in place by June 30, 1996, the state may reclaim that money. So for Cambio and other members of the Allendale Dam Reparation Project, the clock is ticking.

The state money will help the project along, but it will not come close to the \$300,000 that the Army Corps of Engineers estimates the dam will cost to construct. Supporters are counting on Sen. John H. Chafee's clout to secure federal money for the remainder of the tab.

Full Text (628 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Sep 12, 1995

State Rep. Bambilyn Cambio recently secured \$45,000 in state money to help rebuild the historical Allendale Dam that washed away almost four years ago.

But if the rebuilding plans are not in place by June 30, 1996, the state may reclaim that money. So for Cambio and other members of the Allendale Dam Reparation Project, the clock is ticking.

Project members met last night in a meeting room at Town Hall to discuss their options and map strategy.

The state money will help the project along, but it will not come close to the \$300,000 that the Army Corps of Engineers estimates the dam will cost to construct. Supporters are counting on Sen. John H. Chafee's clout to secure federal money for the remainder of the tab.

The timber-and-earth dam held back the Woonasquatucket River for more than a century. When it burst in November 1991, it emptied a wide section of the waterway downstream into the Providence River.

The dam - part of the mill complex on the National Register of Historic Places - created a pond for local residents. The pond provided a rustic vista for residents, some of whom used it for fishing and canoeing. Now, knee-high grass covers what was the pond, and a 20-foot stream runs through the middle.

From the day the dam burst, almost everyone has agreed that the dam should be rebuilt. But deciding who would foot the bill was harder.

Chafee has added the Allendale Dam project to the Water Resources Development Act of 1995. The bill authorizes \$350,000 for the dam project, including \$262,500 in federal money.

If and when that money will emerge from the federal budget process is unknown, said James Barden, a Chafee aide who attended the meeting.

"The time frame on when they pass these bills is not something we have control over," Barden said.

The project would be put on the appropriations bill for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, 1996. The federal money would be available after that date.

The legislation would have to be passed by the House and Senate, and even then might have to survive the scrutiny of a conference committee.

"I think the chances are pretty good," Barden said. "Senator Chafee's got a good track record on this."

Federal money for the project would have to be channeled through a nonprofit corporation.

The dam reparation committee was formed as a nonprofit organization, and a condominium complex bordering the former pond has the same status.

James Taylor, president of the Mill at Allendale Condominium Association, said last night that it might be easier for the association to take the lead. Barden said he would check the regulations regarding nonprofit associations.

Taylor said the Mill at Allendale could then give the dam "to whoever wants it."

There are many abutters to the property, including 51 owners of condominiums in the Mill at Allendale and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The FDIC took ownership over part of the complex after the First Mutual Bank of Boston became insolvent.

North Providence has already spent \$10,500 on plans to replace the dam.

"It's money well spent if the end result is we get the dam fixed," said Mayor G. Richard Fossa. "We'd love to see it repaired tomorrow and have water back on Woonasquatucket Avenue. That's the goal."

Fossa said legal issues, not financial, present the stumbling blocks for a speedy repair. Save the Bay might help in clearing up some of those legal issues, according to Topher Hamblett, who handles outreach activities for the organization.

A legal committee is scheduled to take up the Allendale Dam project at a meeting tonight. Hamblett said several members of that committee were interested in taking on the issue. "Hopefully, I will come back with some good news soon," Hamblett said.

The lawyers would undertake title searches and title-clearing issues.

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Dateline: *NORTH PROVIDENCE*

Text Word Count 628

Allendale Dam restoration picks up steam *The new state budget earmarks \$45,000 for replacing the century-old dam and refilling a muddy flat with its historical pond.; [NORTH WEST Edition]

C.J. CHIVERS Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer . Providence Journal - Bulletin. Providence, R.I.: Aug 29, 1995. pg. D.01

Abstract (Article Summary)

It was once an 8-foot drop of sparkling water from the top the Allendale Dam to the Woonasquatucket River. Yesterday, it was little more than a trickle of water escaping through a raft of junk.

The dam gave way in November 1991, draining the pond behind it and, for a group of residents, washing away a unique North Providence lifestyle.

Now, with a \$45,000 grant earmarked in the new state budget, state Rep. Bambilyn Cambio says that officials have taken another step toward replacing the century-old dam, and refilling the muddy flat with its historical pond.

Full Text (507 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Aug 29, 1995

It was once an 8-foot drop of sparkling water from the top the Allendale Dam to the Woonasquatucket River. Yesterday, it was little more than a trickle of water escaping through a raft of junk.

The dam gave way in November 1991, draining the pond behind it and, for a group of residents, washing away a unique North Providence lifestyle.

"I've been here all my life," said Virginia Fitzgerald, 56, of 41 Stevens St. "We always used the river. My children loved it; we had a canoe. My son was like Mark Twain out there."

Now, with a \$45,000 grant earmarked in the new state budget, state Rep. Bambilyn Cambio says that officials have taken another step toward replacing the century-old dam, and refilling the muddy flat with its historical pond.

The money, which was allocated to the state Department of Environmental Management's Planning and Development Division, will be put toward the cost of the dam project.

"There has never been a doubt on the part of North Providence officials about the urgent need to rebuild this dam," Cambio said.

In the years since the dam let go, the wheels of government have been turning slowly in the matter of dam restoration. But a group of Johnston and North Providence residents, called the Allendale Dam Reparation Committee, has worked to keep the project alive.

Four problems have complicated the effort, said Cambio, who is a member of the group.

First, at \$100,000, the early cost estimates were unrealistically low. Then, project coordinators learned that they must receive permission to develop the dam from condominium owners at the adjacent property. Third, the owner of an asphalt

business that abuts property near the dam wants compensation for the use of his land, should restoration occur. And last, coordinators have had to synchronize the tight budgets of the town, the state and the federal government, which would share the cost of replacing the dam.

"It seems at though we are making some headway here," Cambio said. "The DEM is on board."

Cambio said that the cost estimate has been adjusted to about \$300,000, and that the former mayoral administration of Salvatore Mancini had begun work on getting clear title to the dam.

"Some preliminary work had been done by the prior administration," she said. "Now it's just a matter of starting up from where they left off."

With the state financing in place, Cambio said, she will contact the owner of the asphalt company again.

Although the pond vanished overnight, both Cambio and Mayor G. Richard Fossa caution that bringing it back will continue to take time. Today it is carpeted with knee-high grass and sluiced by a 20-foot-wide stream. Dragonflies zip by on the wind, and land on a wide, spongy flat.

Residents say that the marsh is no substitute, and that they will continue to work to get their pond back, that, rather than drawing a crowd, the present-day bog drives people away.

"I think because of the swampiness the mosquitoes have more places to lay their eggs," Fitzgerald said. "I had a cookout yesterday and we couldn't even sit."

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Dateline: *NORTH PROVIDENCE*

Text Word Count 507

Corps estimates Allendale Dam will cost \$350,000 to repair *Many obstacles still impede the project. Congress must approve extra money, and the dam's ownership must change.

BOB JAGOLINZER *Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer* . Providence Journal. Providence, R.I.: Mar 29, 1995. pg. D-01

Abstract (Article Summary)

In a letter sent to town officials recently, Corps officials said the estimate is based on the projected cost of building a new concrete dam, demolishing the existing wooden dam, design work, administrative costs and inflation.

Because the new estimate is more than 20 percent higher than the original authorization, the Corps must seek approval from Congress for the money, said Robert J. Gauvreau, acting director of programs and management for the Corps' New England division.

Full Text (400 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Mar 29, 1995

NORTH PROVIDENCE --- The cost of repairing the broken Allendale Dam, initially estimated at \$90,000, will probably be about \$350,000, according to the Army Corps of Engineers.

In a letter sent to town officials recently, Corps officials said the estimate is based on the projected cost of building a new concrete dam, demolishing the existing wooden dam, design work, administrative costs and inflation.

The quarter-mile-long dam on the Woonasquatucket River, which dated to the 1860s, broke in 1991, draining a scenic pond. Engineering studies came up with the \$90,000 estimate for repairs. At the behest of Sen. John H. Chafee, federal authorization for the project was included in the 1992 Water Resources Development Act.

At the time, based on the \$90,000 estimate, the federal government agreed to contribute \$67,500, or 75 percent, of the cost. The state or town is to pay the rest.

Last fall, Corps officials, who were puzzled at a dam costing only \$67,500, toured the site and said they would do a more detailed cost estimate.

But because the new estimate is more than 20 percent higher than the original authorization, the Corps must seek approval from Congress for the money, said Robert J. Gauvreau, acting director of programs and management for the Corps' New England division.

The \$350,000 is considered to be a high estimate. "It could be lower," depending on the results of studies that are to be done, Gauvreau said.

Yesterday Gauvreau said the new estimate must be reviewed by Corps headquarters before it is sent to Congress.

Even if Congress approves the extra money, the Corps will not seek bids on the project until the town or a nonprofit agency owns the dam. Now it is owned by the Allendale Condominium Association.

Owners would have to surrender their property rights to the dam. James Taylor, who

manages the condominium development, sees "no problems" with owners giving up title to the dam.

Mayor G. Richard Fossa favors the nonprofit group taking it over.

The Allendale Dam Reparation Committee is working on getting incorporated as a nonprofit organization, said committee chairman Stephen A. Pitassi.

He said the group hopes to get a state grant to hire a lawyer and to do other work to get title to the property.

Legislation was introduced in both houses of the General Assembly yesterday to give the committee a state grant of \$95,000 for the project.

SECTION: NEWS

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Section: *NEWS*

Text Word Count 400

Corps of Engineers will repair N. Providence's Allendale Dam *The government will contribute \$67,500 toward the estimated \$100,000 cost of repairing the 1860s-vintage earth and wood dam, with the t...

BOB JAGOLINZER *Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer* . Providence

Journal. Providence, R.I.: Nov 2, 1994. pg. D-08

Abstract (Article Summary)

Corps of Engineers will repair N. Providence's Allendale Dam *The government will contribute \$67,500 toward the estimated \$100,000 cost of repairing the 1860s-vintage earth and wood dam, with the town providing the rest.

Cost has been a major concern to Mayor [G. Richard Fossa], who fears the eventual price tag could be closer to \$500,000 than \$100,000. As he showed the Corps personnel around the site, Fossa several times mentioned that concern.

[Robert H. Byrne Jr.] said the Corps would try to come up with a precise cost. By law, he said, the Corps could spend up to 20 percent more than the authorized amount without congressional authorization. Beyond that, he said, "we'd have to go back to Congress" for more money, he said.

Full Text (512 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Nov 2, 1994

Corps of Engineers will repair N. Providence's Allendale Dam *The government will contribute \$67,500 toward the estimated \$100,000 cost of repairing the 1860s-vintage earth and wood dam, with the town providing the rest.

NORTH PROVIDENCE --- Repair of the broken Allendale Dam, which once formed a small pond on the Woonasquatucket River, has become an official project of the nation's premier dam builders - the Army Corps of Engineers.

The quarter-mile-long dam was breached in 1991, leaving a mud flat and stream in place of a shallow pond that once was a neighborhood fishing hole.

Earlier this year a former Town Council candidate contended that the town had dropped the ball in efforts to get the dam repaired. Town officials said the delays have been caused by a number of factors, including objections raised by the state Department of Environmental Management under provisions of the state wetlands law.

Last Thursday, four officials from the Corps' New England regional office in Waltham, Mass., accompanied Mayor G. Richard Fossa and several other town officials on a tour of the site, off Woonasquatucket Avenue and behind the former Allendale Mill complex, most of which is now condominium units.

Authorization gained in 1992

Authorization for the project was included in the 1992 Water Resources Development Act, thanks to the efforts of Sen. John H. Chafee, at the request of town officials.

But money for the repairs was appropriated by Congress only this year, according to Robert H. Byrne Jr., program-management chief for the Corps of Engineers' New England division.

The government will contribute \$67,500 toward the estimated \$100,000 cost of

repairing the 1860s-vintage earth and wood dam, with the town providing the rest.

"For \$67,500 we wanted to see what kind of a dam this is," said Byrne as he viewed the dam last week.

He said the Corps would supervise the project and award construction contracts. Corps officials offered no timetable for the overall project; the first step, though, is a series of preliminary studies expected to take several months.

Cost has been a major concern to Mayor Fossa, who fears the eventual price tag could be closer to \$500,000 than \$100,000. As he showed the Corps personnel around the site, Fossa several times mentioned that concern.

Corps will seek exact cost figure

Byrne said the Corps would try to come up with a precise cost. By law, he said, the Corps could spend up to 20 percent more than the authorized amount without congressional authorization. Beyond that, he said, "we'd have to go back to Congress" for more money, he said.

Beyond the uncertainty of the cost and the still-unresolved wetlands concerns raised by DEM, the project is complicated by the fact that the dam is privately owned, by the Allendale condominium owners association.

So either the town would have to take it over or a nonprofit agency must be set up to hold title.

That should not be a problem, according to town planner Joseph Rendine, who said the association has told officials it is willing to set up the corporation.

SECTION: NEWS

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Section: *NEWS*

Text Word Count 512

Panel not needed to oversee dam work *The town is negotiating to gain access to the Allendale dam from the Johnston side.

BOB JAGOLINZER *Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer* . Providence

Journal. Providence, R.I.: Sep 7, 1994. pg. D-01

Abstract (Article Summary)

After listening to an hour of discussion on the dam, the council rejected a suggestion from new member Paul Caranci for a citizens committee to oversee the project. Since the break, town officials have met with various state agencies to discuss the project. Officials are not sure how much it will cost. And there are questions about using public money for reconstruction, because the dam belongs to the Allendale Mill Condominium Association.

The town has rejected that demand, but says it wants to discuss the matter further. "We haven't heard (back) from Mario Libutti," Rendine said.

Full Text (526 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Sep 7, 1994

NORTH PROVIDENCE --- Mayor G. Richard Fossa and Town Planner Joseph Rendine seem to have a firm grasp of the complexities of fixing the broken Allendale Dam, so there is no need to set up a special committee to assist with the project, the Town Council decided last night.

After listening to an hour of discussion on the dam, the council rejected a suggestion from new member Paul Caranci for a citizens committee to oversee the project.

Caranci, who was elected in last month's special District 1 election, is also one of five people running in next week's Democratic primary.

Another candidate, Steven Pitassi, has been pushing the reconstruction project and has maintained that town officials have "dropped the ball" on the project.

The dam, which dates to the mid-1800s, broke in 1991. It spans the Woonasquatucket River. The break left marshland and a sluggish stream where there had been a popular neighborhood pond that was used for fishing and skating.

Since the break, town officials have met with various state agencies to discuss the project. Officials are not sure how much it will cost. And there are questions about using public money for reconstruction, because the dam belongs to the Allendale Mill Condominium Association.

During the council's monthly meeting last night, Caranci suggested a nine-member committee be appointed that would include three council members and three private citizens.

The group would review all aspects of the project, including securing permission from regulatory agencies, determining the cost, finding a financing method and determining whether the Town of Johnston would help. The river is the boundary between part of North Providence and Johnston.

Caranci said the town met with DEM officials in February and they wanted more information about the reconstruction since it is to be done in wetlands.

But Caranci said the agency has not heard from the town again.

"The town response has not been timely and it has not been appropriate," he said.

Rendine disagreed.

He said the town has the additional engineering information DEM wants.

But he said the agency also asked that the town gain access to the river from the west side, in Johnston.

To do that requires going through property owned by Town Asphalt Co.

But company owner Mario Libutti has made several demands of the town, including that he be paid for granting access across his land.

The town has rejected that demand, but says it wants to discuss the matter further. "We haven't heard (back) from Mario Libutti," Rendine said.

Fossa, who thinks the project could cost about \$500,000, said a major problem is ownership of the dam.

If the town takes ownership, it could be liable if the dam fails again and damages property downstream.

Fossa suggested setting up a nonprofit corporation to own the dam. Then public money could be funneled to it for the repair project.

Fossa also said that if public money is used, there would have to be assurance that the people would have access to the dam.

Fossa also said the town is committed to seeing the repair completed, and said Rendine would file monthly progress reports with the council.

SECTION: NEWS

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Section: *NEWS*

Text Word Count 526

Call for dam restoration at center of council race *Steven A. Pitassi, a Democrat running for council, says an election year might just be the time to get the Allendale Dam rebuilt. But difficultie...

BOB JAGOLINZER *Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer* . Providence

Journal. Providence, R.I.: Aug 30, 1994. pg. B-01

Abstract (Article Summary)

The dam, which dates from the mid-1800s, created the pond. It broke when some of its rotted timbers gave way. Now "the people who live around there are complaining of rats," Pitassi said.

"Everyone has dropped the ball on this," Pitassi said. "The matter has been let go for three years. It's an election year, (so) maybe it's the time" to get the project done. He thinks the entire project could cost up to \$500,000, especially if the damage is more severe than was first thought. "The town has a \$5 million deficit," he said. "We don't have the money for this."

Full Text (630 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Aug 30, 1994

Call for dam restoration at center of council race *Steven A. Pitassi, a Democrat running for council, says an election year might just be the time to get the Allendale Dam rebuilt. But difficulties abound.

NORTH PROVIDENCE --- The Allendale Dam, which burst in 1991 and left a mud flat and a narrow stream in place of a neighborhood pond, is about to become the town's latest political cause celebre.

Steven A. Pitassi, an unendorsed Democratic Town Council candidate, plans to ask the council to support restoring the dam.

Pitassi, who last year helped organize protests that led to the closing of the controversial landfill on Smithfield Road, yesterday said he is acting at the request of residents who expressed their concern while he was campaigning. Pitassi and others have passed out flyers, urging people to go to the council meeting on Sept. 6 to talk about the dam.

The dam, which dates from the mid-1800s, created the pond. It broke when some of its rotted timbers gave way. Now "the people who live around there are complaining of rats," Pitassi said.

At the time, the late Mayor Salvatore Mancini said the town would see what could be done to repair the dam.

"Everyone has dropped the ball on this," Pitassi said. "The matter has been let go for three years. It's an election year, (so) maybe it's the time" to get the project done.

But that may be easier said than done.

There are several problems to be overcome, including cost, wetlands protections, the ownership of the dam and an abutting landowner.

Engineering studies done after the dam broke pegged the cost of repairs at about \$100,000.

This year U.S. Sen. John H. Chafee, the ranking Republican on the Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works, persuaded Congress to authorize spending up to \$67,500 for the project.

But the \$100,000 figure has drawn frowns from Mayor G. Richard Fossa. "It will cost almost that much to remove the debris" which is piled behind the now-dry dam, he said as he surveyed the site last week.

He thinks the entire project could cost up to \$500,000, especially if the damage is more severe than was first thought. "The town has a \$5 million deficit," he said. "We don't have the money for this."

The town must get permission from the state Department of Environmental Management, which has raised several concerns, primarily because there would be construction in wetlands.

The river forms part of the town boundary with Johnston, and the agency believes most of the work would be done on the Johnston side, said town planner Joseph Rendine.

DEM wants the town to gain access to the river through property owned by Town Asphalt Inc. It also wants more detailed plans to be submitted, so it can determine how much wetland would be disturbed and exactly what would be done.

But last month Town Asphalt president Mario Libutti wrote to the town, saying that he must be paid if the town is to use his property.

Also, he wants protection from any liability and he wants the town to pay any legal fees that arise.

That's unacceptable, Rendine said yesterday.

He said the town does not want to pay for access or to be held liable for any legal fees, especially if a case comes up that is only marginally connected with the project.

He has asked Libutti for a meeting. Libutti could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Another problem is that the dam is owned by the Allendale Condominium Association, Rendine said. Because the property is privately owned, the town would have to acquire the dam or probably work out another arrangement to use public money for the repairs..

KEYWORDS: election 1994 campaign North Providence

SECTION: NEWS

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People: Pitassi, Steven A

Section: NEWS

Text Word Count 630

Town seeks funds for dam project Watershed council could help rebuild Allendale Dam

JERRY O'BRIEN *Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer* . Providence Journal . Providence, R.I.: Feb 17, 1992. pg. B-01

Abstract (Article Summary)

The river still meanders southward through Centredale down to the former Allendale Mill and downstream into the Providence River. But the dam - a 19th-century landmark, part of a mill complex listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings - is damaged beyond repair.

The catch, [Leo J. Perrotta] said, is that those guidelines require applicants to be nonprofit groups, such as municipalities or their designates. The Allendale Dam, the mill building and grounds are owned primarily by the Allendale Condominium Association, he said.

Based on an informal estimate, Perrotta said replacing the 106-foot-wide dam would probably cost between \$65,000 and \$90,000.

Full Text (461 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Feb 17, 1992

NORTH PROVIDENCE --- Town officials are looking into forming a nonprofit watershed council that could help win federal money to rebuild the Allendale Dam.

Such a group might be needed to meet the conditions of a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant, which would cover half the cost of the reconstruction, according to Leo J. Perrotta, chief of staff to Mayor Salvatore Mancini.

Called a Hazard Mitigation Grant, the federal-aid program provides 50 percent of the cost of construction or restoration projects that address and prevent public hazards.

The 106-foot-wide Allendale Dam burst in November, emptying a wide section of the Woonasquatucket River and turning a scenic waterway into a broad mudflat.

The river still meanders southward through Centredale down to the former Allendale Mill and downstream into the Providence River. But the dam - a 19th-century landmark, part of a mill complex listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings - is damaged beyond repair.

The cause of the break in the 8-foot-high timber and earth dam was rotting wooden planking, buried under a wedge of dirt since its construction around 1886.

The leak grew slowly during the early morning hours of Nov. 27, so there was no flooding or damage downstream.

"We run the risk of further damage to the riverbed, which is exposed, in flash floods during heavy rainstorms," Perrotta said. "Restoration addresses those problems and are covered under FEMA's guidelines."

The catch, Perrotta said, is that those guidelines require applicants to be nonprofit groups, such as municipalities or their designates. The Allendale Dam, the mill building and grounds are owned primarily by the Allendale Condominium Association, he said.

"We applied Feb. 3, and they came to us with a question about whether the town

could apply on behalf of the mill because the town doesn't own the dam," said Perrotta.

"So this is a fall-back position. We could set up a watershed council that would include the town, condominium residents and surrounding neighbors to go through" for the grant, he said.

Based on an informal estimate, Perrotta said replacing the 106-foot-wide dam would probably cost between \$65,000 and \$90,000.

"Our next step is to meet with the condominium association and the residents to discuss forming the group, and applying for wetlands permits (with the state Department of Environmental Management)," he said.

Perrotta said that if the federal matching grant is approved and the town has to cover the balance of the cost, access to the area for residents would have to be included.

"But we're looking at a lot of options," he said.

Perrotta said town officials will be getting advice on the project from the Rhode Island Rivers Council, which was formed last year. The council intends to form a statewide policy on river revitalization.

SECTION: NEWS

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Section: *NEWS*

Text Word Count 461

Old dam lets go in N. Providence Rotted wood went undetected; scenic pond now bed of mud

JERRY O'BRIEN *Journal-Bulletin Staff Writer* . Providence Journal. Providence, R.I.: Nov 28, 1991. pg. D-01

Abstract (Article Summary)

"I used to fish here since I was 8," he said incredulously. "I was down here constantly in the summer with all my friends."

"A sudden burst would have caused some flooding downstream, and there wasn't any," Prout said. "The leak must have started small and grown. It probably took at least three to four hours to empty out the pond. The hole has stopped growing now. There isn't enough volume of water left in the river to take any more of it away."

"There was always water going over the spillway," Prout said, "so you could never see the supporting timbers."

Full Text (637 words)

Copyright Providence Journal/Evening Bulletin Nov 28, 1991

NORTH PROVIDENCE --- Keith Tremblay stood at the edge of the Allendale Dam and wondered where the pond went.

"I used to fish here since I was 8," he said incredulously. "I was down here constantly in the summer with all my friends."

Tremblay, 21, of Julia Drive, grew up on Atlantic Avenue, not far from Allendale Way, near the timber and earth dam that has held back the Woonasquatucket River for more than a century.

"It sure looks different now," he said.

The 106-foot-wide Allendale Dam let go Tuesday night, emptying a wide section of the waterway downstream into the Providence River and turning one of the town's few rustic vistas into a broad expanse of glistening mud.

Rotting wood at the east end of the structure gave way in at least three places near the base of the 8-foot-high dam, according to Earle Prout Jr., dams inspector for the state Department of Environmental Management.

Prout was there yesterday morning, scanning the eerie landscape with town Building Inspector Albert DiPetrillo.

"A sudden burst would have caused some flooding downstream, and there wasn't any," Prout said. "The leak must have started small and grown. It probably took at least three to four hours to empty out the pond. The hole has stopped growing now. There isn't enough volume of water left in the river to take any more of it away."

In the 13 years Prout has been inspecting the state's 525 dams, he has visited the Allendale Dam at least a half dozen times and has never seen signs of impending problems.

There was no dampness in the ground around the edges and no irregularities in the water current as it draws toward and spills over the top of the dam.

"There was always water going over the spillway," Prout said, "so you could never see

the supporting timbers."

You can see them all now.

The dam's wooden support structure is made of large planks laid side by side, buttressed on the downstream side with whole trunks laid at an angle. An enormous mound of dirt and gravel rests on the other side, sloping gently to the riverbed, helping to hold back the water.

The lazily moving river - at this point, more of a pond about 150 feet wide, one-quarter mile long and no more than a few feet deep in many places - usually was just a couple of inches higher than the spillway.

Until last night, when the plug was pulled.

Now the rotted wood has been revealed, a huge chunk of the dirt has been washed away and the pond has become a muddy, meandering river about 15 feet wide.

The black mud is speckled with small pools of water. Hundred of sea gulls dart from the sky to feed on stranded minnows.

According to Prout, the earliest state record of the dam is an 1886 inspection report. The dam was built to help harness the power of the river for the Allendale Mill, built in 1822 by textile manufacturer Zachariah Allen.

In 1987, the building became the home of 52 condominiums, whose eventual owner was the First Mutual Bank of Boston. But First Mutual became insolvent this year and was taken over by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Bank of Boston purchased First Mutual from the FDIC in June, but a Bank of Boston spokeswoman was not sure whether the Allendale condominiums, grounds and dam were included in the transaction.

Prout said it is the owner's responsibility to repair the dam, which he considers a hazard.

Mayor Salvatore Mancini agreed. He said his office would look into getting state aid to help fix it and restore the scenic view. In the meantime, he said, signs will be posted and police patrols will be added to discourage trespassers.

KEYWORDS: picture

SECTION: NEWS

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Section: *NEWS*

Text Word Count 637