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SDMS DocID **506579**

Government

## Mayor Kills Plan To Bury Toxic Soil At DPW Site

A scheduled Jan. 11 meeting to discuss the proposal has been cancelled.

By [Joseph Hutnak](#) | [Email the author](#) | January 5, 2012

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Mayor Joseph Polisen has decided not to pursue a plan that would allow the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use the town's public works property for storage of contaminated soil from nearby Centredale, Chief of Staff Doug Jeffrey confirmed today.

A full description of the plan is available at the [EPA's Centredale Manor Restoration Project web page](#).

During a phone interview, Jeffrey said the town has also cancelled a meeting set for Jan. 11 at [Sarah Dyer Barnes School](#), where the plan would have been discussed.

"The mayor sat down, looked at the whole deal, and said 'This isn't the right thing to do for the town,' and we sent them a letter to that effect," Jeffrey explained.

According to a published notice for the meeting, the town was considering the use of the public works site, at 100 Irons Ave., for an "upland confined disposal facility" that would contain soil removed from the location of Centredale Manor.

The purpose of next week's meeting was to discuss possible recreational uses for the site.

Polisen's Dec. 29 letter — a copy of which is attached to this article — states that the town "is no longer supportive of consideration of *any* upland disposal" [emphasis in original] of the soil from the site along the Woonasquatucket River.

In the letter, the mayor also notes that the town currently "bears a disproportionate share of landfill disposal statewide... [including] ongoing issues with operation of Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation's Central Landfill."

Town Planner Pam Sherrill, during a separate phone interview, said the town's main concern was the *potential effects of the contaminated soil — especially*

if the plan had gone forward to build recreational facilities on top of the burial site.

EPA had proposed a burial plan that was "state of the art for now, and my concern was, 'Is this good enough long-term?'" Sherrill explained.

Sherrill also noted that the mayor's decision effectively stops EPA from considering Johnston as a site for the soil, although the project of dredging the Woonasquatucket shore line and removing the contaminated soil will still go forward.

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**Joseph McCauley** Flag as inappropriate  
 8:26 pm on Thursday, January 5, 2012

Good choice Mayor. Let the EPA dispose of the toxins properly and not burden other innocent people with it.

What the EPA was proposing reminded me of a scene from an old time movie, when the Janitor swept the dirt under the rug.

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**Patricia Shaffer** Flag as inappropriate  
 8:57 am on Friday, January 6, 2012

Yes good choice!

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