

Newsday

Study: \$7M for Kings Park asbestos, lead cleanup

BY BILL BLEYER | 8-15-07

It would cost the state parks department \$7 million to clean up asbestos and lead paint at 25 former Kings Park Psychiatric Center buildings now part of Nissequogue River State Park, then demolish 19 of the structures, a consultant's report says.

The Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation had hoped to use the \$150,000 study by LiRo Engineers Inc. of Syosset to calculate the cost of cleaning up the 84 buildings on the remaining hospital property, which was transferred to the department in December. But parks officials are saying now it will probably be impossible to figure out the cost.

Andy Beers, the department's executive deputy commissioner, said the buildings on the additional 330 acres of hospital property are larger than the buildings that are now part of the park, and groundwater contamination and buried demolition debris make it difficult to extrapolate the overall cleanup cost from the report's estimates.

Beers said the department will try to get cleanup reports from the firms that wanted to buy and redevelop the property. But he added that the agency will probably have to arrange for a study with the same kind of detailed building-by-building analysis of the structures on the 330 acres, which would take six to nine months after a consultant is hired.

Previous studies suggested remediation of the entire property would cost \$50 million to \$75 million. Parks commissioner Carol Ash has been weighing whether the department should keep the additional property or give it to another agency to try to sell it for development.

The study found that all but two buildings contained asbestos and all had lead paint.

Smithtown Supervisor Patrick Vecchio said "the estimate seems awfully low to me."

State Sen. John Flanagan (R-East Northport), who has secured \$25 million in the legislature to clean up the site, said receipt of the report was an important step in resolving the use of the property. He said the \$7 million estimate seemed reasonable and thought the study could be used to get a rough idea of the cost of cleaning up the 330 acres.

Linda Henninger, president of the Kings Park Neighbors Association, said, "I think it's a positive step that shows the state moving in the right direction" toward keeping all of the site as parkland.