

## OUR TOWNS

A25

### YAPHANK

# Town: LIRR dump site poses threat to water

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Long Island environmental and Brookhaven Town officials say they fear contaminated soil at a former Long Island Rail Road dump site in Yaphank could one day pollute drinking water near the Carmans River.

With the recommendation of the state Department of Environmental Conservation, the LIRR plans to contain the 4-acre site by installing stone, concrete and asphalt caps instead of removing it.

Brookhaven officials do not approve of the capping plan and want the site cleaned up and the soil removed. Yesterday, they filed a notice of intent to sue the LIRR.

Referring to the capping plan, Richard Amper, executive director of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society, said, "How can we sit for a cleanup . . . that is utterly unacceptable in the most sensitive parts of Long Island? And that this town has to stand up for its people to protect something as simple as drinking water is intolerable."

His comments came at a news conference yesterday where town officials discussed their plans to sue the LIRR.

Metropolitan Transportation Authori-

ty officials said they would not comment on pending litigation.

The LIRR site has been found to contain high levels of 29 contaminants, town officials said. The parcel is in a groundwater protection area about 500 feet from the Carmans River.

The notice to sue comes on the heels of the state's May recommendation that the LIRR, which dumped at the site for about three decades before it was closed in the 1970s, only had to cap the site.

The DEC has said covering the contaminated soil would "serve as an effective low permeable cap to cover the portion of the site that has exhibited the highest metal concentrations based on the completed investigations. The cap and cover will isolate the contamination from human or environmental exposure."

But Brookhaven officials aren't sold.

"We believe this site poses an immediate danger not only to the river, but to the people that live there," town Supervisor Edward P. Romaine said. "We have no alternative but to seek, in the court of law, environmental justice."

Robert Calica, a Garden City attorney representing Brookhaven in the suit, said, "Legally, the DEC is the trustee of the environment. Here, they have breached that trust."