

Residents quiz state officials on cleanup

■ Those living near contaminated American LaFrance site express concerns.

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Southside residents had a chance Tuesday to speak one on one for the first time with state environmental and health officials about contamination at the former American LaFrance property on South Main Street.

At a three-hour session in the Southport Fire Hall, residents questioned engineers from the state Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Health about the contaminated LaFrance site, and shared with officials a wide variety of concerns about the site.

The state began investigating possible environmental hazards around Southside High School in April after parents raised concerns about a seemingly elevated rate of cancer among current and former students. The former American LaFrance site is adjacent to the school.

Additional soil tests have been done on a former recreation area on the LaFrance site and around an unnamed creek that feeds into Coldbrook Creek. Tests from the recreation area show a concentra-

CONCERN on the SOUTHSIDE Online

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tion of metals that will require cleanup, according to Mary Jane Peachey, a regional hazardous waste remediation engineer with the DEC.

Results from the tests on the creek have not come back, Peachey said.

Residents have also been concerned with a holding pond on the site that connects with the creek. Many claim the pond never freezes.

"We want to evaluate what's going on with the pond to determine if it's a spring-fed pond, or does it freeze or doesn't it freeze," Peachey said.

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