



Bainbridge

This aerial photo is of the former Bainbridge Naval Training Center in Port Deposit.

Developers await results of Bainbridge soil sampling

By Cheryl Mattix cmattix@cecilwhig.com | Posted: Thursday, June 24, 2010 2:45 am

Developers and county officials are expecting to soon learn whether ground contamination at Bainbridge will impact redevelopment of the 1,200-acre former naval training center near Port Deposit.

Sources familiar with the long-running effort said a representative from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency took a series of soil samples in April and early June from areas of Bainbridge that are planned for residential and commercial development.

Test results from those samples are expected by mid-August.

The soil testing is part of a voluntary environmental cleanup project a partnership of developers is conducting to meet standards set by Maryland's Department of the Environment.

An official with the Bainbridge Development Corp., a public body charged with facilitating the property's private development, said the tests would determine which parcels, if any, need remediation.

"None of the areas are thought to be serious," project assistant Deborah Kauffman said.

Any traces of possible contaminants found in the soil samples are most likely to be particles of asphalt, according to Donna Tapley, executive director of the Bainbridge Development Corp.

"We will get MDE and the U.S. Navy involved in this," Robert Drew Lausch II, the EPA's lead environmental scientist on the project, said Monday while presenting an updated environmental assessment to the Bainbridge Development Corp.'s board of directors.

Last year, the corporation and development partners, MPTM, discovered some areas of concern on parts of the sprawling property, including an area marked for the first phase of residential development.

"We had 32 areas of concern, of which 14 areas were part of areas designated for development," Lausch reminded the board.

As a result of those concerns, the development partners asked the state to place them in a voluntary cleanup program, which means state environmental officials must sign off before the property is ruled to be safe.

The next steps, Lausch said, would be to determine what clean up is necessary and who is going to pay for it.