

Staff Report

I. Project Background

The timeline below provides an overview of how the private property was used before the Town purchased it, as well as the activities the Town has taken more recently to investigate current conditions in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The history of the site prior to Town ownership was pieced together by the Town's Environmental Engineer, Hart & Hickman.

Timeline	Description
1950s to early 1960s	Property initially used as a borrow pit – an area where material was dug up for use at other locations, usually for construction
Mid-1960s to mid-1970s	Property then used as a fill site where construction debris was deposited; coal combustion products (CCPs) were later placed on top of the construction debris for structural fill
Early 1980s	Town acquires property and builds a police station that is still in use today
2013	As part of a process to explore a new home for the police department, Town conducts a site assessment and begins working with DEQ to investigate and share information about the condition of the property
2015 - 2017	Town works with Environmental Engineering consultant and DEQ to complete Phase 1 and Phase 2 remedial site investigations to understand CCP locations and amounts
2018	Town explores remedial cost options and possible future uses for the property; Council asks staff to work with a toxicologist to assess the risks associated with a range of remediation options and future uses.
2019	Town hires Duncklee & Dunham to perform a Human Health and Ecological Risk Assessment; this work includes a review of the information and data gathered to date, as well as additional sampling and a review of all proposed remediation options. A report will be issued in July.

[Staff maintains a project web page](#)¹ for more information about project activities, reports and communication.

¹ <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/news-events/current-issues/coal-ash-disposal-site-remediation-project>

II. Possible Interim Measures

We anticipate that a new Municipal Services Center will house the Town's police department within the next 2-3 years. Permanent remediation measures can be implemented on the current police station site once the police department is relocated to a different property and a future use for the site is identified.

In the meantime, the Town's consultants have identified the near-term measures described below as steps we can take to address CCPs on the lower portion of the property (the land closest to Bolin Creek). Our consultants estimate that with proper monitoring and maintenance, these measures can last for at least 3-5 years.

a) Soil Removal and Replacement

Remove deposits of contaminated soil in the areas next to the trail and the creek (see green areas on map below). This work includes the removal of approximately 6-12" of contaminated soil to a facility that is permitted to receive these materials. Clean soil would then be brought in to replace the amount that was removed.

b) Additional Silt Fencing for Erosion Control

Add additional silt fencing to help control erosion from the embankment. Monitor and repair as needed. Currently, there are two layers of silt fencing on the site – one at the base of the embankment and another at the base of a black chain link fence that separates the Bolin Creek Greenway from the embankment.

c) Additional Signage along Trail and Existing Fence

For the portion of the Bolin Creek Greenway that runs through the property, place additional signs at both ends of the trail segment—and along the existing fence that separates the trail from the embankment—to help keep recreational users on the path while clean-up, management and ongoing sampling activities occur. We are also exploring the possibility of placing large stones on either side of the trail to deter people from leaving the path.

d) Polling of Trail Users for Frequency and Duration Information

Conduct a survey of greenway users to acquire new site-specific data for how often and how long someone visits the portion of the trail located on the police station property. This data, in combination with the latest rounds of sampling from the site, will be used to update the risk calculations for the property that were last developed in 2016. Prior to the current risk assessment, staff worked with DEQ to determine how the trail could be used today and how construction of the bridge underpass and trail connection could proceed.

e) Post-Construction Sampling

After the measures above have been implemented, take additional samples of the soil removal/replacement areas to verify that no additional contaminants have been deposited from the embankment.

f) Embankment Stabilization

Add matting, clean soil and grow new vegetation on the areas of the embankment where CCPs are currently exposed (see the pink areas on the map below). The goal of this measure is to reduce the likelihood of CCP erosion and further contamination of the soils next to the trail and the creek.

Due to the steep slope of the embankment, our consultants also believe there is a possibility that the work to cover and stabilize the area could worsen its condition and increase levels of erosion. For this reason, we have included embankment stabilization in the list of measures and would propose to evaluate this technique by first testing a small area. Our consultants tell us that the final results of the risk assessment may also help inform whether a measure like this will be important to test.

III. Additional Information and Next Steps

At the meeting on May 15th, the Town's consultants will present additional information about the following topics:

- Findings from the data gap assessment
- Comparison to 2016 Risk Evaluation by DEQ
- Opening the bridge underpass/trail connection for the Bolin Creek Greenway
- Which interim measures are necessary to keep the trail open
- Other risk considerations
- Proposed next steps

Coal Combustion Products (CCPs) Location and Cover Evaluation Map

