

Water filtration plant edges closer to County Board vote

By Dick Hubert

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The Westchester Joint Water Works (WJWW), which has been under court order for some 20 years to build a water filtration plant for Rye Brook and Port Chester water users and has so far incurred over \$160 million in court-imposed fines as the process drags on, is another step closer to the last legal hurdles in the plant building process.

As the WJWW told the Westmore News on Friday, Sept. 16:

"...the preparation of the draft Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)...will be presented to the WJWW Board of Trustees for consideration of adoption at the next WJWW Board meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 28.

A mandatory waiting period of 10 days must pass after adoption of a FEIS before the WJWW Board can issue a Findings Statement which is the last step in the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process."

After that 10-day waiting period, and should the Board adopt the FEIS (it would be a nearly unheard-of development if they did not), it will then be up to the Westchester County Legislature to approve a proposed land swap on County Airport land which would allow the plant, as designed, to be built.

The opposition to the plant comes almost entirely from the Purchase Environmental Protection Association (PEPA), many of whose members live near the proposed plant site and have fought its existence for years.

Thus the decision by the County Legislature, and in particular the vote by County Legislator Nancy Barr, who represents Rye Brook, Port Chester, and the part of Purchase most impacted by the plant, will be crucial.