828 MLK JR BLVD: Coal Ash Remediation Site Information

Basic Information
828 Martin Luther King Boulevard is the location a police station and 60,000 cubic yards of coal ash waste in Chapel Hill. The Town acquired the property after coal ash waste was already deposited, and discovered it in 2013. The Town is now considering plans for redevelopment, which currently includes offices and residential housing.

Important Facts

1. In 2020, the Town conducted an interim cleanup to eliminate the immediate hazards by removing 1,000 tons of coal ash and soil along Bolin Creek Trail and providing erosion resistance to the embankment. Proposed plans for remediation are to remove the exposed coal ash on the surface and to cover it with three to four ft of soil and build a retention wall to prevent runoff into Bolin Creek.

2. Current proposed concept plans include municipal offices and new police station as well as multifamily housing units. The business street market analysis determined it would not be a good site for retail and office space mainly because of lack of visibility and freeway access.

3. There is evidence of “perched water” in the fill materials, which are separated from the main underlying unconfined aquifer system. Perched water does not transit water well to the underlying aquifer. According to the Town’s environmental consultants, Hart & Hickman, while higher concentrations of metals were identified in some perched water zones where coal ash is present in the fill, there is limited or no groundwater impact identified in the groundwater underlying the fill.

Studies and Assessments
Some assessments done by the property include a Human Health & Ecological Risk Assessment, an Interim Remedial Measures Report, and Fact Sheets from the Town and their Environmental Consultants.

Additional Information
The Town has developed two websites to share information about the property: Futureof828.org & on the Town’s website, ‘Coal Ash Disposal Site Remediation Project’

Clean Water for North Carolina cwfnc.org

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Cap and contain approach includes; some ash removal and off site disposal, cap with 3-4 ft of clean soil, a retaining wall and restricted use of groundwater.

Current redevelopment plan for the site is pictured here from an aerial view, presented during a June 2021 Town Meeting.