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West Valley Demonstration Project to move forward



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by: Marlee Tuskes

WEST VALLEY, N.Y. (WIVB) — Judy Dinse and her husband live just a few miles from the **West Valley Demonstration Project**. She said when they purchased the home, they had no idea they were moving right near a former nuclear waste site.

“My husband has COPD, I have [multiple sclerosis]. You add anything more to that – it’s not good,” Dinse said.

They were among the southern tier residents attending a public meeting Wednesday night to find out more information on what the plan is for the plant’s main building.

“Ultimately we want to remove all the facilities at West Valley as part of our remediation of the site. This is the last major facility that we have left on the site,” said Department of Energy Director Bryan Bower.

Over the last 20 years, the DOE has been cleaning out the site.

“[We’ve been] removing all the contaminated piping, all the contaminated vessels, and now we have the shell of the building left and it’s ready to come down,” Bower said.

In order to keep things safe, officials said they’re not demolishing the building, they’re deconstructing it.

“Those movies with explosives and the building comes down – it’s nothing like that at all. What deconstruction is is using very precise, technical equipment – things like shears, saws,” said John Rendall, CHBWV President. “We take the building down block by block, piece by piece.”



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Project leaders say this should take about three years with the hope to start deconstruction by the end of this year. Many who live near the plant say they want transparency throughout this process.

“We’ve been involved with the West Valley process throughout the process and we’ll continue to be involved,” said Rob Mrowka, president of Concerned Citizens of Cattaraugus County. “We want to preserve the health, the beauty and the welfare of the citizens of Cattaraugus County. And if we’re not watching, who is going to be watching?”