own BRC legislation. She would not comment on the pending litigation regarding the N.R.C. policy, which she expects to go to trial in Washington, D.C., next April.

Joseph Cohen, a spokesman for the CHWMS—the agency that will decide where the proposed $40 million to $70 million low-level radioactive waste disposal facility will go, said that the issue of radioactive material in municipal dumps could become a "moot point" in Connecticut, because he expects the General Assembly to adopt legislation proposed last session that would require all low-level radioactive waste to be disposed of in the state's proposed facility.

In the last legislative session, State Representative Jessie Stratton, a Democrat from Canton, proposed a measure to keep such waste out of landfills. It passed the State House of Representatives, but was amended by the State Senate, Mr. Cohen said, and the amended bill did not make it back for another vote by the entire legislature.

Ms. Stratton could not be reached for comment this week.

Mr. Cohen also noted that "the largest generators of low-level radioactive waste in Connecticut—Northeast Utilities and the four nuclear power plants—have said that they will continue to treat BRC as low-level waste and dispose of it as such."

As far as siting for the planned low-level radioactive waste facility is concerned, he said that all 169 towns in the state are still being considered as possible sites.

Among the 94 criteria being used to select a 250-acre site for the facility are stipulations that the site be located away from sources of drinking water; that it be close to major roadways, but isolated from areas of high population density; and that it be an area where the facility would have a minimal impact on land and environmental resources.

Mr. Cohen said that Connecticut's cities are not being ruled out, especially if they have large tracts of undeveloped land. He said that the CHWMS is considering choosing the three candidate sites "blindly," by reviewing their pertinent characteristics without naming the towns where they are located.

Though proximity to the state's nuclear power plants in southeastern Connecticut is preferable for the site, Mr. Cohen said, it could go anywhere because of the state's small size. Waste would be brought there by trucks.

He noted that the proposed facility will most likely be an above-ground, steel-reinforced concrete vault system, which will be "totally non-emitting" in terms of smoke, fumes or odor. "This is the permanent resting place for the waste," he said.

Judi Friedman of Canton, chairwoman of People's Action for Clean Energy, said that the BRC issue is more immediately threatening to people than the site selection for a disposal facility, "because that could happen in every single town in Connecticut."

She said that there is no safe means of disposing of radioactive waste and the best that can be done is to find the least objectionable method of disposal, which includes ensuring that the waste is retrievable in case of an accident.

Currently, Connecticut ships the 45,000 cubic feet of low-level radioactive waste it generates annually to three out-of-state facilities, most of it to one in Barnwell, S.C. But all such facilities will stop accepting out-of-state waste starting in 1993. Under Federal law, all states must make provisions to dispose of their own low-level waste.

According to the CHWMS, low-level radioactive waste encompasses a broad range of materials—generated by nuclear power plants, hospitals and universities—which have widely different levels of radioactivity. It includes items such as paper towels, protective clothing, and tools and equipment that have become contaminated.