

BROWNFIELDS NEW HAMPSHIRE Success Stories



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Former Essex Mills, Newmarket

Success in Brownfields Assessment Grant and Covenant Programs

Overview

In 1999, the N.H. Department of Environmental Services (DES) provided technical oversight and support to the N.H. Office of State Planning (OSP) and worked with the Newmarket Community Development Corporation (NCDC) and the Town of Newmarket to characterize the contamination at the former Essex Mills property located in downtown Newmarket. United Technologies, Inc., a former owner, completed the site characterization and remediation in 2000. The property was subsequently purchased by Chinburg Builders, Inc. who redeveloped the property into townhouse style homes.

At A Glance:

Site Location: Downtown Newmarket, N.H., on the Lamprey River

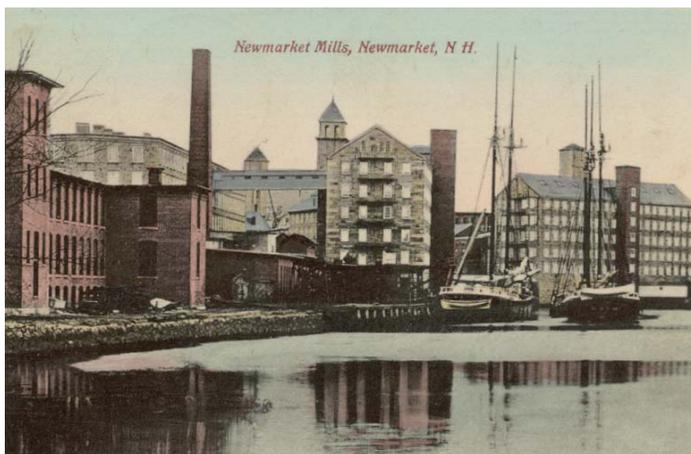
Site Profile: 1.5-acre, early 19th century mill complex

Brownfields Assistance:

\$25,000 in TBA funds from OSP; NH Brownfields Covenant Program Participant

History

This one and a-half acre site has had many different industrial uses since the early 1800s, including textile, leather and wire manufacturing. Manufacturing activities ceased in 1987. The major environmental impacts were leakage from fuel storage facilities and impacts from a small coal-gas production facility that operated at the site from the late 1800s until 1920. Additionally, lead and asbestos hazards were evident in various buildings at the site.



Early 1900s view of the mills from the Lamprey River.

Site Assessment and Cleanup

In 1999, this site was acquired by the Newmarket Community Development Corporation for redevelopment purposes. Both the NCDC and Chinburg Builders entered into the New Hampshire Brownfields Covenant Program, which provides liability protection to parties who purchase a contaminated property and agree to forge ahead with a cleanup plan. OSP expended \$25,000 in Brownfields funds to help

NCDC understand the environmental issues associated with the site. GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. performed this work as OSP's consultant. The momentum for site development was generated by the town's interest, a prospective developer and DES's work with the former owner, United Technologies, to perform the necessary site investigation and cleanup planning at a cost of approximately \$450,000. Collectively, these efforts leveraged approximately \$7 million in private investments by the developers, which generated more than \$8 million in real estate value.



Essex Mill site prior to renovations.

Redevelopment Success

Townhouse style homes have now been constructed as the result of the beautiful restoration of a dry course, granite block mill building, where once a neglected, contaminated property existed. In lieu of developing open land elsewhere in Newmarket, the developers reused an existing parcel of land in the town's center. Smart growth efforts, such as this, work to prevent sprawl and reduce the environmental and social impacts of using virgin land elsewhere. Given this approach, the site has become a desirable location due to its stunning views of the Lamprey River and being located in the middle of a vintage New England village.



New residential townhouses constructed on the Essex Mills site.

For further assistance please contact the
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April 2006