

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Funded Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot Project 2000-02

City of Wilmington

Development Services Department / Planning Division

Project Information Summary

Attached is the Final Report from the City's contractor RTI, International of Raleigh NC for the two year brownfields assessment and public outreach pilot grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-used property and unknowns make redevelopment difficult. A brownfield site may have real or perceived environmental contamination. The City Development Services Department / Planning Division accomplished the following in the inner city project area.

- A cooperative support partnership known as LEAP (local environmental action partnership) was formed for the project with approximately 24 cooperative partners.
- The project received a resolution of support by City Council in August 2000.
- Approximately 70 possible brownfield properties were inventoried. Through time staff found that many of these properties were being redeveloped by private owners.
- Ten education outreach public community meetings were held in the project area.
- Additional public outreach included information disseminated to neighborhood churches, Earth Day and visits to the NC Black Chamber of Commerce and other neighborhood organizations.
- A mailing list with approximately 400 persons received public outreach information regarding the project.



Project Area map, with assessed property locations.

- Community stakeholders and staff created selection site criteria and listed potential properties that could benefit from free demonstration pilot Environmental Site Assessments.



Brownfield public meeting.

- Three pilot Environmental Site Assessments were conducted at the: Soul Saving Station Church (community church on Dawson St.) proposed expansion site; the expansion site in the future for Good Shepherd Ministries (9th. St. and Martin St.); and the Former Ice House – Wilmington Scrap Iron & Metal site (6th St. and Brunswick St.).
- The results showed no environmental conditions for the sites regarding the Soul Saving Station and Good Shepherd Ministries.
- In general terms the former Ice House - Wilmington Scrap Iron & Metal site showed low to moderate elevated soil levels such as lead, cadmium and zinc from a battery recycling and scrap yard operation with residue from used oil, tar or creosote. Depending on the type of future use excavation of the soils in question or covering with a cap would remedy the situation.
- An environmental record review was completed for the former City incinerator site (10th St. and Post St.). Sub-surface soil showed low to moderate elevated levels of arsenic, chromium, and lead. As this soil in question is subsurface the current risk exposure is generally low. Additional investigation would be necessary if City affordable housing plans or park plans were proposed for the site. This site ranks low on the City park enhancement priority list and for the foreseeable future the City will likely leave the property intact as an undeveloped mowed grassy lot.
- Good Shepherd Ministries built a \$1.4 million day shelter at the assessed site. Services include: medical screening; job referral; counseling; food redistribution; and a “soup” kitchen that feeds 100 persons per day for breakfast and 150-200 per day for lunch. Plans are for Winter 2004-5 to build a \$1.1 million night sleep over building facility with 115 beds.



Newly constructed Good Shepherd Ministries building.

- The former Ice House - Wilmington Scrap Iron & Metal site, after discussion with the owner and at a public community meeting, could redevelop as senior assisted affordable housing. The owner expressed interest in the concept but will have to submit a financial plan and proposal in order to apply for i.e. HUD type of competitive grants, loans, and, or tax credits with possible assistance from the City.
- During the course of the project staff became aware of the need for EPA to further improve federal legislation to address the challenge of a municipality or jurisdiction better having access and ability for using revolving loan or “clean up” money for brownfield sites.
- As of Spring 2004 the City was carrying out it’s second EPA brownfield grant regarding brownfield concerns for a former dump/landfill in the general area of Love Grove and Burnt Mill / Smith Creeks.