

MEETING MINUTES

Stafford Brownfields Advisory Committee
Special Meeting
Veteran's Meeting Room
Warren Memorial Town Hall

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 5:00pm

Members Present: Rob Arute, Sean Beaudry, Korie Kritzky, Beth Magura, Charlie Nehrig, Todd J. Ostrowski, David Perkins, Rob Proux, Amber Wakley

Others Present: Sarah DeStefano, Project Manager, Weston & Sampson; John Figurelli, Vice President, Weston & Sampson; AmyJean McKeown, Project Officer, EPA New England Region 1; Stephanie Irving, Tax Collector, Town of Stafford; Donna Wright, Stafford Garden Club

Called to order by: Chair Amber Wakley at 5:04 PM

1) **Introductions** – *Amber Wakley*

Welcomed and introduced project partners, Sarah DeStefano and John Figurelli of Weston & Sampson, and EPA Project Officer, AmyJean McKeown. Following, committee members introduced themselves, shared professional expertise, community affiliations, etc: Rob Arute (Arute Realty Group); Sean Beaudry (Project Manager/EH&S Coordinator/Senior Geologist, Loureiro Engineering Associates); Korie Kritzky (Civil Engineer, LEED Green Associates); Beth Magura (Stafford Historical Advisory Commission/Technical Editor); Charlie Nehrig (TTM Technologies); Todd Ostrowski (Certified Hazardous Materials Manager, MBA); Rob Proux (Proux Builders); Stephanie Irving (Tax Collector, Town of Stafford); David Perkins (ZEO, Town of Stafford).

2) **Message from EPA** – *Amy Jean McKeown*

McKeown shared an overview of the EPA's Brownfields Program and how the grant funds support revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training activities. The Town of Stafford, CT was awarded a \$300,000 Brownfields Assessment Grant by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) during their FY2019 competition. With this funding, The Town will inventory regional brownfields sites, identify potential contamination issues at Brownfields sites through Phase I and Phase II assessments, evaluate cleanup and reuse strategies, conduct focused redevelopment and area-wide planning, and ultimately return otherwise distressed, abandoned, or environmentally stigmatized sites back to viable and sustainable reuse. The grant will also support on-going public outreach measures that keep the communities informed about the proposed work activities, completed assessments, and general health and economic issues.

3) **Community Wide Brownfields Assessment Program / General Process Information** – *Weston & Sampson*

DeSefano detailed the involvement/role of Weston & Sampson – an interdisciplinary design, engineering, and environmental services firm – in Stafford's brownfield program. DeStefano shared the inventory of potential target sites, which included sites from the initial grant application (Witt School, 21 Furnace Avenue, Stafford Cleaners, Sellars Avenue parcel, Hydeville Mill, and New City Mill), along with those generated from a site visit with Weston & Sampson and the EPA Project Officer. DeStefano went on to detail site eligibility requirements, methodology of prioritization, and GIS/mapping activities.

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Amber Wakley
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DeStefano continued to define Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (ESA). A Phase I ESA is largely a desktop activity and the first step for evaluating environmental liability, in accordance with All Appropriate Inquiries, or AAI. This process evaluates a property's environmental conditions and assesses potential liability for any contamination. Phase I ESA activities include, but not limited to, site inspections, historical research (current and past property uses, Sanborn fire insurance maps, building permits, planning records, title information, etc.), interviews (tenants, owners and past reports), and regulatory research with environmental agencies (for example). If Phase I identifies potential environmental issues, it can trigger further action. A Phase II ESA documents environmental conditions of the property and includes EPA Site Specific Quality Assurance Project Plan, environmental media sampling and analysis, Hazardous Building Material (HBM) Assessments, and sampling to identify the types, concentrations, and areas of potential contamination (for example).

Cleanup and reuse planning: Weston & Sampson have also teamed with Gamble Associates and RKG Associates (Boston, MA). David Gamble will be charged with Reuse Planning and literally wrote the book on redevelopment and reuse planning: *Rebuilding the American City, Design, and Strategy for the 21st Century Urban Core*. Without [officially] having an Urban/City planner on Stafford with the Town of Stafford, we believe David's experience in the complexities of redevelopment will be a huge asset to revitalization Stafford. RKG Associates brings financial analysis support to the project. DeStefano went on to share exemplary regional brownfield projects including Ryan Park in Norwalk, projects.

Community involvement is a key component of a brownfields redevelopment program. Wakley shared details of the "Stafford Business Development Mixer," at Four Seasons by the Lake on March 25. In conjunction with Town Departments and the Stafford Economic Development Commission, the event is a networking event and designed to broaden the community's understanding and involvement of the Stafford Brownfields Program. A round-table format, program objectives include: familiarize businesses and stakeholders with the Stafford Brownfield Initiative, share proposed inventory of Stafford sites and nominate sites for assessment consideration, meet Weston & Sampson, discuss redevelopment needs, meet Town staff, elected officials, and commission members, and collect preferences for future communications. The event is scheduled with cautious optimism amid recent developments of COVID-19. Any cancellations/postponements will be across town-wide communication channels.

DeStefano continued to discuss programmatic grant requirements, including budget tracking, quarterly reporting through the Assessment, Cleanup and Redevelopment Exchange System *ACRES* (an online database for Brownfields Grantees to electronically submit data directly to EPA), and annual reporting requirements.

4) **Planning/Next Steps**

The Committee then had a roundtable discussion, conferring about additional properties that should be evaluated under the program, factors for prioritization, community redevelopment needs, barriers/hurdles, and how to get private property owners/developers interested in the program.

Based on previously identified properties, eligibility, and group discussion, the committee went on to discuss and rank potential target sites.

1. **Witt School** – 20 Hyde Park Road – former Stafford Springs High School). *High Priority*
2. **American Woolen Mill** (2.09 acres) – 21 Furnace Avenue – 1 building of complex nearest dam – brewery potentially interested in property – CTDEEP VRP 133x – Remediation Started). *High Priority*
3. **Village Shops** 30 West Stafford Road – primarily vacant – large property with lots of potential – owned by private developer. *High-medium priority*

4. **Stafford Cleaners** (0.17 acres) – 27 East Main Street – Tax title eligible – known Property Transfer Site with CTDEEP). *High Priority*
5. **Muzio's** 12& 18 West Stafford Road (recently listed for sale – former hair salon (#12) and former propane/plumbing business (Muzio's #18). *Medium priority*
6. **Hydeville Mill** 108 Hydeville Road – Safety concerns due to areas of building collapsing – Owner of property passed away – Owe taxes – tenant in rear of building – Historic District). *High Priority*
7. **Avery Park Apartments** 85 West Street – elderly complex comprised of former military styled housing. *High-medium Priority*
8. **Stafford Conservatories** 80 East Main Street (9.2 acres) - seller and purchaser in conversation, would only aid to help facilitate sale and redevelopment – LUST Site: completed. *Medium Priority*
9. **Chestnut Hill Conservatory** – 75 Chestnut Hill Road – former green houses, for sale or lease, zoned for residential or nursery/greenhouses – potential to help facilitate sale and redevelopment. *Medium Priority*
10. **New City Mill** – 49 New City Road – artist apartments and music studio – paying taxes. *Low priority*
11. **West Street Mill** (7.54 acres) – 25 West Street (Owned by American Woolen Mill – multiple tenants –redevelopment in progress – CTDEEP VRP 133x Investigation started. *Low priority*

Please note, this list does not infer confirmed contamination, but properties that are underutilized, abandoned or areas of interest for redevelopment.

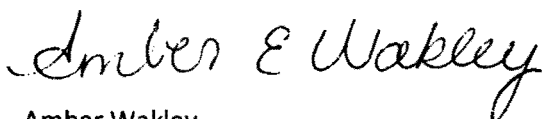
To help shape local site inventory, potential properties will continue to be identified based on site selection criteria. The committee agreed to communicate virtually by email to address any questions, concerns, and comments, then reconvene when applicable.

5) Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Though this program has been funded, wholly or in part, by EPA, the contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the EPA.

Submitted by



Amber Wakley