

Brownfield Conservation and Recovery

The Naugatuck Valley Corridor has long been one of the Connecticut's leading manufacturing centers. In fact, Connecticut has been designated as one of its "cluster" areas for precision metals. It is also true that manufacturing jobs continue to decline in Connecticut and the Naugatuck Valley Corridor (NVC) from 1997 to 2001, Connecticut lost 33,801 jobs in manufacturing or 11 percent while the NVC area lost 2,419 jobs during the same period, or 7 percent.

Many of the jobs lost in manufacturing are directly related to change in technology and manufacturing applications and processing. What has happened that many of the old manufacturers have failed to keep pace with technology, capital costs for new equipment, research and development funds were channeled elsewhere. The net results, many of the NVC sites and buildings are either reduced in size; the major manufacturing community in the NVC like Waterbury, Naugatuck, Seymour, Ansonia and Derby have lost their competitive edge. World economics, cost of doing business, and regional competition have left communities with "Brownfields".

Communities like Waterbury, have very limited land to compete for new business opportunities. Very few if any large tracts of land say 10+/- acres for "Businesses" are available. Therefore, business growth and sprawl spreads to other community with "open" land for all forms of economic expansion.

Yet communities like Waterbury continue to provide extensive services to the region, education, governmental agencies/services, hospitals and associated health care, transportation hubs and a workforce of both skilled and unskilled workers.

The following comprehensive Brownfield proposals have been a multi agency effort from both within the City of Waterbury as well as regional and state agency effort. The goal is to investigate, catalog and assess potential Brownfield properties, then rank based on a positive return on investment.

Through remediation use federal, state, local and private capital investment to prepare an adaptive reuse for existing structures or Brownfields.

This concept while directed and recommended for the City of Waterbury through the Waterbury Partnership for Growth, could be expanded to other communities with Brownfield issues. Addressing needs and opportunities in the Lower Naugatuck Valley; a funding strategy; prepared by Mt. Auburn Associates for The Community Foundation of Greater New Haven and its Valley Advisory Committee report. Currently, there are other Brownfield initiatives working and sites have been identified and remediation has taken place in the NVC.

The Waterbury Initiative is vital for the overall economic revitalization of Waterbury. The concept has excellent opportunities for success and must be given the resources to succeed.

Community Development

Community development activities affect the lives of all residents of the Valley as well as the vitality of the businesses that operate there.

The Environment

- Industrial waste and brownfields are the most identifiable and pressing environmental problems confronting the Valley.
- The Brownfields Pilot project is an innovative and effective regional effort that offers considerable promise in addressing environmental issues in the Valley.
- Sprawl and the loss of open space is becoming a major concern, and with no regional land use planning there is a threat to the long-term quality of life in the region.
- A number of small environmental organizations in the region are focusing on preserving farm land, open space, and the quality of the rivers. However, they have limited capacity and have not been very involved in regional collaborative organizations.

Industrial waste and brownfields are the most identifiable and pressing environmental problems confronting the Valley.

The Valley is not alone, of course, in coming to grips with an industrial past – abandoned factories, boarded up mills, and contamination of sites and waterways. Unfortunately, many of the problems are very visible and many are close to the downtowns of several communities. Cleaning up these visual eyesores and turning them into more productive use is a very serious challenge for the Valley. Some planning and clean-up has begun, but much remains to be done.

The Brownfields Pilot project is an innovative and effective regional effort that offers considerable promise in addressing environmental issues in the Valley.

The Valley's Brownfields Pilot Project is an innovative effort to assess and redevelop the many brownfield sites located throughout the Naugatuck Valley. Initiated by the Naugatuck Valley Project and the Valley Regional Planning Agency, the project has identified over 100 brownfields throughout the region and has received over \$300,000 in federal, state, and foundation funding for environmental assessment. The project has been involved in funding environmental assessment on O'Sullivan's Island in Derby, the Vest Pocket Area in Ansonia, the former Nutmeg Bakery in Beacon Falls, and the

incinerator in Ansonia. To date, the project's greatest success has been the redevelopment of the Silvermine Landfill in Seymour. This site was the first to benefit from the pilot and is currently being redeveloped by Haynes Construction for a 40,000 square foot industrial building. The Pilot is also actively involved in managing the environmental assessment related to the Downtown Revitalization District in Derby and is proposing an innovative project in environmental reclamation at a number of sites in the Naugatuck River watershed.