



Land & Community Revitalization

# BROWNFIELDS SUCCESS IN NEW ENGLAND

## KNOWLES MILL

RICHMOND, RHODE ISLAND



Property Details	
<b>Property Address:</b>	5 Railroad Street, Richmond, RI 02875
<b>Property Size:</b>	Approximately 1 acre
<b>Former Use:</b>	Grist mill, textile mill, other various mill operations, dry storage
<b>Contaminants Found:</b>	Other metal, PAHs, SVOCs
<b>Proposed Use:</b>	Historic interpretive park; canoe portage and launch
<b>Current Owner:</b>	Broderick Macari c/o Tara International

Project Partners
Town of Richmond, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RI DEM), RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, and Tribal Preservation Office (TPO)



**Drivers for Redevelopment:** As the location of two of the earliest known textile mills in southern Rhode Island, the Town of Richmond has a rich history steeped in the textile industry. Knowles

Mill, a former textile mill, became a blighting influence over time and eventually vacant as the structures began to fall into ruins. In an effort to maximize the potential of the property due to its location along the Pawcatuck River and its historical significance, RI DEM selected it for an environmental site assessment.

**Property History:** Located on the Pawcatuck River in the village of Shannock at the Lower Falls Dam, the Knowles Mill site was the location of two of the earliest known textile mills in southern Rhode Island. Built in 1835, it was used for various mill operations including grist, textile and woolen mills for more than 100 years. The original structure burned down in 1850, but a second building was constructed on the site in 1885 so mill operations could continue. In the 1970s, the property was used for dry storage and eventually abandoned. It was also

Funding Details	
<b>EPA Section 128(a) and Tribal Funding</b>	\$53,060
<b>EPA TBA Funding</b>	\$43,220
<b>Community Development Block Grant</b>	\$100,000

Project Highlights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fostered successful coordination between RI DEM, the Town of Richmond, the local SHPO and TPO due to historical and Native American significance of the site</li> <li>Preserved the mill's stone foundation and an existing marker commemorating the Native American significance of the site.</li> </ul>

the location of a fierce battle in 1636 between the Narragansett and Pequot Indians over fishing rights.

**Project Results:** Working in conjunction with the RI Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, the town decided to redevelop the property into a historic interpretive park and canoe portage and launch, which meet the safe river access needs of the community; this plan includes a pedestrian footbridge extending over the river that connects the villages of Shannock and Columbia Heights in the neighboring Town of Charlestown. Through EPA Section 128(a) Grant funds, RI DEM conducted a Phase I assessment on the property in 2006 revealing various contaminants onsite. The second building became so dilapidated that it was falling into a public road and was demolished in May 2006. Expected to be complete in early 2008, the Phase II assessment revealed the granite block foundation of the original building, which in addition to a free standing chimney, will be preserved as part of the historic park. Once cleanup funding is in place, the property will undergo a combination of hot spot removal and capping in preparation for redevelopment, which is expected to be completed in September 2009.

Project Timeline	
<b>April 2006</b>	Phase I Assessment Completed
<b>May 2006</b>	Mill Building Demolished
<b>January 2008</b>	Phase II Assessment Expected Completion
<b>September 2009</b>	Expected Project Completion