

NORTH DAM MILL PROPERTY BIDDEFORD, MAINE



Property Details

Property Address:	2 Main Street, Biddeford, ME 04005
Property Size:	4.4 acres
Former Uses:	Textile (cotton) manufacturing, electric blanket manufacturing
Contaminants Found:	Lead, including lead-based paint; asbestos
Current Uses:	Residential, and more than 50 different commercial entities
Current Owner:	North Dam LLC

Project Partners

Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC), North Dam LLC

Motivation for Redevelopment: The City of Biddeford is one of Maine's fastest-growing commercial centers, with redevelopment projects that have brought new shopping centers, restaurants and commerce to the area within the last few years alone. Biddeford is known for its historic mill operations, and the city's revitalization has extended to these sites as well. The area's growing population and economic revival, combined with increased local housing demand, suggested that the North Dam Mill site at the heart of the city's downtown could have a promising future through residential and commercial reuse.

Property History: The North Dam Mill property was used for cotton textile manufacturing as far back as the mid-1800s, when it was owned by the Pepperell Manufacturing Company. Pepperell owned and operated the mill for more than a century, employing thousands of area workers, until selling it to the Biddeford Textile Company in 1971. Textile operations ended at the mill in 1978 when the facility was sold to the Sunbeam Corporation, which used it to manufacture the company's line of electric blankets.

When Sunbeam expressed interest in selling the property in approximately 2003, interest was immediate based on the area's overall economic and population growth. Within a year the site was purchased by North Dam LLC, which recognized the former mill's potential as a mixed-use, commercial and residential development project.

Project Results: EPA Brownfields Assessment grants awarded to both the Maine DEP and the SMRPC addressed areas of contamination uncertainty on the property, and a total of \$540,000 in Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) loans

Funding Details

Maine DEP State/Tribal Brownfields Assessment Grant:	\$47,466
SMRPC Brownfields Assessment Grant:	\$60,000
SMRPC RLF loans:	\$178,000 and \$362,000 provided from a \$1 million RLF grant awarded to the SMRPC in September 2007 (with an additional \$1.7 million awarded in 2009)
Leveraged Funding:	\$140,000 in assessment and \$6 million in redevelopment funding from North Dam LLC

Project Highlights

- Developers recognized the potential of this historic industrial site even before it ceased operations
- EPA Assessment grants clarified contamination issues and enabled cleanup to proceed
- EPA RLF loans helped remove asbestos and lead paint, and cap soil in areas defined through assessments
- Created a highly sought after residential complex and a new home for more than 50 businesses, with approximately 40 percent of the project yet to be completed

were used for asbestos removal, cleanup of lead-contaminated paint and soil, and soil capping. Redevelopment began in stages, with a waiting list for the property's loft-style rental units within two months of their opening. By the end of 2009 redevelopment was approximately 60 percent complete; 49 residential units had been occupied and more than 50 commercial tenants had opened their doors on the site, with 60 new jobs leveraged. Businesses now operating on the former mill include a yoga gym, auction house, food production facilities, violin repair and production, a pizza shop, realtors, a golf club manufacturer, woodworkers, and a performance/visual arts studio. Future businesses coming to the North Dam property will likely cater to the site's burgeoning residential community.

Project Timeline

1800s	Property operated by the Pepperell Company for cotton textile manufacture
1978	Property sold to the Sunbeam Corporation
2004	Property sold to North Dam LLC
2006	Some space leased to retail, office and manufacturing tenants
2007	Initial environmental assessments conducted
2008	Additional assessments conducted; cleanup and redevelopment proceed in stages; first residential units open
2009-	Residential and commercial development continue in stages