

BROWNFIELDS SUCCESS IN NEW ENGLAND

SCHOOL STREET PROJECT HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT



Property Details

Property Address:	22-24, 26-32, 41-43, & 49-51 School Street Hartford, CT 06106
Property Size:	0.83 acres
Former Uses:	Residential
Contaminants Found:	Petroleum, Chlordane, Heptachlor and Heptachlor Epoxide, Other Metals
Current Use:	Residential
Current Owner:	Pope Park Zion, LLC

Project Partners

U.S. EPA Region 1, Pope Park Zion, LLC, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (SINA)

Drivers for Redevelopment: School Street in Hartford, Connecticut is located in the “Learning Corridor,” where residents can find such local resources as Trinity College, a Montessori school, a Boys’ and Girls’ club, and a local hospital. For decades, it was known as a destination neighborhood for families seeking quality education for their children. Unfortunately, this once-thriving block became blighted over time, and became known as a place which attracted drug problems, rodents, and crime—driving out residents. Seeing that the neighborhood needed a change, Pope Park Zion LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (SINA), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, acquired the property to build affordable homes as part of their Cityscape Homes Project. The Project has revitalized several locations throughout the neighborhood. The area had been overwhelmed with rental housing, and the City of Hartford felt that homeownership was important for instilling a sense of citizenship, as well as a “vested concern for the appearance of the neighborhood, and to encourage participation in the community.”

Property History: The “Learning Corridor” was built in 1908 and was the center of a thriving neighborhood in Hartford. Located near Trinity College, it is primarily a residential area with nearby commercial amenities. After the neighborhood became neglected over time, all residential buildings in the area were beyond repair and had to be demolished. Historical research indicated that no other structures were located at the property other than residential. Environmental investigation detected the presence of petroleum, residual pesticide contamination, and three leaking underground storage tanks (USTs). Cleanup was performed in June of 2009 on all properties.

Funding Details

U.S. EPA Brownfields RLF Subgrant	\$200,000
Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (SINA)	\$48,969
City of Hartford	\$7,692
Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA)	
Interest on Real Estate Bankers Trust Accounts (IOREBTA)	\$3,269
HUD Economic Development Initiative	\$7,346
Net Sales/Proceeds: First Mortgages	\$138,154
DECD Housing Trust Fund Grant	\$100,336

Project Highlights

- SINA’s Cityscape Homes Project includes a total of 17 single- and multi-family houses.
- Nearly 50% of available real estate was developed on School Street resulting in a major impact on the neighborhood’s appearance and character.

Project Results: The completed School Street properties are a welcome addition to the Cityscape Homes Project. The houses are specifically being marketed to low-income, first-time buyers, and SINA is offering financial assistance for potential purchasers. This includes down payment and closing cost assistance, some waived fees, and workshops for first-time homeowners. Through this initiative, SINA will develop nearly 50% of the available real estate on the street. Four new duplexes were completed in the Summer of 2010, which were then sold to first-time homebuyers, including one homebuyer who moved to the neighborhood specifically so his children could walk to school. “The wonderful thing is that we are finishing homes and selling them in this market,” said SINA Executive Director Luis Caban. The remaining homes were completed the Summer of 2011.

Project Timeline

1908	Original homes built in Learning Corridor neighborhood
1997	41-43 School Street acquired by Pope Park Zion
1998	22-24 School Street acquired by Pope Park Zion
2003	28-32 and 49-51 School Street acquired by Pope Park Zion
2006	Assessments complete on all School Street properties
2007	First homes completed for Cityscape Homes Project
6/2009	Cleanup of School Street properties complete
2010	22-24, 28-32 (<i>now renumbered to 26-32</i>), and 41-43 School Street completed; all homes sold and occupied
2011	49-51 School Street homes completed