

BROWNFIELDS SUCCESS IN NEW ENGLAND

SOUTH WORCESTER NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS



Property Details

Property Address:	140 Grand Street/South Armory Street, Worcester, MA 01603
Property Size:	1.07 acres, 0.32 acres
Former Use:	Residential units for nearby foundries industries in the 1880s; more recently, warehousing and auto repair
Contaminants Found:	Petroleum/petroleum products, asbestos, lead
Current Use:	Affordable residential space; child care facility
Current Owner:	City Builders LLC

Project Partners

Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC), Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), Horne + Johnson / StepONE, L. D. Russo, Inc., Elmwood Homes LLC, Mechanics Guild LLC, South Worcester Neighborhood Improvement Corporation (SWNIC), City of Worcester, NSP, Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC), Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

Drivers for Redevelopment: The project is a joint partnership between a non-profit (SWNIC) and a for profit developer (Mechanic Guild, LLC). This area contained multiple abandoned warehouses and SWNIC, as part of its neighborhood improvement plan for South Worcester, saw the creation of affordable housing in a blighted area as key to improving quality of life and the neighborhood. These particular properties were chosen for affordable housing units because of its proximity to the South Worcester Industrial Park (SWIP). This location will help provide affordable “work force” housing for the SWIP.

Property History: Through the 1930s these properties were used for residential housing, storage and garages for the nearby foundries. During this time residential dumping and urban filling of ash occurred on the properties. These parcels were then bought up by lumber distributors for wholesale building supply warehouses. An auto repair shop with gas storage tanks also operated on-site. These uses resulted in lead, petroleum and asbestos contamination. Most recently, the site was used for storage by construction contractors, furniture retailers, restaurant suppliers, and auto repair/auto body shops. The buildings and properties were completely abandoned in the early 2000s.

Project Results: An EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment grant awarded in 2009 was used to perform environmental assessments that helped to characterize areas of contamination and prepare for cleanup, which included building debris and asbestos removal. Some building materials (e.g., concrete and masonry) were recycled on an on-site processing facility. Cleanup was funded through EPA Cleanup grants. Recently, ground has been broken and construction started on 25 affordable rental apartments, with

Funding Details

Brownfields Cleanup Grant –Parcel I and II (2008):	\$73,250
Brownfields Cleanup Grant –Parcel I (2009):	\$141,400
Brownfields Cleanup Grant –Parcel II (2010):	\$163,550
Brownfields Targeted Assessment Grant (2009):	\$78,250
Tax Credit Exchange Funds:	\$3.8 Million from U.S. Treasury
Leveraged Funding:	\$750,000 from DHCD; \$450,000 from City of Worcester; \$379,000 from CEDAC; and \$300,000 from City of Worcester Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)—all for affordable housing development

Project Highlights

- The first phase of this project will create 25 affordable rental units that feature energy saving features such as solar hot water heating, motion-activated lighting, exhaust air energy recovery systems and energy star compliant appliances.
- Plantings will introduce trees especially bred for resistance to the Asian Long Horn Beetle, an insect responsible for prior infestations.
- The second phase of the project will create a condominium complex with new garden space and/or a child care facility.

two parking spots per unit, and on-site recreation. These homes will have energy saving features such as solar hot water heating, motion-activated lighting, exhaust air energy recovery systems and energy star compliant appliances. Landscaping around the buildings will introduce trees especially bred for resistance to the Asian Long Horn Beetle, an insect responsible for prior infestations. Occupancy of rental units on Parcel I is expected in the spring of 2011, while cleanup and construction of Parcel II for development into condominiums is expected to begin by July 2011.

Project Timeline

1880s	Residential units for nearby foundry industry
1930s	Primary use changes to lumber warehouse storage and automotive repair
1970s	Lumber yard razed all residences in the area and expanded warehouses
1980s	The parcels are primarily used for storage
2000	Portions of the parcels used for automobile repair/auto body activities
2006	Initial environmental site assessment completed
2008	Additional assessments performed
2009	Cleanup begins on Parcel I
2010	Cleanup of Parcel I completed (February)
2011	Anticipated occupancy of Parcel I rental units; cleanup and construction of condominiums is planned for Parcel II