

Former Gas Station Redeveloped As Façade For Office Building In Historic Hillsborough, NC

A former gas station at an underground storage tank (UST) site is now reused as the façade to the new Sinclair Station Office Building. It serves as the main north entrance to downtown historic Hillsborough in North Carolina.



The redeveloped Sinclair Station Office Building is located at the main north entrance to downtown historic Hillsborough.

Background

The former Lloyd's Sinclair Service Station UST site is located within the historic district and along the north entrance of Hillsborough, NC. The area in and around Hillsborough is home to at least 100 late 18th and early 19th century structures. Because of that history, the town of Hillsborough was very interested in redeveloping the UST site and also preserving the façade and architecture of the vacant Sinclair Service Station.

Seven USTs were removed in 1997, and soil samples revealed a release had occurred at the site. Tests showed the release occurred from three smaller USTs that were unknown prior to excavation; the current owner did not use those three USTs. That means there was no responsible party to pay for cleaning up the site, and the site was placed into North Carolina's Trust Fund Cleanup Program. But because the site's risk ranking was below the action level for cleanup under North Carolina's fund, it would likely be many years before the contamination would be cleaned up.



Sinclair Service Station UST site before reuse.

Photo: www.jimspencerarchitects.com/sinclair

In 2010, North Carolina used American Reinvestment and Recovery Act money to conduct a site assessment, which revealed that the soil was no longer contaminated and the groundwater contamination levels were below gross contaminant levels. Because there are no public water supply wells within 1,000 feet of the site, North Carolina closed the site in September 2010 with a notice of no further action on the deed. The money used at the Sinclair site paid for assessment field work, sampling and lab analysis to determine current contamination levels, developing a site closure report, and oversight by a North Carolina corrective project manager. As a result, the town of Hillsborough was able to retain and use the historic façade of the gas station as part of the newly-constructed office building.

For More Information

To learn more about underground storage tanks in North Carolina, see NC Department of Environment & Natural Resources, Underground Storage Tank Section <http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/waste-management/ust>

