



Brownfields Success Story

The Former HUB Site Meriden, CT

Motivation for Redevelopment:

The City of Meriden, located in south central Connecticut, covers approximately 24 square miles and has a population of more than 60,000 residents. Construction of the railroad in the 1800s and the availability of water power helped Meriden become a vibrant manufacturing center. Unfortunately, by the mid-1900s the rising cost of business and increased competition caused a dramatic decline in the City's manufacturing base, leaving behind old, underutilized, and often contaminated buildings. In 2002, the Meriden Economic Development Corporation provided funding for the development of a Comprehensive City Center Plan, which made the HUB site a focal point of a larger downtown vision. The city center would serve the State's planned New Haven to Springfield, MA commuter rail service and connect with local bus and taxi service.

Property History:

The Meriden HUB site encompasses approximately fourteen acres in Meriden's downtown. The site historically served as the main location of Meriden's industrial and commercial activity. Following the decline of these businesses, the region's first indoor mall was constructed on the HUB site in the 1970s. Because Harbor Brook flowed through the center of the site, flooding was an issue and the construction of the mall included a subsurface drainage structure in an attempt to divert the flow. However, severe flooding occurred in the 1990s causing approximately \$26 million in damage, resulting in the mall's closure.

Recognizing that brownfield sites were having a negative impact on the community, in 2002, Meriden formed the Blight and Brownfields (B&B) Committee. The B&B Committee consists of more than 20 stakeholders, including the EPA, businesses, community organizations, universities and city and state government agencies. In 2004, the City applied for and received a \$200,000 EPA Community Wide Assessment grant. This grant allowed the committee to create an inventory of vacant and underutilized sites within the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District, consider potential future uses, and assess the likelihood of environmental issues. Given that Meriden was to be a stop on the New Haven/Hartford/Springfield rail service scheduled to start in 2016, the B&B Committee



After

KEY CONTACTS:

KATHLEEN CASTAGNA
U.S. EPA
Brownfields Project Officer
617-918-1429
castagna.kathleen@epa.gov

JULIET BURDELSKI
City of Meriden
Economic Development
Director
203-630-4152
jburdelski@meridenct.gov



Before

identified two parcels that comprise the HUB site (i.e., 1-77 State Street and 50 East Main Street) for further brownfields work. Historical uses on these parcels included: metal products manufacturing, glass-cutting, lumber yards, automotive sales and service, gasoline dispensing, dry cleaners, plumbing and pipe fitting, and a machine shop. In 2005 the City of Meriden acquired the HUB site parcels with plans to demolish existing structures and conduct remediation activities.

Phase I and II Assessments were conducted on 1-77 State Street (the main HUB parcel) in 2005. The environmental site investigation found petroleum, asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), lead, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAHS) and other metals. In 2007 this parcel received an EPA cleanup grant for \$200,000, with subsequent funding from CT DECD for demolition and cleanup totaling \$2 million.

In 2013, a \$200,000 brownfields cleanup grant was awarded for the 0.44-acre 50 East Main Street parcel. Contaminants for this parcel included semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and lead. Cleanup included excavation of the top one foot to one and a half foot of soil (depending on the location), off-site disposal of the impacted soil and placement of clean backfill.

The City of Meriden received over \$14 million in state and federal funding to implement flood control at the HUB site. Eliminating flooding in the Harbor Brook floodplain was essential to the development of Meriden's HUB site and downtown. The Harbor Brook Flood Control and Linear Trail Project enacted a series of steps to reduce flooding in the downtown. The project incorporated the redesign and replacement of bridges, channel improvements, and acquisition of floodplain property for storage during floods. A key feature was the "daylighting" of Harbor Brook which serves as a focal point for the new Meriden Green.

Project Results:

From charrettes to workshops, community involvement was pivotal in the creation of a common vision and to the ultimate success of the project. The HUB Site, now called Meriden Green,

includes access to open space and other public amenities such as a farmer's market that provides residents with fresh and healthy foods. A public park with gathering places and links to the regional greenway system has also been completed. Adjacent to the Meriden Green is the new Intermodal Transportation Station, and private development along the perimeter of the site is planned.

With support from federal, state and local partners, demolition and clean-up activities successfully reduced environmental impacts to the community and enabled the redevelopment to take place.

Funding Details:

EPA Cleanup Grants.....	\$400,000
EPA Brownfields Assessment	\$71,392
EPA Clean Water Fund	\$144,300

The final cost of the Meriden Green Flood Control, Park and Economic Development Project is \$14 million. In addition to the funds received from the U.S. EPA, the City of Meriden received \$4 million in Urban Act, Brownfields Pilot and other funds administered by the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, and \$8.8 million in funds provided through the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The City of Meriden provided local funds for construction administration and flood control engineering services.

Timeline:

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment	3/2004
Phase II Environmental Site Assessment	10/2005
City of Meriden Assumes Property	2005
Brownfields Cleanup Grant Received	2007
Brownfields Cleanup Grants Received	2013
Redevelopment Completed	9/2016
Park Grand Opening	9/2016