

**Meeting Notes of
MetroHartford Brownfields Advisory Committee Meeting
October 3, 2019
CRCOG Offices, Hartford CT**

Attendance

Glenn Geathers	City of Hartford	Mark Lewis	CT DEEP
William Diaz	City of Hartford	Binu Chandy	CT DECD
Eric Trott	Town of Coventry	Dan Jahne	Fuss & O'Neill
Eileen Buckheit	Town of East Hartford	Tory Man	Zuvic Carr
Ruben Flores-Marsan	Town of East Windsor	Harley Langford	Tighe & Bond, Inc.
Kyle Shiel	Town of Manchester	Amy Vaillancourt	Tighe & Bond, Inc.
Cal Hauburger	Town of Plainville	Earl Randall	Capital for Change
Ray Carpentino	Town of Rocky Hill	Courtney Hendrickson	CERC
Jeff Bord	Town of Somers	Maria Chrysochoou	UConn CBI
Shaun Gately	Town of Vernon	Nefeli Bompoti	UConn CBI
Peter Gillespie	Town of Wethersfield	Emily Hultquist	CRCOG
Flavia Rey De Castro	Town of Windsor	Caitlin Palmer	CRCOG
Jim Burke	Town of Windsor	Lynne Pike DiSanto	CRCOG
Todd Andrews	Goodwin College		

Introductions and Overview of MetroHartford Brownfields Program

Lynne Pike DiSanto of CRCOG opened the meeting at approximately 1 pm and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

She provided a summary of the work accomplished over the past fifteen years since CRCOG's MetroHartford Brownfields Program was established. She said the program relies on federal and state grants to help member communities deal with brownfields sites. She said the MetroHartford Brownfields program consists of maintaining an inventory of potential brownfields sites, commissioning environmental assessments and clean-up plans on behalf of member communities, and providing funding for site remediation in the form of subgrants and/or loans through CRCOG's Revolving Loan Fund program. She described the Targeted Brownfields Inventory which includes potential and known brownfields sites near *CTfastrak* and *CTrail* stations which may have potential for transit-oriented development. She said CRCOG has hired licensed environmental professional to undertake 68 environmental assessments on sites in 12 communities since 2004. She said there is currently no funding available for additional assessments but CRCOG intends to apply for an EPA assessment grant later this year.

Status Report and Discussion of EPA-funded Revolving Loan Fund Program

Ms. Pike DiSanto said the EPA awarded CRCOG \$500,000.00 in supplemental funding last year bringing the total RLF award to \$1,450,000.00. She said five applications had been submitted for funding under the program and four were found to be eligible. She said CRCOG had hired licensed environmental

professionals (LEPs) to ensure that projects are undertaken in accordance with EPA and state regulations. She said these LEPS are independent of the property owners' LEPs.

She said subgrants of \$200,000.00 each were awarded to the Towns of Berlin and Somers for clean up on town-owned sites. She said loans were also offered to the towns but each declined to apply for loans. She described the progress on 889 Farmington Avenue, Berlin, noting that the parcel is one of several that is proposed for a mixed-use development adjacent to the new CTrail station. She said the town has selected a developer and has drafted a Community Relations Plan and an Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives. She said clean-up of the parcel would likely take place in the next year. She next described the progress on the Somersville Mill site, noting that the Town also has plans for a mixed-use development, has selected a developer and has drafted a Community Relations Plan and an Analysis of Brownfields Cleanup Alternatives. She said the town is looking for additional grants to cover the full cost of remediation. She then described the two privately owned sites which had been selected for loans. She said the owner of the Silver Lane Plaza in East Hartford has applied for a \$325,000.00 loan to clean up hazardous substances contamination and plans on undertaking a significant retail renovation on the site. She said the loan application is midway through underwriting. Next she described the Rocky Hill Foundry site which was awarded loan funds of \$125,000.00 to clean up petroleum contamination as well as \$75,000.00 to clean up hazardous substances contamination. She said the applicant had not yet submitted a loan application and had said the available funding was not enough to complete the remediation.

Ms. Pike DiSanto said that establishing the RLF and closing on a loan is a slow process. She said the amount of funding the program is able to provide is often only a small piece of what is needed for full site remediation. She asked attendees for suggestions on making the program more attractive to potential borrowers. Ms. Vaillancourt suggested that perhaps funding could be used to hire a consultant to obtain closure for a notice of violation. She also suggested that the program could be marketed with a list of "fast and easy" ways to use the funding and that a flow chart and timeline would be helpful. Jim Burke asked what collateral would be needed. Earl Randall said a mortgage could be taken but the intent of the program is to be flexible to meet the applicant's needs.

Ms. Pike DiSanto said there is some funding currently uncommitted - \$100,000.00 which could be sub-granted to a municipality for a town-owned site contaminated with petroleum and \$245,000.00 which could be loaned to municipal or private land owners to assist with clean up of sites contaminated with hazardous substances. Mr. Geathers said there may be a site in Hartford which could qualify and indicated he would discuss this further after the meeting.

Discussion of Upcoming Application for EPA Assessment Program

Ms. Pike DiSanto said the EPA will be issuing a Notice of Funding Availability soon for Brownfields grants. She said CRCOG wants to apply for a community-wide assessment grant. She said CRCOG's application would likely highlight potential sites in Opportunity Zones and particularly those with transit-oriented development potential. She presented a map of Opportunity Zones in the region as well as maps of transit corridors and station areas. She asked attendees to let her know if they had sites which could be included in the application. Mr. Geathers said the City of Hartford's recent tax deed sale would be finalized in late October and he may have some sites to recommend at that time.

Mr. Lewis said the EPA applications require a state letter which his office can provide.

Other Business

Mr. Lewis said the EPA will be holding its National Brownfields Conference in Los Angeles in December. He said the New Jersey TAB, an institute which helps grant recipients and applicants, would be sponsoring a Redevelopment Rodeo highlighting and providing advice for specific sites at the conference. He also announced the Brownfields Coalition of the Northeast would be holding networking events at the Gold Roc Diner on November 7th and at the Barcelona on January 13th.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30 pm.