

SPECIAL BOARD OF ALDERMEN JANUARY 10, 2023

6:45 P.M.

Aldermanic Chamber

PRESIDENT LORI WILSHIRE CALLS ASSEMBLY TO ORDER
PRAYER OFFERED BY CITY CLERK DANIEL HEALEY
PLEDGE TO THE FLAG LED BY ALDERMAN JUNE M. CARON
ROLL CALL

COMMUNICATION

From: Tim Cummings, Director of Economic Development
Re: Redevelopment of Mohawk Tannery Site

PRESENTATION

- Mohawk Tannery

ADJOURNMENT



To: Board of Aldermen
From: Tim Cummings, Director of Economic Development
Cc:
Date: January/2023
Re: **Redevelopment of Mohawk Tannery Site**

Request & Purpose

I am requesting a special Board of Aldermen Meeting to present a concept for redeveloping the Mohawk Tannery site. The purpose of the meeting is to introduce the Mohawk Tannery redevelopment proposal by Baylock Holdings and Thorndike Development & Construction ("Development Team").

Discussion & Presentation

At this time, there is an on-going discussion with the Development Team relative to developing the property into multifamily housing, which would require the cleaning-up of the land.

Background

The former Mohawk Tannery facility (a.k.a. Granite State Leathers) is located on approximately 30 acres off the Veterans Memorial Parkway (formally known as the Broad Street Parkway). The currently inactive facility produced tanned hides for leather between 1924 and 1984. The site was proposed to the National Priorities List (NPL) on the basis of past disposal practices which included the direct discharge of wastewater containing such hazardous substances as chromium, zinc, and phenol into the Nashua River and the disposal of sludge containing such hazardous substances as chromium, pentachlorophenol, phenol, and 2, 4, 6-trichlorophenol into a number of unlined disposal areas at the site. Two of the largest disposal areas are located directly next to the Nashua River; with one of these areas within the 100-year flood plain. These disposal areas were not designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to prevent the washout of hazardous substances in the event of a flood.

It should be noted, adjacent to the Mohawk Tannery land there is another environmentally sensitive area known as the former Fimbel Door site and contains a closed and capped landfill. Along with some Right-of-Way (RoW) that abuts the Veterans Memorial Parkway. These land areas make up the entirety of the project area.

In 2017 timeframe, the EPA announced a new and unique program where the EPA sought out environmentally sensitive areas, i.e. superfund sites or sites that would qualify as superfund sites and due to other unique characteristics of the land, they would be attractive for "public private partnerships". The foundational principle guiding the program is that these sites would allow the EPA to leverage private sector investments or other sources of funds beyond just federal monies to clean up the site. This translates into stretching the federal EPA dollars further, because less federal funds would be necessary at a specific site allowing for more sites to be cleaned. The Mohawk Tannery site was one of twenty-one sites to be nationally named to this program (Nashua Tannery Site Lands On EPA Priorities List: <https://www.nhpr.org/environment/2017-12-11/nashua-tannery-site-lands-on-epa-priorities-list> -The Environmental Protection Agency

has named 21 contaminated sites across the country, including one in Nashua, where it aims to make quick progress).

Once the Mohawk Tannery land received this identification, it in turn triggered a few actions. First, a 2018 Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis Amendment (“EE/CA Amendment”) to a 2002 EE/CA outlined a consolidation plan of approximately 78,600 cy of contaminated waste and overlying soil from six disposal areas, approximately 1,150 cy of contaminated soil from areas of the Site located outside the footprint of six disposal areas, and approximately 2,500 cy of contaminated soil from the Site’s Southern Parcel onto the Northern Parcel of the Site, enclosed with a vertical barrier, and covered with an impermeable cap. Approximately, a total volume of 82,250 cy of contaminated material would be consolidated, encapsulated and capped. The total project cost ceiling for the NTCRA recommended in the Action Memorandum ranged from \$7.7 million to \$14.5 million. Second, active conversations amongst local, state and federal jurisdictions having authority on how to redevelop the land based off the EE/CA. Finally, thirdly, engagement with Baylock Holdings a private sector partner that would take on the responsibility of the clean-up.

From then until now a small group of city staff has been meeting on and off, but more regularly over the past year and half to slowly and methodically work our way through various issues. This was done in an effort to remove constraints and obstacles with the hopes that we would unlock the potential redevelopment of this site for our shared mutual benefit.

To that end, on January 10th you will hear a proposal with a draft concept plan, which is based on all the prior work and engagement that has taken place since the Mohawk Tannery site closed. It builds upon the work and discussions that have occurred intermittently over the past five or six years with various stakeholders.

To accomplish the feat of cleaning-up the site a public-private-partnership is necessary and the presentation will outline a financing plan, which align the dials to unlock the potential redevelopment of this land. Finally, there will be a roadmap of sorts, which articulates the various pieces of legislation, and/or official actions needed by various public bodies to accomplish the goal of cleaning-up the site and repurposing the land.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you.