

Landfill and Station Area Redevelopment Update April 2009

This update is to advise you of the current status of the Somerville Landfill and Station Area redevelopment project.

The chronology of recent events:

October 29, 2007, the Borough of Somerville in conjunction with NJ Transit issued a Request for Qualifications & Proposals for the redevelopment of the Landfill and Station Area.

March 14, 2008, the Borough received only one proposal.

On April 21, 2008, this group made a public presentation of their proposal.

Following the public presentation, the consensus of the proposal review committee and the Borough Council was that the proposal submitted did not adequately address some of the goals and objectives of the RFQ/P, Vision Plan, and Redevelopment Plan.

October 2008, issued a revised RFQ.

March 6th 2009, submission deadline for the revised RFQ.

The collapse of the financial and housing markets was seen as the major contributor to the withdrawal of all respondents for the project. The Redevelopment Committee recommended to Council that the project focus continue and be directed towards the environmental investigation and remediation of the site.

This will provide a positive result for the borough mid to long term during this financial downturn in the market.

1. It will keep the overall landfill project moving forward.
2. It will keep activity and emphasis on a major project in front to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
3. It will enable the Borough to determine the limits of "buildable" land in the area
4. It will enable the Borough to develop a remediation plan that is directly related to the Vision and Redevelopment Plans
5. The Borough will be assured of maintaining the 40 plus acres of the "green seam" as open space and recreational areas
6. As a government entity the Borough will be able to apply for various financial support and grants not available to the private sector for the remediation and re-engineering of the "green seam" and needed infrastructure improvements that the Redevelopment Plan calls for
7. Through these grants we will remove some of the financial uncertainty from the project as the economy improves
8. It will allow the Borough to bid out smaller sections of the project (sub-divide) to a broader range of developers; reducing or eliminating the loss of time to completion of the overall project

On March 30th the Borough delivered to the NJ DEP an application to be designated a Brownfield Development Area (BDA) by this agency. This designation carries with it the benefit of receiving larger grant amounts from the DEP for environmental investigations and certain types of remediation. Plus it identifies the Borough within other State agencies as being in conformance with the states "Smart Growth" initiative and eligible for greater consideration and attention when applying for grants and other forms of support.

As part of our BDA application we have formed a BDA Steering Committee to work with the Redevelopment Committee and DEP to bring a broader cross section of the Somerville community's thoughts and ideas into the remediation planning. This committee will be involved in all aspects of the

environmental investigations and remediation planning whether the borough is designated a BDA or not.

We are currently working on an application for submission to the NJ Department of Transportation (DOT) to be designated as a Transit Village, this designation in turn confirms the Boroughs intention to plan for and create livable pedestrian friendly communities with a focus on mass transit and other forms of public transportation; reducing the reliance on gasoline and helping reduce airborne contaminants. This application should be complete during May 2009. The benefit of this designation while similar to the BDA benefits also allows the Borough access to a broader array of grant funding and support not only from state government but the federal government as well.

In March of this year the Boroughs newly appointed environmental team; GeoSyntec-Whitman recommenced the environmental investigation of the former landfill. The initial work is to complete that started by previous environmental consultants and will fully define the limits of the "fill", it's composition and depth, they will then submit a report on their findings for the DEP.

This report will be quickly followed by a request for further grant funding to undertake a detailed ground water investigation (sub-surface) as directed by the DEP. In addition this funding will also include a request to investigate the adjoining properties as part of the study. The end result of these investigations will allow the Borough to create a Remedial Action Work plan (RAW), identifying the types of remediation required, area by area, and how it is proposed to be achieved for submission to the DEP for approval, it is estimated that these investigations will cost between \$500,000 and \$1,700,000.

The above RAW will also help identify the types of infrastructure improvements needed for the redevelopment and where they can be located. Through these actions the Borough believes that even in a depressed market place the project can continue forward in an active manner, and by undertaking these "public works" type activities now we will actually save time "to construction" when the economy begins to recover.

If you have any questions or comments please e-mail Redev@somervillenj.org