

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Land & Community Revitalization

## BROWNFIELDS SUCCESS IN NEW ENGLAND

### FITCH AVENUE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT



<b>PROPERTY DETAILS</b>	<b>Address:</b> NW intersection of Fitch Avenue and Crest Street, New London, CT
	<b>Size:</b> Approximately one acre
	<b>Former Use:</b> Motor lodge; undeveloped land adjacent to I-95
	<b>Contaminants:</b> Arsenic, zinc, and lead
	<b>Current Use:</b> Affordable housing
<b>Owner:</b> Habitat for Humanity of Southeastern Connecticut	
<b>PARTNERS</b>	Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD); Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); City of New London

**Motivation for Redevelopment:** New London, Connecticut is a seaport town of approximately 25,700 residents in the southeast region of the state. With population and local industry in decline over the last several decades, unemployment and poverty levels in New London are higher than state averages. Creating low-income housing is a priority, but there is limited land available for development. Approximately half of the one-acre property at the focus of this project had already been developed for low-income housing by Habitat for Humanity of Southeastern Connecticut (HFHSECT). Environmental contamination on the remaining portion of the site was a barrier that had to be overcome to construct additional, much-needed affordable housing.

**Property History:** A portion of this approximately one-acre property was used as a motor lodge in the 1960s. In the 1970s the site was purchased by the state Department of Transportation (CT DOT) as part of Interstate 95 construction. Areas of metal contamination discovered on the property are most likely attributable to the site's industrial use during this time. A private developer, Thomas Sheridan, purchased the land from CT DOT in 1986. In 1997 Mr. Sheridan donated the property to HFHSECT. Initial environmental assessments in 1998 revealed that nearly half of the site was free from contamination, and in 2000 HFHSECT built two homes on the uncontaminated portion. To address contamination on the remaining portion, HFHSECT applied for and received a \$200,000 EPA Brownfields Cleanup grant in 2005.

**Project Results:** The success of this 14-year project is due to the determination of HFHSECT as well as assistance and collaboration from federal, state, and local partners. Funding from various components of the EPA Brownfields Program was critical; HFHSECT Executive Director Terri O'Rourke believes that without the EPA funding the project would not have moved forward. In addition to awarding the project a cleanup grant, EPA used Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) funds, with assistance from CT DEP, in 2006 to perform detailed environmental tests to better characterized areas of arsenic, zinc,

<b>FUNDING DETAILS</b>	<i>Funding for Assessment and Cleanup</i>	
	<b>EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA)</b>	
	<b>Grant:</b>	\$151,893
	<b>EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant:</b>	\$200,000
	<b>Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund</b>	
	<b>Grant (subgrant from CT DECD):</b>	\$42,500
	<b>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):</b>	\$11,000
	<b>Matching Funds from HFHSECT:</b>	\$73,445
	<i>Funding for House Construction</i>	
	<b>Liberty Bank Loan:</b>	\$50,000
<b>Federal Home Loan Bank Grant:</b>	\$50,000	
<b>HFHSECT Funds (from donations, mortgage sales, ReStore proceeds, and mortgage payments):</b>	\$185,007	
<b>HIGHLIGHTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leveraged initial EPA investment into suite of federal, state, and private funding sources.</li> <li>Constructed new, energy efficient housing to LEED specifications; green construction techniques based on model from prior HFHSECT projects.</li> <li>Provides much-needed affordable housing for two families including 10 children.</li> </ul>	

and lead in the site's soil and surface water. HFHSECT used its Brownfields Cleanup grant—as well as an additional \$42,500 subgrant from an EPA-funded Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund administered by CT DECD, and \$11,000 from the City of New London—to excavate these areas of contamination and replace them with clean fill.

The site cleanup efforts helped HFHSECT secure additional financing from other sources, such as an extremely competitive Federal Home Loan Bank grant, to fund the construction of the two homes. HFHSECT also raised over \$285,000 from various sources for construction materials and labor. Construction began in 2010 and was largely completed by volunteers; roughly 300 people donated more than 6,000 hours to the project. The homes are ENERGY STAR qualified and built using green construction techniques learned through the construction of a LEED Gold certified HFHSECT residential building nearby. Construction was completed in 2011, and two families, including 10 children, are now living in the homes. As a result of this project these families now have safe, affordable housing and an opportunity for homeownership. The new homes will also contribute \$6,000 in new tax revenue annually to the local municipality.

<b>TIMELINE</b>	
<b>1960s</b>	Portion of property used as motor lodge
<b>1970s</b>	Property purchased by CT DOT and used for I-95 construction
<b>1986</b>	Property purchased by developer Thomas Sheridan
<b>1997</b>	Mr. Sheridan donates the property to HFHSECT
<b>1998</b>	Initial environmental assessments
<b>2000</b>	HFHSECT builds two homes on uncontaminated portion of the property
<b>2008</b>	Additional site assessments enabled through an EPA TBA grant
<b>2009 - 2010</b>	Cleanup begins on contaminated areas
<b>2010</b>	Construction of two homes
<b>2011</b>	Homes dedicated to two local families