

**CITY OF AMSTERDAM  
WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS UPDATE  
SARATOGA ASSOCIATES**

**DECEMBER 7, 2005**

**Chalmer's Environmental Restoration Program (ERP)**

In order to advance the City's interest in redeveloping the Chalmers Building and Site for a mixed-use project the site needs to be restored and made ready. At the present time it is understood that the site has several areas of concern that require investigation and possible remediation in order to set the stage for redevelopment. A report prepared by ENSR International highlights the issues of environmental concern. Potential concerns also exist from adjacent and/or abutting properties, which also would require investigation to determine potential impacts from off-site sources.

This project focuses on participating with the Environmental Restoration Program as administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The objective is for the City of Amsterdam to receive state financial assistance for the investigation and remediation of the site leading to redevelopment.

1. Prepare Environmental Restoration Program Application
2. Prepare State Assistance Contracts for Brownfield's Grant
3. Conduct Environmental Investigation Program
4. Update Redevelopment Plans
5. Conduct Public Input Meetings

The project has been awarded for the investigative phase and is anticipated to start in early 2006.

**Brownfield Opportunity Area Program (BOA)**

The [Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program](#) (BOA) provides municipalities and community based organizations with assistance to complete area-wide approaches to brownfields redevelopment. Through the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program communities will receive state financial assistance for the preparation of community based revitalization plans leading to returning brownfields to productive use and in doing so revitalizing neighborhoods and providing new opportunities for economic growth, recreation and natural resource protection.

This BOA provides funding from New York State Department of State to conduct the STEP 1: Pre-Nomination Study for the Via Ponte project area (southside neighborhood). This is the first step in the BOA process to determine which properties are to be included in the program. Effectively the purpose of this step is to confirm which properties are to be included in the project. Once completed, it is anticipated the City will seek to continue in the program and complete Steps 2 and 3. Additional state financial assistance will be provided if approved by NYS Department of State to continue in the program. A local financial match is required.

- o **Step 1: Pre-Nomination Study** - Pre-Nomination Study - The Pre-Nomination Study provides a preliminary description and analysis of the proposed Brownfield Opportunity Area. Essentially the properties to be included in the project are identified during this phase. The Pre-Nomination Study will be reviewed by the New York State Departments of State and Environmental Conservation to determine if a community should proceed with a Nomination to designate a Brownfield Opportunity Area.
- o **Step 2: Nomination** - The Nomination provides an in-depth and thorough description and analysis, including an economic and market trends analysis, of existing conditions, opportunities, and reuse potential for properties located in the proposed Brownfield Opportunity Area with an emphasis on the identification and reuse potential of priority brownfield sites that are catalysts for revitalization.
- o **Step 3: Site Assessments and/or Implementation Strategy** - Site Assessments and/or Implementation Strategy - If needed, site assessments will result in identifying the location, nature and extent of contamination on priority brownfield sites within a Brownfield Opportunity Area. Site assessments will provide sufficient information to allow for the identification and evaluation of remedial action alternatives and to facilitate remedy selection. The Implementation Strategy provides a description of the techniques and actions to implement the revitalization plan and compliance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act regulations.

The City has been awarded a Step 1 grant and it is anticipated the project will begin in early 2006. The mayor has formed a working committee to guide the planning process.

## **Niagara Mohawk Riverlink Park Remediation**

Niagara Mohawk is currently working with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to investigate and remediate the Phase 2 Riverlink Park area for use as a public park. The site is a Former Manufactured Gas Plant Site and has environmental contamination in the soil and groundwater. The Mohawk River has been impacted as well. In order to prevent further damage and render the site safe for public use, the contamination will be capped and contained in place. The remediation includes a buffer of soil and/or pavement placed over the contamination to provide a safe buffer and restrict the pathway to public exposure.

The project is currently scheduled for remediation during the 2006 construction season. NMPC will provide a topsoil cover and lawn area to protect the remediated area.

## **Riverlink Park Phase II Development**

The expansion of the park is currently in the planning and design phase and being coordinated with the NMPC remediation program. Although public grant funds are being sought, they have not yet been committed to pay for the park improvements. The objective of the phase of expansion is to provide additional room for public events; festivals, concerts, boating and general play areas. The program currently includes:

- Great lawn
- Painted Rock sculpture
- Relocated children playground
- Additional restrooms and interpretative center
- Additional boat docks
- HC access throughout
- Hiking trails, pathways and riverfront promenade
- Landscape plantings and lawn

The project has not yet been funded. Efforts are being made to secure state and/or federal funding assistance.

## **Mohawk River Pedestrian Bridge**

Assemblyman Paul Tonko has secured a \$17MM line item in the Canal Improvements component of the 2005 Transportation Bond act to construct a pedestrian bridge over the Mohawk River/Erie Canal. The funds are dedicated to Canal related improvements. The project will connect the north and south shore of the Mohawk River at Bridge Street and provide both pedestrian and emergency vehicle access to the Riverlink Park. This connection provides critically needed additional means of access to the park and emerging Via Ponte redevelopment area.

The project schedule is dependent upon the NYS Thruway Authority authorizing the expenditure of funds.