

## site remediation program

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## Workshop Inaugurates Jersey City Pilot

On October 3, 1997 Jersey City held a brownfields workshop to introduce its plans under the recently awarded EPA Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot Grant. The workshop was sponsored by EPA. Participants in the workshop included community members, industrial property owners and developers as well as representatives from federal, state and city government offices. Jersey City's Mayor, Bret Schundler, welcomed participants and encouraged all levels of private and public involvement by describing the brownfields initiative as "a regional issue as well as a neighborhood issue."

Key speakers included Professor Albert Price, of the State University of New York at Buffalo, who provided the historical context by discussing changing patterns of urban development and redevelopment, and Charles Bartsch, of the Northeast Midwest Institute, who presented numerous examples of how other cities have dealt with barriers to the brownfields redevelopment process. Representatives of the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency discussed the specific plans for Jersey City's Brownfields Pilot Project. The goal of the project, they said, is to create a standardized process for redeveloping brownfields. This process will emphasize increasing the municipal tax base, creating industrial jobs, and identifying and reducing the potential exposure to contaminants.

In the last portion of the workshop, participants aired questions and concerns in the spirit of beginning a mutually beneficial dialogue between the private and public sector. The city hopes the success of this initial "kickoff" workshop will attract more interested parties to the subsequent stakeholders meetings.

The city chose the Lafayette Park area for initial redevelopment based on its mix of industrial and residential land uses, its large concentration of industrial properties — either abandoned or having substantial municipal tax liens allowing foreclosure by the city — and local residents in need of jobs. Jersey City began analysis of the target area by mapping the location and land use of 850 properties using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The city continues to gather information on property characteristics, such as building conditions, tax liens and known contamination, which will be included in the GIS maps. As part of the redevelopment program, Jersey City also plans to guide efforts to preserve historic structures and to designate industrial/ residential zones in the Lafayette Park area.

Experienced with previous community-development programs, Jersey City is committed to keeping all stakeholders informed. Community involvement activities underway include holding stakeholder meetings, disseminating site information through flyers and newsletters and media coverage.

For more information please contact Sanford Greenberg in Jersey City at (201) 547-4790, Chelsea Albucher, USEPA at (212) 637-4291 or Frank Faranca, NJDEP at (609) 984-4071.

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