

SMART GROWTH IN ACTION

Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill Redevelopment Housing, Heritage at Mixed-Use Site

REDDING, CONNECTICUT

Closure of the Gilbert & Bennett wire mill in 1989 left a 55-acre, contaminated industrial site in Redding's Georgetown section, the primary commercial zone for this town of 8,400 residents. By 2002, the facility that was once a major source of tax revenue had accrued unpaid taxes of over \$1 million. To revitalize the area and protect public health, the town partnered with a developer who not only paid the tax lien in full, but also cleaned up the contamination and is redeveloping the site into a mixed-use neighborhood. This partnership has been good for the town and the developer—each benefits from the new homes, businesses, services, and revenue.

In a week-long public workshop, over 1,000 stakeholders from the town and from regional, state, and federal governments developed the design for the new neighborhood. A key component of the plan is a lively diversity of uses, including 416 homes, 109,000 square feet of shops and restaurants, 113,000 square feet of office space, a performing arts center with a theater, and a health facility with a public pool. Home styles will include single-family houses, townhouses, affordable senior housing, and live/work apartments. To honor the mill's heritage, 15 of the site's historic buildings will be rehabilitated and 21 new buildings will be designed in a historically sensitive manner.

Pedestrian-friendly design features such as trails, wide sidewalks, short blocks, and narrow streets encourage people to walk around the neighborhood. To give residents more transportation choices, the developer is building a commuter train station that will provide easy access to Manhattan. The developer is also using environmentally friendly energy sources and design techniques.

When the neighborhood is complete, the town of Redding expects that this former brownfield will create more than 1,700 permanent jobs and provide the town with \$4.7 million in new, annual property tax revenues.

The Gilbert & Bennett wire mill redevelopment is a model for complex reuse projects. The strong public-private partnership invited community input in the design process, facilitated the remediation plan, and expedited adoption of the master plan.



SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES REDDING'S BROWNFIELD REUSE

#1	Includes Mixed Land Uses	★
#2	Exhibits Compact Building Design	★
#3	Provides Range of Housing Types	★
#4	Promotes Walkable Neighborhoods	★
#5	Exhibits a Distinct Sense of Place	★
#6	Preserves Open Space	✓
#7	Utilizes Existing Development	★
#8	Provides Transportation Choices	✓
#9	Practices Fair Decision-making	✓
#10	Promotes Stakeholder Participation	★

QUICK FACTS

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