



Facts About...

Former Sacred Heart Hospital (Brownfields Site)

Site Location

The Former Sacred Heart Hospital is located at 215 Decatur Street, Cumberland, MD. The site is situated in a residential/commercial section near downtown Cumberland approximately ¼-mile east of City Hall and less than ½-mile east of the Potomac River in central Allegany County. The site is comprised of a 2.13-acre plot of land that formerly housed the downtown facilities of the Sacred Heart Hospital.

Site History

Sacred Heart Hospital stood at 215 Decatur Street on the grounds of a nineteenth-century mansion. In 1905 the mansion was converted into a hospital in the first phase of operations. It was in this building that the facility was first incorporated as Allegany Hospital. Six years later, the Sisters of Mercy took over operation of the facility and it was renamed Sacred Heart Hospital. Several phases of construction followed incorporation and the footprint of building eventually covered much of the Decatur Street frontage. In 1967, the Decatur Street facility closed and the buildings were demolished.

The site first appears on the 1887 Sanborn Fire Insurance map and indicates that the original land area that made up the former Sacred Heart Hospital was a private residence. The 1910 map reveals the same residence, but local history documents that the building is used as a hospital. Sanborn maps between 1910 and 1972 show the hospital. The foundations of the hospital have expanded to cover much of the parcel in the 1956 Sanborn map. The facility closed in 1967 and was sold in 1968 to Manst Corporation. The facility was demolished and most of the demolition debris transported off site for disposal. John M. Robb purchased the property in 1983 and transferred it to Charles W. W. Stultz in 1986. Stultz sold the property to the City of Cumberland in January 1994. The City held the property from 1994 until 2005 when redevelopment was undertaken by a private developer for residential development.

Environmental Investigations and Actions

On August 2, 2004, a site reconnaissance was performed on the property to photo-document the properties and define the current site conditions. The reconnaissance consisted of a visual observation of the subject site and included a detailed inspection of important site features including remains of historical operations. A Phase I report and proposed sampling and analysis plan was developed based on this reconnaissance and a review of historic information on the hospital.

On October 5, 2004, sampling for a Phase II site assessment was performed by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Eight surface soil and nine subsurface soil grab samples were collected by Geoprobe[®] and field screened for Carcinogenic Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon (cPAHs), Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), and metals concentrations using immunoassay and X-Ray Fluorescence techniques. Ten of these seventeen soil grab samples were also analyzed by Phase Separation Science Lab for volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), Priority Pollutant List metals,



pesticides and PCBs. MDE prepared a toxicological evaluation of the Sacred Heart site utilizing the analytical data provided by Phase under a residential use scenario. Overall contaminants detected on site were within MDE and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency acceptable levels using the residential risk exposure assumptions, except for the child resident population. Only three contaminants were detected at levels above screening benchmarks (arsenic, mercury, and benzo[a]pyrene). Arsenic was the risk driver for risk to the child resident population. However, levels detected were below the Anticipated Typical Concentration for western Maryland and therefore considered to not pose a risk for the child resident population above that anticipated for western Maryland.

Current Status

The Sacred Heart property is a grass and gravel-covered area surrounded on three sides by a low stone retaining wall. The rear of the property is a very steep tree covered expanse rising up to Helen Street. Vegetation covers much of the site but is sparse in certain areas due to the lack of soils present. Allegedly, debris from the site demolition was left on site with additional fill materials brought onto the site to grade and elevate the site several feet. Most of the site is covered with former building foundations and roadbeds.

There are no existing storage tanks on the property. MDE has no record of open cases on the site. There are no existing transformers or electrical equipment on site. The site is, however, a likely candidate for PCB contamination due to its age and era when it was abandoned. The EPA Enviromap does not indicate that hazardous substances were stored on the parcel. Inquiry into MDE's Hazardous Waste Enforcement Division files did not reveal the facility to be a hazardous waste generator. Asbestos containing materials and lead paint were likely used in the construction of the old hospital building. Much of the debris from the demolition of the building was hauled off site for disposal.

Planned or Potential Future Action

The 215 Decatur Street property has been subdivided into several parcels and a series of town homes constructed on the site. Most of the property is asphalt or concrete covered and there is little likelihood for child contact with the contaminants documented in the Phase II investigation. MDE has no further planned activity for this site.

Facility Contacts

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Last Update: October 10, 2006

