

Middleton Redevelopment

PUB-RR-741

October, 2005

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7500-7700 University Ave.
Middleton, WI
Dane County

Locaton: Downtown Middleton

Money Magazine recently ranked Middleton, Wisconsin, as one of the top 10 places to live in the United States. Located on the western edge of Lake Mendota, Middleton is adjacent to Madison, another popular place to call home. However, despite its close proximity to the state capitol, Middleton and its downtown area remain equally popular destinations for residents and tourists alike.

In 1856, Middleton became the site of the first railroad station located between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River. Settlers and local businesses concentrated near this railroad depot, and the community began to grow. Today, Middleton continues to change and grow, not only with new developments, but also with the cleanup and redevelopment of a major brownfield located in the heart of the city's downtown.

History

The site, located between the 7500 and 7700 blocks of University Avenue, used to be home to 19 separate parcels, including an automobile repair service, car dealership, radiator repair company, furniture manufacturer, window blind manufacturer, and several residential properties. The city of Middleton purchased all of the properties for redevelopment and demolished all but one building.



The site before redevelopment housed a car dealership and a number of other businesses (DNR photo).

Investigation & Cleanup

Through the first phase of site assessments, officials focused their efforts on eleven specific areas on the properties. Located within these areas were leaking underground storage tanks, an automotive hydraulic lift and an automotive maintenance pit.

With staff from the DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program providing technical assistance, workers placed soil borings and groundwater wells at the site to identify



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PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707
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possible contamination. Tests detected water contaminated with tetrachloroethene (TCE), perchloroethylene (PCE) and dichloroethylene (DCE).



The Valencia Condos are just a part of the successful redevelopment in downtown Middleton.

(photo by Megan Clemens, DNR).

The TCE contamination, which is harmful to humans and the environment, was also found in the soil at low levels throughout the site.

Today the site has been successfully cleaned up, with nearly 1,600 tons of soil excavated and removed.

Redevelopment

Redevelopment on this property was completed in the summer of 2003. After remediation and demolition activities, developers used the one warehouse left standing and transformed it into The Valencia Place, a mix of commercial and residential units. Valencia Place features retail businesses on the first level and 52 apartments on the upper level.

The development of this multi-property site has created hundreds of additional jobs for the community and increased the property value from approximately \$1 million to \$20 million dollars. Thanks to the efforts of the DNR and the city, Middleton successfully eliminated a severely blighted area with a long history of industrial use, and helped turn the downtown

back into a place everyone can enjoy.

Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

In addition to receiving technical assistance from the RR Program, in April 2001 city officials received a Department of Commerce Brownfields Grant for \$50,000 to remove contaminated soil.

Also, in 1993 Middleton created a Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) district for the site.

Contacts

Michael Schmoller
Project Manager
DNR Remediation and Redevelopment Program
(608) 275-3303

Matt Meier
Development Project Manager
Alexander Company
(608) 268-8106

Eileen Kelley
City Planner
City of Middleton
(608) 827-1077

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