

Trolley Square

PUB-RR-772

June, 2007

Trolley Square (former Valmet, Inc./Metso Corp.)

619 S. Olde Oneida Street
Appleton, WI
Outagamie County

2.7 Acres

Location: Downtown Appleton, along the Fox River in the old industrial flats.

Appleton, a community strong in waterfront renaissance, opened Trolley Square as a part of its master plan for the Fox, bringing public access back to the river through brownfields redevelopment.

History

Dating back to the 1880s, the Trolley Square property had a number of various industrial uses and more than 10 different owners. Past activities included a knitting mill, nail and incandescent lamp manufacturing, metal fabrication and other machine operations. The Valmet Company, manufacturers of paper processing technologies and drum drying systems for the textile and non-woven industries, owned and occupied the property for more than 50 years.

Past owners demolished the original 19th Century structures and built Quonset buildings in the 1950s. Metso Corporation acquired the

Valmet Company, and eventually discontinued use of the property for storage, which gave the Appleton Redevelopment Authority (ARA) an opportunity to step in and link the property's redevelopment with the city's master plan for the Fox River.



The Trolley Square property prior to cleanup. Previous activities at the site included a knitting mill, nail and incandescent lamp manufacturing, metal fabrication and other machine operations (photo courtesy of OMNNI Associates).

Investigation & Cleanup

Contamination existed at the property due to the long history of industrial operations at the site. In 1999, the ARA conducted Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments and discovered polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and various metals in the soil.

In January 2000, the ARA sent out requests for proposals and brochures to numerous developers in the Midwest. Due to the environmental concerns, they received no response. However, thanks to the city's



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Remediation and Redevelopment Program

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partnership with the DNR's Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program, the ARA acquired the property through slum clearance and blight elimination procedures in 2001, investigated the site and demolished three buildings. At this point the city allowed the vacant property to be utilized by a utility company cleaning up a former manufactured gas plant (MGP) across the Fox River. Temporary construction of a thermal treatment unit to treat contaminated soils eliminated the need to haul contaminated soil from the MGP property through the city.

Redevelopment

After cleanup was completed, the ARA again solicited proposals and selected Rollie Winter & Associates for the development of Trolley Square.

The 20,000 square foot facility features a display for a refurbished Birney Streetcar and historical photos of Appleton. The site also houses a restaurant and will feature a wine store and banquet and catering business. Outdoor amenities include a riverwalk and dining and entertainment areas, with the potential to link with a trail across the river utilizing an abandoned railroad trestle.



The Trolley Square redevelopment includes a restaurant, outdoor dining area and riverwalk. (city of Appleton photo).

Financial, Liability, Technical Assistance

As a way to stimulate riverfront redevelopment, city of Appleton officials created a Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) district that included the Trolley Square property.

Also, the ARA was awarded two DNR Brownfields Site Assessment Grants (SAGs): a \$100,000 award in 2002 for environmental investigation and demolition, and a \$20,000 award in 2003 for continued investigation.

The city also received a local government liability exemption from the DNR, which limits liability for the city at the property, and received an exemption to build on an historic fill site due to the presence of foundry sand. Both exemptions helped pave the way for redevelopment of the property, along with the Voluntary Party Liability Exemption (VPLE) certificate of completion, which limits liability for historic releases for current and future property owners.

Throughout the project, RR program staff assisted with project plans and reports, oversaw remediation activities, reviewed and approved case closure requests and assisted with the various state liability and financial incentives.

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