



Equity Environmental Engineering LLC

Newsletter

APRIL 2011 NEWSLETTER

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Brownfields 2011

In early April 2011, the US Environmental Protection Agency in conjunction with ICMA (International City/County Management Association) had the Brownfields 2011 Conference in Philadelphia, PA. I attended a portion of the three day event along with 6,000 other attendees. The attendees came from all over the country and Canada and

Dear Peter,

Well, Spring has finally sprung although it seems to have gone straight to summer this past week. The April showers have come with a vengeance and the May flowers are early! Along with the warmer weather comes the outdoor activities including children playing so please drive carefully. The ticks are already out as well so make sure you check yourself as well as your children for the pests. (doing field work this week one person found six (6) ticks on him)

→ Site Constraint Analysis

Everywhere you look today, site acquisition opportunities abound. But how good are they? How do you choose the best among the available opportunities? In a rising economy, a gut feeling and market trend were all the tools you needed. Things are different in today's down economy, where a single poor decision can lead to financial distress. Today site acquisition requires a cold eye and hard science to be successful.

Many properties available today are, by their very nature, properties with lost histories. Vacant or abandoned sites typically held by financial institutions are usually missing critical data that would have been available if an active owner or tenant was present. Such information could have included current and historic site conditions, site closure procedures, past business or manufacturing practices, waste disposal manifests, and materials management inventories.

A Site Constraints Assessment (SCA) is a systematic process that helps reassemble these disjointed data into

were from Universities, Government Agencies, Commercial Businesses, and the Environmental Industry. The title of this year's conference was "Sustainable Communities Start Here". The number of options for attendees is overwhelming, with panel discussions, educational sessions, training workshops, mobile workshops, and an enormous Exhibit Hall.

Brownfields, distressed properties, typically in urban areas have been around for a long time. As America transitioned from an Industrial Nation to a Service and Financial Nation, industries closed factories and the land they were built on became vacant. The properties are typically contaminated from the original operations. This makes them less desirable to developers, because they need to clean up the properties to allow for any redevelopment, sometimes at an enormous cost. Municipal governments are looking for ways to bring these "Brownfields" back to life and on the tax rolls as "Greenfields".

The Conference focused on the issues that are germane to the area, including: Sustainability, Funding sources, Speed Dating of properties and buyers, Environmental Insurance Options, Renewable Energy and Brownfields, and Economic Development. One of the interesting sessions that I attended covered the topic of social networking and brownfields. Today, communities are establishing social networking pages as a means to reach a larger number of concerned citizens. This

usable information. These site specific data when reconciled with site specific, business, environmental, and planning datasets can become scalable weighted elements that support a systematic site selection / decision making process.

At the onset of this assessment process, the selection of the "right" SCA elements is critical. Looking for all lost or missing data is time consuming. In the end, too much data bogs down the process and the wrong data can obscure the best sites. So, what are signature elements needed for SCA to be successful? Consider these elements, as just a subset of what is available:

- Site Feasibility
 - o Site Suitability (Size, Location, Access, Utilities)
 - o Constructability Issues
 - o Zoning / Land Use
 - o Regulatory Processes including Permit Evaluation and Variance Requirements
 - o Economic Evaluation
- Physical Restrictions
 - o Utility Easements / Rights-Of-Ways / Environmental Land Use Restrictions
 - o Site and Offsite Wetlands / Natural Resources including buffers and exclusion areas
 - o Sensitive Receptors / Land Uses
 - o View Sheds
 - o Historic Resources
 - o Soil Conditions / Drainage
- Development Features
 - o Building Layout
 - o Site Plan and Subdivision Approvals
 - o Site Access
 - o Transportation including Traffic / Parking / Mass Transit / Pedestrians
 - o Utility Availability and Access
 - o Open Space Requirements
 - o LEED Considerations
- Environmental Concerns
 - o Regulatory databases
 - o Air Quality
 - o Commuter Preferences
 - o Hazardous Waste Management

approach is also being used to provide information to people who may not have a computer, but have a smart phone.

The Keynote Speaker was Lisa Jackson, the Administrator of the US EPA. Her message was that due to the efforts of the people in the room, more than 17,500 Brownfields properties had been redeveloped, 70,000 jobs had been created, and \$15 Billion dollars has been leveraged through the Brownfields program. Considering the economic benefit to the communities, this is a true success story. She introduced a new program called "Sustainable Communities Building Blocks" which engages communities new to the Brownfields program to learn from the Communities that have experience with Brownfields. Even with a downturn in the economy, the Brownfields movement continues to progress and grow.

Equity Environmental Engineering provides services to clients to evaluate properties for site selection, planning and zoning studies, property condition assessments, Environmental Site Assessments, investigation services, permitting, clean up coordination, and grant acquisition/coordination. If you are looking for help in this area, please contact Peter Jaran at peter.jaran@equityenvironmental.com or at (973) 527-7451 x 102.

- o Remedial Strategies
- o Quality of Life

Careful consideration given to the appropriate factors, at the onset of the site selection process, will potentially avoid, or at least minimize, decision making data / information gaps. Consider, how many filters or sieves would you require?



Merging diverse elements into a single unified dataset is where we, Equity Environmental Engineering, can help you create opportunities for good decision making supporting your site selection / development / redevelopment process.

Call us for assistance. Mark London, Partner, can be reached at mark.london@equityenvironmental.com or by calling (973)527-7451 x201.

→ Value Added Services

Understanding the Bigger Picture

Equity Environmental Engineering attempts to provide value-added services to our clients whenever possible, from

identifying potential issues early in the life of projects to determining means and methods to shorten the duration of a project where applicable. This service is even provided in the proposal phase of a project to educate our clients before the work is awarded. The following are two examples of how our value added service helped our due diligence clients.

Equity provided due diligence services for a private client planning to purchase property along the waterfront in Brooklyn. During the course of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) project it became apparent that there were regional contamination issues (soil and vapor intrusion) adjacent to the site that was a potential fatal flaw for the purchase of the property. The client had entered into an agreement which included a termination clause based on the estimated cost to address onsite contamination and/or a specific time period to address the contamination.

The property owner conducted an extremely limited Phase II Site Investigation based on the Phase I findings. Equity was able, based on information gathered during the Phase I ESA and the limited Phase II, to provide a list of required activities (preparation of workplans, regulatory approvals, implementation of field work, etc.), approximate scheduling, and estimated costs to allow the client to terminate the deal instead of purchasing a contaminated property.

Project Understanding

Equity was hired by a foreign entity to provide pre-purchase conduct due diligence services for a potential New York City office site. The request for proposal (RFP) included a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and a Property Condition Assessment (PCA). During our typical RFP and subject property evaluation, Equity observed that the property was not properly zoned for the intended use.

The zoning issue could have been a significant obstacle to the use of the building as planned. This observation was discussed with the client in the proposal. When awarded the project, Equity was told that none of the other firms that submitted proposals raised this key zoning point.

Equity is constantly in search of ways to provide value added service to our clients, often before they become our clients. Whether it is assisting a client recover from a poor decision or preventing them from entering into one, Equity takes the time to understand and protect our client's needs.

This newsletter highlights site issues that are found in conducting work in the environmental and planning fields. Equity staff continue to keep abreast of changes in our industry and look for way to help clients to achieve their goals, whether finding, purchasing, or redeveloping sites. One of our core

services.

In May we will be sponsoring the Commerce and Industry of New Jersey Environmental Business Council meeting, so if you are attending the meeting, please say hello.

We were recently featured in an article in the Morris County Daily Record newspaper. Click on the link:

<http://www.dailyrecord.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2011104150305>

Check us out on Facebook too.

Sincerely,

Peter Jaran
Equity Environmental Engineering LLC

This is the fine print text where you might tell your customers how the item will be shipped and, for example, if they are overseas that there will be additional shipping charges and must contact you.