

# Stephenson County Brownfields Program

## THE FACTS

EPA's investment in the Brownfields Program has resulted in many accomplishments including:

-Creating Nearly 30,000 New Jobs

-Assessing More Than 4,800 Properties

-Creating 4,280 Redevelopment, Cleanup, and Construction Jobs in Region 5

\*\*It is estimated that there are more than 450,000 Brownfields in the United States

Region 5 is composed of the following states: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin



If you have any information regarding potential Brownfields, please contact Chairman John Blum or Joel Zirkle of Fehr-Graham & Associates

## BROWNFIELDS REACH OUT TO COMMUNITY

The United States Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields Program seeks to clean up and reinvest in real properties where the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which is complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, and takes development pressures off of undeveloped, open land while both improving and protecting the environment. The Brownfields Program is also designed to empower communities and other stakeholders in economic development to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. Tutty Baker Park, a former ser-



County Board Chairman John Blum looks over and explains some survey results with meeting attendees.

vice station, and the property immediately adjacent to the park, a former Mortuary site, were identified as potential brownfield sites by the County's BRAC (Brownfields Redevelopment Advisory Committee) in the initial

phases of their program. Both Tutty Baker Park and the former Mortuary site have since been through both Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments. It has been determined that the sites will need to go through some type of cleanup activities and the question facing the community now is: What do we do with the sites once they are cleaned up?

A Public Meeting was held on Tuesday, July 24, 2007 in an effort to obtain public input on the neighborhood's needs and desires for the properties once they're redeveloped. The meeting was held at the Tutty Baker Park site on Adams Street in Freeport. The meeting was conducted by Stephenson



Meeting attendees comment on the sites' redevelopment

County Board Chairman John Blum, Joel Zirkle of Fehr-Graham & Associates, and Scott Harrington of Vandewalle & Associates. Chairman Blum kicked off the meeting by describing the purpose and goals of the project, which are to gain an understanding of what the neighborhood and community would like to see developed at the sites. It was relayed to the attendees that there were no plans as of yet for the sites and this was simply the first step of many to obtain citizen input. Joel Zirkle of Fehr-Graham & Associates presented and discussed information in regards to the environmental issues at site. Zirkle reiterated the fact that the purpose of the US EPA Brownfields Program is to position these potentially contaminated sites for reuse within the community. Scott Harrington of Vandewalle & Associates engaged the attendees in a planning exercise that allowed them to visualize what they would like to see developed at the sites. There were four (4) conceptual drawings displayed for the attendees simply for a discussion starting point. The attendees then went on to discuss and illustrate what they would like to see developed at the property. Some ideas included: Band Shelter, Convenience Store, a mixed use building that included both commercial space as well as housing, and some eager neighborhood children offered that the space become a YMCA or swimming pool.

A Community Opinion Survey was also mailed in March of 2007 to determine the public's wishes for the property once it was developed. Some ideas expressed in the survey were to construct the following: Housing Complex, Convenience Store, Civic Center, Community Garden, and a Playground. The survey respondents were very clear that they did not want a place that would create a hangout for local youth or something that would become vacant, as much of the neighborhood is currently characterized by vacant property. Following the Public Meeting, several ideas were discussed to more efficiently involve the public in this ongoing process.

If you have any input regarding to the redevelopment of Tutty Baker Park and the adjacent former mortuary site, please contact Chairman John Blum or Joel Zirkle of Fehr-Graham & Associates.



Charles Hilton, Ronnie Bush, and Sam Newton discuss redevelopment strategies



Chairman Blum, Sam Newton, and Charles Hilton discuss redevelopment ideas.



Meeting attendees illustrate their ideas for the sites' redevelopment.