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NJIT TAB TIMES

April 9, 2021



Redding Community Brownfields Forum Comes Down to the Wire

The Town of Redding invited the NJIT TAB Team to participate in a virtual community forum held on April 8, 2021 to discuss the status of the former Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill site located in the Georgetown section of Redding, CT. The 44+ acre site located along the Norwalk River is comprised of vacant land with some historic structures remaining on the property. Prior to the housing crisis of 2008, the site was moving forward, having a developer and an approved redevelopment and master plan, however, as with many redevelopment projects, it fell victim to the

housing crisis fallout, went into tax foreclosure and has since been acquired by the town. Since the 1980s the site has experienced some remedial actions as well as oversight from EPA and Connecticut Department of Energy & Environment. Unfortunately, the redevelopment and master plans have both expired and the town needs to begin the process anew.

At the virtual community forum, NJIT TAB provided participants with a brownfields basics presentation which included an explanation of what defines a brownfield, the benefits of their redevelopment, and the redevelopment process itself, followed by an overview of the NJIT TAB program, the services it provides, and how those services can be brought to bear in the town's efforts to kick start and manage the project. The presentations were followed by a vigorous question and answer session during which NJIT TAB discussed brownfields funding options including EPA's MARC grants as well as other federal sources, the importance of community engagement, and the brownfields redevelopment timeline. The 2 1/2 hour event was attended by 121 community members, many of which expressed how useful they felt the presentations were and appreciative of the services available to them via NJIT TAB.