

COOK'S GARAGE

SITE ASSESSMENT PROFILE



TIMELINE

2018: Town takes ownership, begins implementing EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant: Phase I and Phase II assessment, Hazardous Building Material Inspection and Inventory, and geophysical surveys.

2019: Phase II assessment completed. Four above ground storage tanks in the building are removed.

2020: Hazardous heavy metals removed from within the building's sump. Investigations into source of the artesian well are ongoing.

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Introduction

Cook's Garage is located at 426 Park Street North in Housatonic. The site sits on a 1.5-acre piece of land along the eastern bank of the Housatonic River. It is zoned as a light industrial area, but there is a mix of industrial and residential along the Housatonic edge. The lot is about 727 feet above sea level and the assumed direction of ground water flow is southwest towards the Housatonic River.

On the site sits a vacant two-story building that was originally part of the Monument Mills textile complex. This is one of the few that ventured across to the eastern side of the banks as many of the mills occupied the western banks of the river. The building appears to be what once was a finishing building, picker house, or bleaching first in use around the year 1900. From about 1914 to 1950 the building was used as a lumber mill and automotive garage. After 1950, the automotive shop stayed and the rest of the space was used for various uses like different types of studio space. Operators also used the well water to fill swimming pools.

Since the building became vacant in 2018, various environmental assessments have been completed including a geophysical survey, building material inspection and inventory, above-ground storage tank removals, soil sampling, and contaminated soil removal.

COOK'S GARAGE BROWNFIELDS SITE ASSESSMENT



TRC Environmental Corporation (TRC) completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) for the Site in September 2018 which identified one Recognized Environmental Condition (REC) related to the former industrial uses of the site for approximately 100 years related to the site's former use as a textile mill and the use and/or storage of fuel oil, lubricating oil, hydraulic oils, and other products.

To investigate the REC, TRC subsequently conducted Phase II ESA activities through December 2019 consisting of the following activities under EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan Addenda and Modification:

- Generated a Site-specific health and safety plan to ensure the health and safety of TRC personnel, potential visitors to the site, and the surrounding community
- Conducted a building materials survey to identify hazardous building materials and inventory any hazardous materials present in the building. Limited asbestos, lead paint, and other hazardous materials inside the building were identified.
- Performed a geophysical survey of the accessible land area in front of the building to identify potential underground storage tanks and subsurface utilities. Two anomalies were identified.
- Excavated two exploratory test pits to investigate the anomalies identified by the geophysical survey and collection of one soil sample for laboratory analysis of petroleum-related compounds
- Cleaned and removed four aboveground storage tanks (ASTs) from the Site
- Installed five soil borings and collected five soil samples for laboratory analysis of petroleum-related compounds. No compounds were reported above the state's reporting criteria.
- Collected two water samples, one from a concrete cistern located inside the building along the west side of building and one from a metal sump in a concrete pit inside the building, for laboratory analysis of petroleum-related compounds, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and metals. None were found in the water sample collected from the concrete cistern. Only lead and one petroleum carbon range were identified at elevated concentrations, but since the water was collected from stagnant water inside a metal sump it is not considered groundwater and did not require reporting to MassDEP.
- Collected a sediment/soil sample from an approximate 4-foot-by-2-foot pit with a metal cover plate on the west side of the building interior for laboratory analysis of petroleum-related compounds, VOCs, metals, and for the presence of coal/coal ash via polarized light microscopy and Scanning Electron Microscopy with Energy Dispersive X-Ray Spectroscopy. Barium and zinc were identified at concentrations which would require reporting to MassDEP within 120 days. Coal and coal ash were identified by microscopy/spectroscopy analyses.
- In April 2020, TRC conducted a Limited Removal Action in accordance with the MCP 310 CMR 40.0318 using Brownfields Revolving Loan Funds allocated to the Town by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to remove the soil containing the elevated concentrations of barium and zinc from the 4-foot-by-2-foot pit. Post-excavation soil sampling indicated the elevated concentrations of barium and zinc were removed and indicated the presence of arsenic and lead at concentrations consistent with MassDEP's background for soils containing coal/coal ash and; therefore, did not require reporting to MassDEP. The pit was subsequently backfilled with gravel and compacted up to the surrounding concrete floor.

WHATS NEXT FOR COOK'S GARAGE?



Based on environmental activities performed to date, no additional investigative or soil cleanup activities are warranted at this time based on the Site's currently vacant status.

Additional investigative activities are warranted if the Town desires to use the suspected artesian well on the Site for recreational or irrigation purposes. Potable use of the water is not likely feasible due to regulatory requirements.

Abatement of asbestos and removal of hazardous materials and general refuse present inside the building are warranted prior to building renovation and/or demolition.

Industrial, commercial, and residential uses are permitted, although additional investigation may be warranted depending upon the type of redevelopment (e.g., residential, day-care, playground) and/or if located in areas not previously investigated

