

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY

FY24 EPA Brownfields Clean-up Grant Strathmore Mill- 20 Canal Road.

In-Person at 1 Avenue A, Turners Falls and VIA ZOOM

Monday, November 6, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Meeting held as part of a weekly Selectboard Meeting. Meeting recording available at <https://vimeo.com/881933154>

Present:

Selectboard Members Rich Kuklewicz, Chris Boutwell, Matt Lord. Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Assistant Town Administrator Walter Ramsey, Executive Assistant Wendy Bogusz; Police Chief Chris Williams; Airport Director Bryan Camden; RiverCulture Director Suzanne LoManto; and Board of Health Director Ryan Paxton. Montague Reporter Jeff Singleton; Historic Commissioner Janel Nockelby.

Project Manager Walter Ramsey presented the grant application. He described the scope of the request (\$4,920,400). He summarized the analysis of Brownfields clean-up alternatives. The presented alternatives are (1) Do nothing, (2) Remove the building and abate 10 feet deep of soils underneath the building, and (3) Remove the building and contaminate just the surface level soils down to 3 feet deep. The analysis recommends going ahead with Option #3, which is the most cost effective. The deadline for the application is Monday, November 13th.

- In response to a question by resident Janel Nockelby, Ramsey states that the intent of the project is to include Building 11 with the caveat of "as the budget allows." Ramsey thanked Janel for her comments which resulted in editorial changes to the final application.
- In response to a question by Jeff Singleton (The Montague Reporter), Ramsey states that the soils element was included to ensure the soils are clean.
- In response to a question by Singleton (The Montague Reporter), Ramsey confirms that the project outcome is intended to stabilize the Turners Falls Hydro structure.

The Selectboard authorized Walter to submit grant application and chairman Kuklewicz to sign all relevant documents associated with the application.

Respectfully Submitted,

Walter Ramsey, AICP
Montague Assistant Town Administrator

Written Comments from Janel Nockelby (resident, Historic Commissioner) received via email 11/6/23. Walter Rasmey's response in RED

Hi Walter,

I'm writing to just let you know about some questions/comments that I have regarding the FY24 EPA Brownfield Grant Application. It seems easier to me to write these out even though there is a public hearing this evening.

-- The application as written does not seem to include Building 11. Is that correct and intentional? – **Strathmore Building 11 is included in the project scope.**

-- Page 3 - is the Strathmore site really serviced by sewer and water? Or, does it have the rights to develop this per First Light negotiations? I thought the water and sewer utilities weren't functional in that part of the canal district. (last line on the page).- **Site is serviceable, but not currently serviced by water and sewer. The Town retains those rights to install water and sewer to the site.**

-- First sentence paragraph 2, page 3 - the sentence ends with "according", which doesn't make sense to me. **Corrected**

--Page 4 - You reference the Turners Falls Paper Company property as having shut down in 2017, but the Turners Falls Paper Company site is the location of where the Housing Authority used to be. The Marshall/Esleek/Southworth/Paperlogic site is where they closed down in 2017. **Corrected**

--In the application, when you mention housing as an option for future use -I'm assuming you mean the former Railroad Salvage site. I don't see how what happens at the RR Salvage site is relevant to what happens at the Strathmore mill site. Not sure the EPA will notice? Also ,you mention 2 catastrophic fires - one of them being RR Salvage I guess - I don't see how this is relevant to the Strathmore site, but I guess the town is looking at the whole canal district for this app, to paint a picture for the EPA? **Yes this is reference to the district as a whole**

--Page 6 - "Additionally, the Town of Montague experiences chronically higher rates of unemployment than the state and national average." More accurately, you could say that census tract 407.1 experiences this. Montague as a whole is doing better than the state and national average, according to the chart in the application, or is the number for Montague correct? **Corrected**

--Page 7 - The Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority is no longer there. It has a new owner, who may have redevelopment dreams that are impacted by the Strathmore mill, but it is no longer offices for 30 people. **Corrected**

--page 8 - section 3b) again I don't see how the Strathmore site is relevant to the former RR salvage site getting housing. Or, is it just the abundance of blight that is the problem? (also page 9 - last sentence 2nd paragraph of 3.a.) **Corrected**

--Page 15 - E) there's a \$ sign in front of 200,000 which isn't needed. **Corrected**

--The timing of some of the tasks described in the task list does not seem to be the same as a stated output on page 12 - "Cleanup by a target date of March 1, 2025." Some dates mentioned in the task list go through 2028. **Corrected**

Thanks for listening!

--Janel