



1800's - 1910

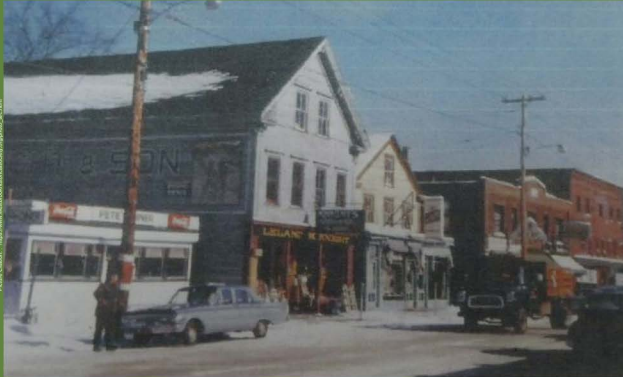


SACCARAPPA PARK'S HISTORY

The Saccarappa Park site has a long history of industrial uses, including a planing mill, grist mill, silk & manufacturer, tannery, hammock factory, electric company, foundry, paint storage, auto repair and storage, undertaker, general commercial, and a gasoline filling station.



1910-1960's



KNIGHT'S HARDWARE

By 1910, the site was known as Knight's Hardware. This was a successful business for over 60 years and although ownership changed in 1960, it remained a hardware store until being sold again in 1970.



1976



URBAN RENEWAL

After being vacant for roughly 10 years and the “urban renewal craze” reaching Westbrook, the building on site along with many other outdated buildings in the town were set to be demolished. Following demolition, the site began to be used as a public park.



2006



EPA FUNDING FOR DOWNTOWN

The City of Westbrook received a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to carry out environmental investigations at various sites in the Westbrook downtown area, including Saccarappa Park. This grant covered an environmental assessment to investigate contamination on the site, as well as the development of cleanup options.



February 2006

INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

With the funding from the grant, a Phase I Environmental Assessment—a non-invasive assessment that investigates potential contamination on a site—was completed that same year. The site's history as a gas station, along with concerns of potential contamination on the groundwater caused by a nearby site, prompted a need for further investigation.





August 2006

PHASE II

Further investigation was completed on the site later that year through a Phase II Environmental Assessment, which involved sampling and testing the soil and groundwater for contaminants. The assessment revealed that some contaminated soil would need to be removed, while other areas could be safely capped to isolate the contamination.





2007

DEVELOPMENT PAUSE

An initiative to revitalize downtown Westbrook drew attention to Saccarappa Park's potential, but a lack of parking and public opposition to converting it into a privately owned development made developers hesitant to purchase the property. The recession that followed shortly after put any initiatives with the park on hold.





2021-2023

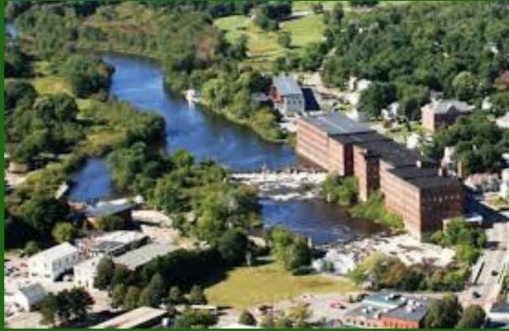


MAKING USE

Although redevelopment had not resumed, Saccarappa Park was approved as a staging area for construction workers removing the nearby hydropower dam. Afterward, the park served as a temporary parking lot in 2023, as the new downtown Westbrook parking facility was constructed.



Present



A SPACE FOR ALL

Today, Saccarappa Park is in the center of a lively downtown area with restaurants & breweries, the historical Dana Warp Mill which is full of small businesses, outdoor spaces such as the Westbrook River Walk & the Riverbank park, and the nearby Walker Memorial Library. Westbrook local government has been thinking a four-season pavilion could be a great use of the space, but the city is hoping to get other ideas from the community as well!

References

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