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Montgomery County's redevelopment efforts continue at Exit 29 site

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Canajoharie, NY Montgomery County's efforts to redevelop the vacant Exit 29 site, formerly the home of Beech-Nut Nutrition for over 100 years, took a step forward this month with the completion of the asbestos abatement process for the remaining portions of the former manufacturing facility and office building.

The site, which the Montgomery County Business Development Center (MCBDC) has been working to clean up and prepare for redevelopment since the county took possession of it in July 2017, is likely to see greater interest from prospective developers now that the costly asbestos removal process is complete.

Last October, the Montgomery County legislature selected Apollo Dismantling Services, LLC. to complete the asbestos abatement work with costs not to be in excess of \$3.4 million. While contractors were on site starting in December 2019, portions of the work were ultimately delayed because of COVID-19 restrictions. The abatement work was completed in October. Now the County, working with LiRo Engineering, will prepare a bid package for further demolition work to remove portions of the remaining structures on the western side of the site.

During the asbestos abatement process, Apollo removed 1,400 tons of material from the former manufacturing facility. Over the course of about 11 months, Apollo's team removed asbestos materials from Building 17, the former main building, and other structures across the western side of the site.

Along with overseeing the asbestos removal, MCBDC's team has also been conducting outreach and marketing efforts for the fully demolished eastern side of the site, with the end goal of attracting private sector investment.

County officials have also been working with the Village of Canajoharie to update the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) Plan for the Village.

"Getting rid of the asbestos from the remaining structures on the western side of the site was paramount to development of a new campus that grows good-paying jobs and creates economic opportunity. Now that the asbestos has been removed we can start the process to demolish the remaining structures and create a clean site that will be appealing to investors," said MCBDC CEO Ken Rose, whose office is managing the property and marketing the site for new users.

“While much of our office’s work in 2020 has been focused on helping businesses succeed in these unprecedented times, we haven’t taken our eye off the ball when it comes to the former Beech-Nut property. We continue to work with local leaders to ensure we are being proactive in our efforts to attract new investments to the property so it can return as an economic engine for the Village of Canajoharie and the surrounding communities,” Rose said.

“We’re continuing to pursue every avenue that gets this site cleaned up and brings in long-term investment that creates good-paying jobs,” said Rose.

“Exit 29’s redevelopment remains one of the issues I hear about most frequently from residents. We’ve worked hard to see how we can restore jobs and create opportunity at this critically important site. Completing the asbestos abatement process is another huge step forward for these efforts,” said Montgomery County executive Matthew Ossenfort.

Additional information on the Exit 29 site and Montgomery County’s redevelopment efforts can be found at www.Exit29Project.com.

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