

July 12, 2021 email from Jess Yepeth Perla Rubin
Re: Conservation Legacy Fund for conservation acquisitions

Dear Scott Gustin,

Would you be willing to please read this on my behalf at the meeting this eve? Thanks so much!!!

Dear advisory body that recommends use of the Conservation Legacy Fund for conservation acquisitions.

The property for sale at 453/501 Pine Street has incredible potential for the city to begin to remediate the pollution embedded in the land and water at this site. Building on top of it, following all of the restrictions in the deed, would only leave the polluted conditions of this land and water for future generations to tend to and may even further contribute to its degraded state. The proposed parking lots and office buildings suggested in the initial site assessments would cap off any remediation potential and likely, with increased impermeable surfaces, will contribute to increased stormwater pollution which inevitably would end up in the lake.

In the Geotechnical Feasibility Report conducted in 2014 by Weston & Sampson, it states that the Pine Street Canal Superfund Site is where a coal gasification plant operated on the 501 Pine Street parcel (currently deemed a superfund site) from somewhere between 1908 to 1966. Wastewater, residual oil, and wood chips saturated with metals and organic compounds were released into the ground, adjacent wetlands and the barge canal. The primary soil and groundwater contaminants include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals and coal tar (a non-aqueous phase liquid – NAPL). The presence of NAPL has been identified along western and southern portions of the 453 Pine Street site (currently deemed a brownfield site).

According to the Burlington Brownfields Wide Plan, it seems that not enough testing has been done and there are several gaps in data. While Stone Environmental did due diligence assessments in 2012 & 2013 and there is stated groundwater monitoring occurring, remedial planning at the site has been delayed until the Railyard Enterprise Project is further along. These gaps include: soil hydraulic properties, invert data, railroad drainage, roof drains and conditions assessment (p.41 <https://www2.burlingtonvt.gov/pz/documents/PlanBTV/BurlingtonBrownfields.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2iqOolqv305fkmfOHKSNIGk5fNaMcYpRI7VLTQzlh1dIN4ol1FWpLri18>)

This information alone seems to be enough to warrant ceasing any sales of this land for future construction on this site or adjacent sites. I respectfully ask this group to consider funding a more thorough site assessment that would involve both: a. all of the needed testing as well as b. the drafting of alternative proposals to development such as an agroforestry remediation plan for this land. I suggest that this process be turned into a community process which invites community input through a series of public forums so that as many local, skilled, knowledgeable and resourced people can be involved to collaborate on this complex community problem. This approach is likely to generate creative solutions rather than keeping it as a private sale for a developer to build upon

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behind public view. There is likely already some funding slated from the state for some of this to occur so if more funding and attention can be brought in and combine to create a proactive approach this can be a model for so many of the other polluted sites in the state and country. There are several strategies of remediation (involving a team of scientists & practitioners of various disciplines) involving bio, myco, and phyto remediation that can repair this site over a series of years while serving as an educational learning center for the community. This can then be applied to the more than 70 acres of other polluted sites in town (p.6 of the brownfield sites linked above). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Jess Rubin
MS Environmental Studies
Creative Director Of [MycoEvolve](#)
MS Candidate in Ecological Landscape Design at UVM

Sincerely,
Jess (Yepeth Perla) Rubin (she/her/they)

Kohenet, folk herbalist, wilderness guide, mentor [rootsandtrails.com](#)
..let us have awareness of the unseen world.. -Rabbi Jill Hammer

Earth tender, environmental scientist, ecological restorationist, educator [www.mycoevolve.net](#)
It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know the sense of wonder and humility. - Rachel Carson