

DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
VOLUNTARY CLEANUP PROGRAM

Project Overview

REDEVELOPMENT OF CAMP SIMMS

The Redevelopment of Camps Simms Voluntary Cleanup Program Project included an approximately 25 acre portion of the former Camp Simms Military Reservation located in Southeast Washington, D.C. The redevelopment project includes a single family residential subdivision and a commercial component, “The Shops at Park Village”. The Shops at Park Village is an approximate 115,000 square foot redevelopment project that includes a Giant Food Store, a pharmacy, Office products store, a florist and a deli. This project brings the first major grocery store to open east of the Anacostia River in 30 years. The project team included William C. Smith & Company, East of the River, District of Columbia’s Housing and Community Development (DHCD), The District Department of the Environment’s (DDOE) Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP), and Environmental Consultants and Contractors, Inc. (ECC).

For over 80 years, Camp Simms was an important and historic component of the District of Columbia’s National Guard. Activities conducted at Camp Simms included numerous field and officer training camps. The site also provided temporary housing during historically significant benefit protests by World War I veterans. In 1984, the redevelopment portion of the Camp Simms property was transferred to DHCD.

In accordance with standard environmental practices for past military facilities, extensive investigations of soil and groundwater quality were conducted at the site by DHCD, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the redevelopment team. Once the Army had approved the site for development, the property was entered into the District’s Voluntary Clean Up Program (VCP). The site was accepted by the VCP and successfully completed characterization and assessment requirements. Before construction was initiated, a Clean-up Action Plan to address documented soil impacts and worker safety was formulated and approved by the VCP. Remedial actions performed included removal and off-site disposal of historic storm drain sediments, capping of soil that exhibited low levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and personnel and perimeter air monitoring conducted during excavation activities. During redevelopment activities, an unexpected orphan petroleum underground storage tank was discovered. This tank was incorporated into the CAP and successfully addressed. All VCP remedial actions have now been completed for the commercial section of the redevelopment, and a final “Certificate of Completion” has been issued by the VCP.

Environmental issues due to past property uses can pose major obstacles in many urban redevelopment projects. The VCP Program and the liability protection that it offers are often vital components in redeveloping urban properties. Many times, the only way a developer can secure financing or satisfy lease conditions for commercial tenants is through partnering with the VCP program.

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The successful redevelopment of a portion of the formerly contaminated Camp Simms property has returned a large tract of land to commercial viability and has benefited the city and it's residents.

The next phase of the Camp Simms redevelopment will offer a 75 single family residences in a community called Ashford Court.

Photos

Before:



After: (proposed)

