



Maryland Department of the
Environment

FACTS ABOUT: CUMBERLAND GAS LIGHT

Site Location

The Cumberland Gas Light site is located at 200-214 N. Mechanic Street, Cumberland, Allegany County. The geographic coordinates are latitude 039° 39' 16.28" north and longitude 078° 45' 56.77" west. The site is adjacent to the channelized Wills Creek, a tributary to the Potomac River, and is situated at approximately 620 feet above mean sea level. The roughly rectangular shaped parcel of land is bounded to the west by Wills Creek, to the east by N. Mechanic Street, to the north by a commercial rental facility and to the south by Market Street. General surface features consist of a relatively flat parcel that is mostly paved and contains several structures. Structures on the site include a bank and a vacant building that used to operate as a commercial auto parts store.

Site History

In 1854 the site was first used as a coal gasification plant that manufactured illuminating gas and continued in that capacity until 1903 when natural gas was used for that purpose at a cheaper cost. A Sanborn map from 1910 shows the site as still containing a coal storage house and a retort house. Also shown was an oil gas plant and oil storage tank, so it is possible the gas plant was still in operation as late as 1910.

The site currently consists of two separate commercial properties, one belonging to the Hoblitzell National Bank and the other is owned by the Mullaney Brothers, LLC. The property owned by the bank is used as a branch location and the other property is vacant at this time.

Tax maps from 1967 to 1972 show the bank property as belonging to the First National Bank of Western Maryland. The other property is listed as belonging to Automotive Supply, Inc. and was apparently a commercial automotive parts supplier at that time.

Environmental Investigations

In January 1987, a Preliminary Assessment (PA) was conducted by MDE on the Cumberland Gas Light site. The PA determined that due to the unknown circumstances regarding the dismantling of the plant and of operational disposal practices, further investigation of the site was recommended. In December 2011, a Site Inspection (SI) was conducted by MDE on the site. The SI determined that there was some soil and



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groundwater contamination on the site that should be addressed. In September 2012, a Limited and Focused Subsurface Soil and Groundwater Investigation was conducted by LCS, Inc. under contract to the property owner, Standard Bank. The investigation confirmed the results found in the SI conducted by MDE and recommended that nothing needed to be done unless the site was redeveloped.

Current Status

The site is currently under an Environmental Covenant which prohibits the use of groundwater beneath the site, requires a work plan be submitted to MDE prior to any planned excavation of soil, and the development of a Health and Safety Plan for any planned development.



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