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Perseverance helps sell brownfield site in Farmington

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Ten years of aggressive marketing finally paid off for Pyramid Brokerage industrial agent Dave Farrington.

Farrington's listing for a 12-acre site on Victor-Manchester Road in Farmington — the former home of laminating company Griffin Technology — resulted in a sale last month to S&W Redevelopment of North America, a Syracuse-based firm that specializes in re-using brownfields.

The challenge to selling the site was the contamination. Brownfields are abandoned industrial lands that have been contaminated.

Farrington found that S&W wasn't intimidated by the project.

The site at 6132 Victor-Manchester Road appealed to S&W largely because of its location, said project manager Terence Maliga, calling the heavily traveled Route 96 corridor one of the fastest-growing areas in the region.

Maliga worked with Pyramid to negotiate with Ohio-based Diebold Inc., which owned the site. Diebold is the parent company of Griffin Technology, which closed the Farmington plant in the mid-1990s, Maliga said, declining to disclose terms of the deal.

Much has to be done before the site is marketable. The groundwater has to be treated and chemical oxidation processes have to be applied. Maliga estimated the cleanup could cost more than \$1 million.

The success of the project depends on commercial interest once the site is redeveloped, Maliga said.

S&W has been involved in several brownfield cleanup projects, having recently sold property in Kingston, Ulster County, to Walgreen Co. for development. The site was given to S&W by the local school district. S&W spent two years cleaning it up before selling it to Walgreen for \$1.2 million earlier this year.

S&W is exploring all options for the Farmington acreage and has not decided on a definite development plan, Maliga said.

While it could be a multiple-use site, with commercial, retail and housing, S&W also is considering the possibility of working with hotel developers, he said.

The extensive cleanup costs had deterred other potential buyers, but not S&W.

"We are a brownfield developer," Maliga said. "All we do is buy contaminated sites."

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