



CARRIE FURNACE

LOCATION: Allegheny County, PA

SIZE: 168 acres

FEATURES: Large Parcel, Flat Land,
and Riverfront Location

OWNER: Allegheny County

CURRENT USE: Vacant Land

PAST USE: Blast furnace

CONTAMINANTS: PCBs, Sulfates

TOTAL ACTUAL COST: no specific
dollar amount obtained

TIMELINE

1881 Carrie Furnace is built

1892 Carrie Furnace takes part in Battle of
Homestead

1898 Carrie Furnace is purchased by Andrew
Carnegie

1901 Carrie Furnace becomes part of the US
Steel Corp.

1978 Carrie Furnace is shutdown

1988 Carrie Furnace is sold to Park
Corporation

2005 Allegheny County buys site from Park
Corporation

2006 Carrie Furnaces 6 and 7 become a
National Historic Landmark

HISTORY

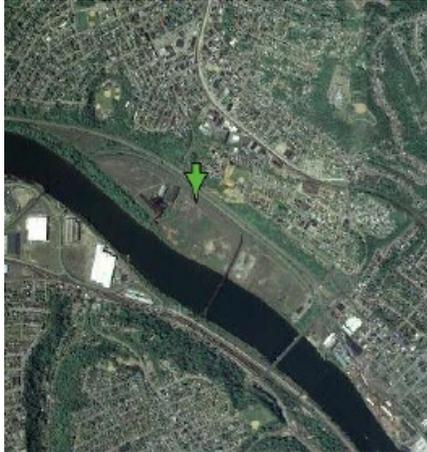
The Carrie Blast Furnace site was built in 1881. It produced iron for the Homestead Works from 1907 to 1978. During its peak production, the furnace produced 1000 to 1250 tons of iron a day. In 1892, the site was part of the Battle of Homestead, a labor dispute that displayed the strength of unionism and also started the onset of a nearly 50 year union in the steel industry. In 2006, Carrie Furnaces 6 and 7 became a National Historic Landmark.

TOPOGRAPHY

The 168 acre flat piece of land is along the Monongahela River, with approximately 135 acres on the north bank of the river and the remaining 33 acres are on the south side of the river. The property is not readily accessible as it is isolated from the adjacent communities by railroad tracks and circuitous access by road. The site itself straddles the boroughs of Rankine, Swissvale, Whitaker and Munhall.



Photo courtesy of www.tacoma-trains.com



Picture courtesy of Google Maps

MARKET CONDITIONS

The surrounding communities have a low median income. In particular, Braddock and Rankin are among the most economically distressed communities in Allegheny County and have been considered Act 47 Municipalities, a state program for financially distressed municipalities, for more than ten years. Since 2004, county officials have invested nearly \$10.7 million in housing, road work and community projects in order to improve the surrounding communities. Officials hope that improving the nearby communities will make the Carrie Furnace site more attractive to developers and investors.

SITE ASSEMBLY AND CONTROL

The Carrie Furnace site was acquired by Andrew Carnegie in 1898. In 1901, the US Steel Corporation purchased the site. In 1988, the Park Corporation purchased the site from US Steel. Both parties mutually agreed to handle designated areas of environmental concern. In 2005, Allegheny County bought the entire site from the Park Corporation for \$5.75 million.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Underground storage tanks that were used to store gasoline were removed in 1994. Two above ground storage tanks used to store fuel oil were also removed. Asbestos was removed from buildings. The ground was also contaminated with sulfates and PCBs. Phase I environmental assessment was conducted in 2007. Phase II environmental assessment is currently being conducted

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Carrie Furnace Community Steering Committee gathers community input regarding the future development of the site. The committee is composed of representatives from nearby municipalities as well as local community leaders. The committee developed a plan that articulated a viable and marketable land use strategy that benefits the surrounding neighborhoods and celebrates the history of the steel industry.

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The Park Corporation performed demolished all structures except the following: Blast Furnaces 6 and 7, a blower engine house for Blast Furnaces 6 and 7, a storage building, a 15-ton ore bridge (crane), and north ore bins in the stock yard for Blast Furnaces 6 and 7. These structures plan on being preserved by Allegheny County. It is proposed that they will eventually be part of an interactive museum that will be constructed on the site.

There is a railroad track that runs through the site. A \$2.7 billion leg of proposed the Mon-Fayette Expressway may run along a nearby hillside. The Mon-Fayette Expressway is a 66 mile, 4-lane highway that has been proposed since the 1950s. Only 35 miles of this highway has been completed so far.

COSTS & ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

It is estimated that \$70 million to \$100 million will be required to convert the site's industrial structures into

a steel heritage museum. Allegheny County projected that the environmental cleanup would cost \$3 million to \$5 million.

CURRENT STATUS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Although the site, which is one of the few remaining riverfront brownfield sites in the area, is currently vacant, redevelopment planning is underway. The redevelopment of the site includes efforts of Allegheny County, several municipalities, and the Steel Industry Heritage Council, to historically preserve the mill structure while also utilizing the site for economic development. The plan calls for the furnaces to be refurbished into an interactive museum. The remaining area would be developed using a mixed-use redevelopment plan. Housing, office buildings, a hotel, a conference center and a transportation center are also planned.

The hot metal rail bridge that connected Carrie Furnace to the Homestead Works will be converted to an automobile bridge that allows for easy access to the site while at the same time, connecting to the Waterfront, a retail development across the Monongahela River.

The Plan also includes a large parking area that could serve as a park-and-ride for commuters using buses, and possibly water taxis and a light rail. The transportation center would tie into a tramway that would also be built in the area.



Completed by Ronald Papa, Summer '08

SOURCES

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National Park Service. "Battle of Homestead and Carrie Furnaces 6 and 7." September 2002.

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Ploetz, Adam and Singer, Molly. "Old Tools and New Measures: Local Government Coordination of Brownfields Redevelopment for Historic and Cultural Reuses."

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