

**Lauren Garrett**  
*Mayor*

## **TOWN OF HAMDEN OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

**Hamden Government Center  
2750 Dixwell Avenue  
Hamden, Connecticut 06518  
Tel: (203) 287-7100  
Fax: (203) 287-7101**

**Revised**

February 4, 2025

Legislative Council  
Memorial Town Hall  
2372 Whitney Avenue  
Hamden, CT 06518

### **RE: Report on the Environmental and Structural Issues in the Newhall Neighborhood**

Honorable Members:

Below please find the Report on the Environmental and Structural Issues in the Newhall Neighborhood:

#### **Introduction**

The Newhall neighborhood has undergone significant environmental and structural challenges over the past century. Originally consisting of farms, swamps, and wetlands, the area experienced substantial landfilling activities primarily driven by Winchester Repeating Firearms and later remediation efforts by Olin Corporation, the State of Connecticut, the Regional Water Authority, and the Town of Hamden. This report outlines the history of environmental contamination, the remediation efforts undertaken, and the ongoing structural issues affecting residents.

#### **Historical Background**

Over 100 years ago, Newhall was largely composed of swamps and wetlands. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, health officials raised concerns over mosquito-borne illnesses such as malaria, leading to the decision to fill in these wetlands. Winchester Repeating Firearms, expanding due to the demands of World War I and World War II, utilized the area as a disposal site for coal ash and manufacturing waste. This filling process continued from the early 1900s through the 1950s, ultimately flattening the land and paving the way for residential development.

During the early 20th century, Germans lived in the Newhall neighborhood and worked in the factories, and Italians later moved to the neighborhood. As housing was built further north into Hamden, Black families moved into Newhall, a redlined neighborhood. Redlining contributes to racial segregation and the underserving of the community.

Residents in Newhall have lived through neighborhood upheaval, environmental racism, intrusive cleanup, and years of deteriorating conditions in their homes likely due to the presence of contaminated fill. With a vote of the Legislative Council and ARPA funds, the Town has chosen to change the piecemeal approach of fixing foundations by fully understanding the scope, retaining the reports from the structural engineering evaluations to ensure compliance, and communicating with residents to inform them of progress.

## Environmental Remediation Efforts

In the early 2000s, Olin Corporation, as the successor to Winchester Repeating Arms, in conjunction with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), initiated a large-scale soil remediation project. DEEP identified approximately 300 homes that required investigation, leading to the removal of four feet of contaminated ash and fill from affected properties and its replacement with clean soil.

Additional remediation efforts included:

- **Villano Park and Rochford Field:** Investigated and remediated by the Town of Hamden through excavation and capping, followed by the construction of new park amenities. Ground water testing is clean [https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/2023-09-25-HAI\\_Hamden\\_Groundwater\\_Letter.pdf](https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/2023-09-25-HAI_Hamden_Groundwater_Letter.pdf) [https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Rochford\\_field\\_Villano\\_Park\\_monitoring\\_cessation.pdf](https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Rochford_field_Villano_Park_monitoring_cessation.pdf)
- **Old Hamden Middle School Property:** Investigated and remediated by the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (RWA) completed in 2021. DEEP certified the cleanup as complete in 2023. <https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/10567/DEEP-Memo-Re-Newhall-St--Morse-St-Consent-Order-May-2023>
- **Non-Public Properties:** Investigated and remediated by Olin and approved by DEEP to ensure regulatory compliance. Conclusion of Remedial Actions memo [https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Newhall\\_remediation.pdf](https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Newhall_remediation.pdf)

## Consent Order and Remediation Responsibilities

A 2003 Consent Order outlined the cleanup responsibilities of Olin, the Town of Hamden, the RWA, and the State of Connecticut. <https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/041703hamdenfinaldecisionpdf.pdf>

Upon completing its soil remediation responsibilities, Olin received a Certificate of Compliance from DEEP, releasing it from further obligations related to Winchester's past dumping activities. However, structural issues resulting from the historical contamination and landfilling remained unaddressed, leaving the State responsible for these concerns.

## Current Structural Issues

Up to 300 homes in the Newhall neighborhood continue to experience foundation problems due to two primary factors:

1. **Soil Composition Changes:** The replaced clean soil retains water differently than the previous fill, leading to increased lateral water movement through unsealed or unpatched foundations.
2. **Ongoing Land Settlement:** Homes built on fill and organic material continue to settle, causing structural problems.

## State and Town Response to Structural Issues

To address these structural concerns, the State of Connecticut has allocated funding through various agencies, including the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), to the Hamden Economic Development Corporation (HEDC). This funding went directly to the Hamden Economic Development Corporation and did not run through the Town of Hamden resulting in a lack of oversight. More funds are needed to cover all affected properties and because funding was distributed in phases without a full investigation of structural foundation problems, the Town of Hamden and State of Connecticut do not know the full scope or work and budget necessary to finish this work. In response to the need, the Town of Hamden and the Hamden Legislative Council have engaged structural engineering firm Haley and Aldrich to assess completed repairs, evaluate additional homes experiencing foundation issues, and develop a comprehensive scope of work and budget estimate for state funding. Haley and Aldrich provides the Town of Hamden weekly status updates with 29% of the site visits completed as of January 31, 2025. The Town has not received any of the individual property reports from Haley and Aldrich investigations.

### Request for Funding

The Mayor's Office met with State Senators Martin Looney and Jorge Cabrera and State Representatives Laurie Sweet and Steven Winter in December 2024 to provide an update to the Newhall Foundations Program. Hamden's State Delegation is following our foundation investigations progress and agrees that the construction repair phase is the State's responsibility. The State of Connecticut has historically paid for repair programs for foundations from bad concrete mix and foundations in Westville. In Newhall, there is a direct link obligating the State after the State absolved Olin of further responsibility once Olin completed the soil remediation. [https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Newhall\\_remediation.pdf](https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/Newhall_remediation.pdf)

Currently, the State of Connecticut is waiting for a scope of work and budget for foundation repairs. The funding for foundation repairs would come from the state bonding and is not linked to or threatened by federal funds and restrictions. Additionally, the engineering assessment funding is safe from federal interference in a Town restricted account specifically for the Newhall Foundations program.

### Call to Action

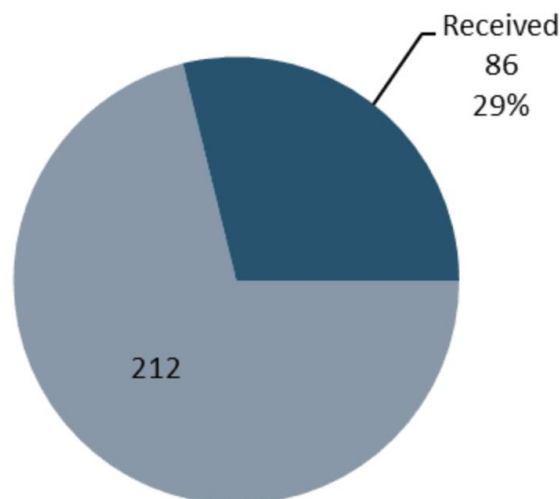
The Town remains committed to identifying and resolving the neighborhood's structural issues comprehensively. However, further progress depends on resident participation. Residents are urged to complete the survey and cooperate with Haley and Aldrich to facilitate the necessary investigations and subsequent remediation efforts. <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScDg0Znl572QNrPoXHBc7gWtYkSoT22bAo3oIOHiY6e4QPkhg/viewform?fcid=92c19e1c-dafc-4118-aace-d736fe318ebd>

The Town is recommending additional outreach with our partners.

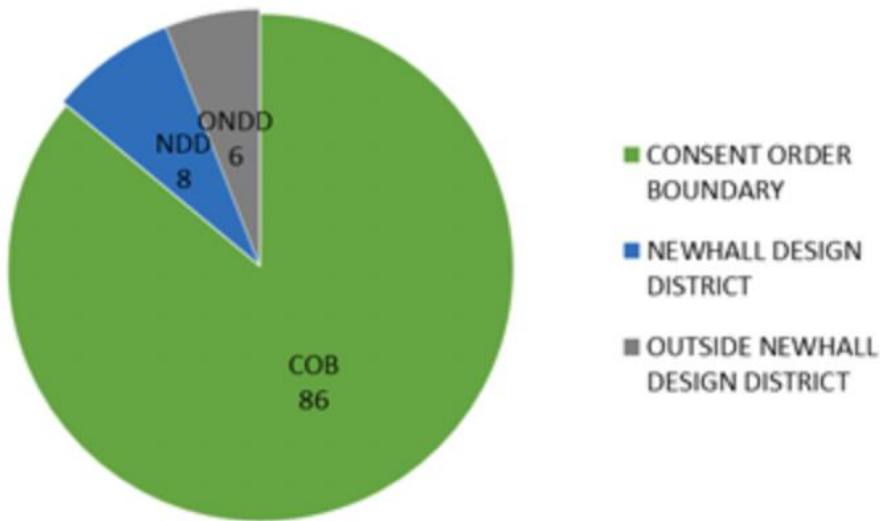
1. **Haley and Aldrich** will send another mailing to addresses identified as likely impacted with another request to fill out the survey.
2. **Launch Consulting** will canvass addresses identified by Haley and Aldrich.

### Newhall Foundation Progress with Haley and Aldrich as of January 31, 2025

Questionnaire Responses within the Consent Order Boundary

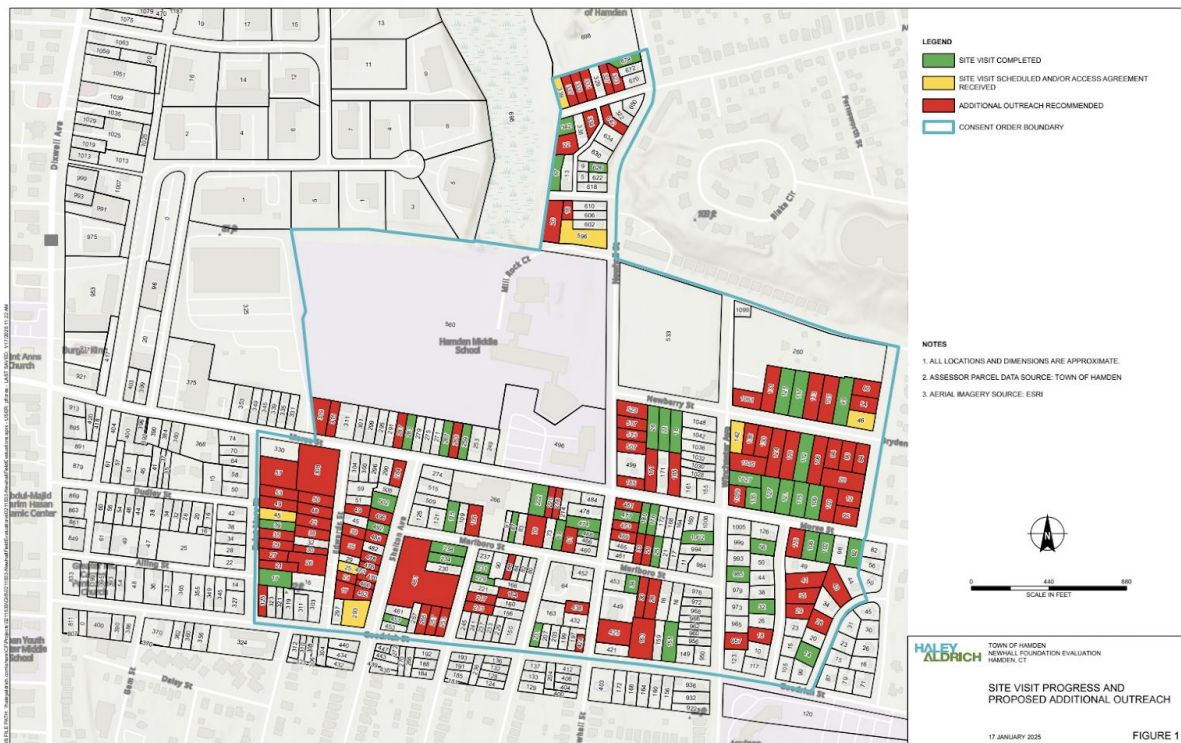


## Questionnaire Responses



### Additional Outreach Recommended

Properties in green have completed site visits. Properties in yellow are in progress with a site visit scheduled and/or access agreement received. Properties in red require additional outreach and are believed to be significantly impacted based on historical data. Properties inside the consent order boundary without a color overlay may not be significantly impacted based on historical industrial waste fill and remediation. Survey responses from those properties remain helpful in completing the first round of assessments.



## **Timeline**

Haley and Aldrich is collecting data that will inform a report. Their work will be done in phases.

- Phase I: Information gathering, outreach, and initial property reconnaissance; September 2024 through April 2025
- Phase II: Subsurface investigation; March 2025 through December 2025
- Phase III: Remedial design and property reports; February 2025 through March 2026
- Phase IV: Construction documents and construction cost estimates; May 2025 through October 2026

Properties that have foundation problems resulting in water intrusion without structural problems will skip Phase 2 and move directly to Phase 3. The full construction documents are due to the Town of Hamden in October 2026 as described in the contract with Haley and Aldrich and bid documents. The Town is working with Haley and Aldrich to get budget projections on a faster timeline.

[https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/ARPA/Newhall\\_Foundations\\_Evaluation-HAI\\_Executed.pdf](https://www.hamdenedc.com/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/ARPA/Newhall_Foundations_Evaluation-HAI_Executed.pdf)

## **Conclusion**

The Newhall neighborhood has faced significant environmental and structural challenges due to historical landfilling activities. While major remediation efforts have been completed, ongoing structural concerns persist. The Town of Hamden, in collaboration with the State, remains dedicated to securing funding and implementing solutions to address these issues comprehensively. Resident participation is crucial in ensuring that all affected properties receive the necessary assessments and repairs.

Sincerely,



Lauren Garrett, Mayor