

Chain Forge Building Tour

As you can tell by its name, the huge chains for ships were forged there. The building is in slightly better shape than the Ropewalk, and is an exact replica of the Basilica. There are contamination issues - probably PCBs, definitely asbestos and potentially other solvents and oil. The Army Corp has cleaned up some, but rough estimates to finish are in the \$5 to \$10 million range. Another issue is the 3 similar lines of forging machines and furnaces, which are enormous, and various cranes and other machinery which were designated as historic landmarks back in the 70's when the Navy Yard was turned over to the BRA. It feels like being in an industrial mausoleum.

To make redevelopment more attractive to a private developer, besides the Army Corp cleanup to date, the BRA is spending \$50,000 on a study to reassess the equipment to see if some of the pieces can be delisted from their historical designation and then moved from the building. The machines have been cleaned and tagged (most pieces seem to be approx. 60 years old), but also look to like they are securely anchored into the floor (some of the moorings are 30 feet of concrete below the floor) - so removal of some pieces may be infeasible.

Bottom line is if a good portion of the machinery can be removed the BRA hopes to get a private developer to at least explore the potential for redevelopment with a commitment to spend \$2 to \$3 million for that exploration.

Michael Parker, August, 2005