

CT's MAIN STREETS

THE NEWSLETTER OF CONNECTICUT MAIN STREET CENTER
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Downtown Revitalization Institute Grand Opening *CMSC's New Program Receives Kudos*



Ribbon Cutting at the DRI. (from left)
Lisa Bumbera, CMSC Board and CI&P;
Brandyn Perdelwitz, Bank of America;
Carol Heller, Office of the State Treasurer;
John Simone, CMSC Executive Director.

"My expectations were substantially exceeded!" With a Grand Opening ceremony and the hint of a surprise raffle at the conclusion of the day, the inaugural Downtown Revitalization Institute Workshop was off and running! 30 participants spent a full day with presenter Kent J. Burnes, who led attendees through the nuts and bolts of "Building Your Capacity to Revitalize Downtown", the first of four workshops that make up the 2005 DRI series.

Presented by Connecticut Main Street Center, and made possible by Bank of America, in collaboration with the Office of the State Treasurer, the DRI offers a full day each quarter with nationally known experts in capacity building, business and real estate development, promotion, and design. Participants learn to

utilize, and to build on, historic and natural assets that already exist.

"I gained a better understanding of how to set up a successful downtown revitalization program," said one attendee, and *"Dynamic presenter - excellent command of subject,"* remarked another. Burnes used his own brand of humor,



Featured speaker **Kent Burnes** and representatives from Darien, CT.

passion for authentic commercial districts, and impressive knowledge of market research and community organizing to engage attendees in the work of building the capacity necessary to get things done.

Kent Burnes, principal of Burnes Consulting, has over 17 years of experience in the field of economic development, downtown development and small business consulting. He has facilitated and trained over 750 downtown and commercial business districts in the Main Street management approach and is recognized as one of the top ten downtown revitalization and small business consulting firms in the United States. Kent has recently opened the Blue Bahia Resort in Roatan, Honduras - and one lucky DRI participant was the winner of the surprise raffle at the conclusion of the day. Candy Shapiro, President of Niantic Main Street, walked away with lots more knowledge and a free 5 day stay for two at Blue Bahia, thanks to Kent's generosity!

SIGN UP TODAY FOR THESE DRI WORKSHOPS!

All workshops take place at the Auditorium at Northeast Utilities in Berlin, CT.

- **JUNE 13** (Note New Date): 8:30am - 5:00pm
Using Design as a Tool for Downtown Revitalization
- **JULY 26** : 8:30am - 5:00pm
Economic Realities of Downtown Revitalization
- **OCTOBER 28**: 8:30am - 5:00pm
Promotional Strategies for your Commercial District

Register online by visiting our website: www.ctmainstreet.org.

Join the Downtown Resource Center

CMSC has developed the Downtown Resource Center in order to make commercial district revitalization resources and tools more widely available. Any municipality, non-profit, consultant or individual citizen can become a member of the DRC. DRC members get access to the latest information, trends and tools relating to commercial center revitalization – members-only websites and on-line forums, newsletters, and on-site consulting. You interact with practitioners statewide, sharing ideas issues, questions, solutions, and success stories. You help shape Connecticut's public policy, by participating in advocacy efforts for legislation that supports downtowns.

For more information about the Downtown Resource Center or the Downtown Revitalization Institute, please go to our website: www.ctmainstreet.org.

Announcing this New Benefit to DRC Members

Thanks to a joint program developed by the National Main Street Center and the Connecticut Main Street Center, Downtown Resource Center members will now receive on-line membership in the National Main Street Center website, the premier website for downtowns. DRC members can access the Solutions Center, the Building Opportunities Network Database, the National Main Street Center member directory, and will be eligible to purchase insurance coverage through the National Main Street network.

DRC members can log on to the DRC members-only area of www.ctmainstreet.org and click on the logo to access the password-protected area of the National Trust Main Street Center site.

PROFILE Keith J. Kumnick, SIOR CMSC Board Chair



CMSC Board Chair **Keith J. Kumnick, SIOR.**

Elected in June 2004, CMSC Board Chair Keith Kumnick has hit the ground running.

A Principal of Colliers Dow & Condon, Kumnick also serves as the firm's Managing Principal. He is also an SIOR (Specialist, Industrial and Office Real Estate) awarded by the Society of Industrial and Office REALTORS®. The Society is the leading professional commercial and industrial real estate association with 2,200 members in 20 countries. Keith's educational background includes an MBA with a concentration in Finance from the University of Hartford and a B.S. in Accounting from Central Connecticut State University. He is a Connecticut native and life long resident of the Greater Hartford area.

"With our main objectives of nurturing and growing the new Downtown Resource Center and continuing to secure the financial health of the Connecticut Main Street Center, I look forward to working with our current board to assist communities within Connecticut in revitalizing their commercial districts."

Welcome New DRC Members!

Andrew May

City of Torrington

Hartford Proud & Beautiful

*Downtown Manchester
Special Services District*

*Mansfield Downtown
Partnership*

*New Britain Downtown
District*

Town of Darien

Wallingford Center, Inc.

*Whalley Avenue
(New Haven) Special
Services District*

SAVE THE DATE CONNECTICUT MAIN STREET CENTER

*2005 Annual
Meeting and Awards
Presentation*

Monday, June 6th

at 5:30 pm

*The Palace Theater
in Downtown
Waterbury*

FEATURE

Designated Connecticut Main Street Communities Benefit From Expertise; John Shapiro Leads Market Niche Strategy Development

As part of its core mission of providing downtowns and commercial districts with the resources and tools that will restore and maintain their economic, social, civic and physical value, CMSC has brought in consultant John Shapiro to several designated Main Street Communities over the past six months to help identify market niche strategies and small business technical needs.

Market Niche Strategy Development

John Shapiro is a principal with Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates. PPSA is a planning and real estate consulting firm based in New York City, with an office in central New Jersey. Founded in 1968, the firm specializes in zoning and land use regulation, real estate advisory services, market and feasibility analyses, comprehensive and community planning and expert testimony. CMSC has selected Shapiro's firm to provide technical assistance on market niche strategies to its designated Main Street Communities.

Shapiro begins with the compilation and review of all relevant design, land-use, demographic, and economic data and maps as well as existing plans and studies pertaining to the district. A full day tour and series of interviews and work sessions are then carried out. The site visit culminates in an interactive workshop with the Main Street organization, business and civic leaders. Alternative market niche and enhancement strategies are presented and tentatively agreed upon. In today's downtowns, strategies that are presented are predicated on the concept that significant nearby competition and limited resources necessitate the adoption of a targeted market-based approach in order to achieve long-term economic vitality. The resultant report serves to document and



John Shapiro meets with Niantic citizens.

elaborate on the findings and recommendations. It begins with a market overview. Alternative options are then described, featuring a matrix indicating how various enhancement strategies would vary under each option. The short-term strategies in each category are then elaborated upon. The report concludes with a description of next steps for the Main Street organization and the municipality to consider.

"The visit from John Shapiro was inspiring. The way he synthesizes information and pulls from his pool of knowledge for creative solutions was amazing to watch," said Niantic Main Street Executive Director, Colleen Gresh. CMSC has recently brought John Shapiro into Niantic and Rockville. Upcoming technical visits are scheduled in Winsted, Waterbury and Norwich in 2005

Rose City Renaissance Creating Community Design Center

Rose City Renaissance [RCR] is preparing to open its Norwich Design Center, a display and meeting area dedicated to the built and natural environment in and around the downtown and waterfront in Historic Norwich, Connecticut.

The Norwich Design Center will be an exciting public outreach – and input – endeavor occupying approximately 3,000 square feet of storefront display space on Main Street. RCR considers it the center point of its efforts, a place which will display architectural renderings, plans and details of construction projects planned or underway in downtown; an information resource to keep the public visually apprised of RCR's efforts in bringing new life to Downtown Norwich; and will provide space for meetings and workshops on downtown issues as well as those related to urban design, preservation, social history and related topics. There will also be casual "gathering areas" where small groups can meet to discuss issues involving design within the community.

If you would like to participate or need more information, please contact Richard B. Kramer, Executive Director, at rbryankramer@msn.com or call 860.887.3289.

Upper Albany Main Street Selected As a BANK OF AMERICA Neighborhood Builder Award Recipient



Front row, left to right, **Nadine Francis-West** of Metro-Hartford Alliance; Professor **Margery Steinberg** of University of Hartford; **Marilyn Risi**, Director of Upper Albany Main Street. Middle row, left to right, **Chandler Howard**, co-president of Bank of America Connecticut; **Walter Harrison**, President of University of Hartford; **Susan Rottner**, co-president of Bank of America Connecticut; **Todd Herman**, owner of Living Word Printing. Third row, left to right, University of Hartford students, **John Lindquist**, **Sylvia Moryl**, **Lindsay Passo** and Professor **David Desplaces**.

In honor of their commitment to the growth and vitality of Hartford, Bank of America Foundation has selected Upper Albany Main Street as a recipient of \$200,000 in grant fund-

ing as well as leadership training for the senior executive and one of the organization's emerging leaders. Announced at the MetroHartford Chamber's Rising Star Breakfast on October 15, 2004, Upper Albany Main Street staff and board members were joined by partners and supporters from University of Hartford, MetroHartford Alliance, Bank of America, and business owners on The Avenue.

Neighborhood Builders

The *Neighborhood Builders* program is designed to strengthen the capacity and infrastructure of select nonprofit groups and to promote the professional development of their leaders. In addition to \$200,000 in grant funding for operational support—\$100,000 annually over two years—each selected organization will be invited to send its senior executive and one of its emerging leaders to participate in specially designed leadership development program. Senior executives will gather for three 3-day workshops focusing on topics such as strategic thinking and business planning, leadership

development and succession planning, leading high performing organizations and building a diverse funding base. Emerging leaders will gather for two 3-day workshops focusing on topics such as developing organizational management skills, managing strategic opportunities, forging alliances and building communities.

Bank of America Foundation

The *Neighborhood Excellence* initiative is consistent with the overall mission of the Bank of America Foundation, which is to help neighborhoods grow and prosper — to be a catalyst for positive change in communities. The *Neighborhood Excellence* initiative is designed to recognize and support organizations and individuals whose tireless efforts create and strengthen the vitality of their communities; making neighborhoods the best they can be. This initiative, with its three core programs — *Neighborhood Builders*, *Local Heroes* and *Student Leaders* — focuses on defined priority funding areas in selected markets.



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