

CT's MAIN STREETS

THE NEWSLETTER OF CONNECTICUT MAIN STREET CENTER

VOL.5, NO.3 SUMMER 2005

CMSC Celebrates 10 Years!

"As activists in preserving Main Streets across Connecticut, you are committed to maintaining a high quality of life for your fellow citizens. Through your tireless efforts, many of our historic town centers have once again become thriving areas of commercial businesses and gathering places. You are truly making a difference in the lives of Connecticut residents and I encourage you to continue your mission. It is a privilege to extend my words of tribute to all of you as Connecticut Main Street kicks off its 10th anniversary."

M. Jodi Rell, Governor State of Connecticut

With these words from Governor Rell in a surprise Letter of Congratulations, CMSC kicked off its 2005 Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation – and its 10th Anniversary. On the 6th of June 165 people from all over the state gathered in Downtown Waterbury for a gala reception at the newly restored Palace Theater, then walked next door to the Waterbury Arts Magnet School for the evening program on the Apron Stage.

CMSC Executive Director John Simone presented a retrospective of 25 Years of the National Main Street Center and the celebration of CMSC's 10th Anniversary. Jack Shannahan, former State Historic Preservation Officer and former CMSC Board Chair and one of its founders, welcomed Bruce Carlson of Northeast Utilities to the stage. Mr. Carlson was key to NU's decision to start the Main Street program in Connecticut,

committing his company's support, and in 1995 Connecticut Light & Power Company started the first privately funded Main Street program in the country.

John O'Toole, Manager of Economic & Community Development at CL&P / Yankee Gas, presented the CL&P Award for Outstanding Contributions to Main Street Revitalization to Webster Bank for their 3-year title sponsorship of "Main Street Solutions", the annual conference produced jointly by CMSC and the Community Economic Development Fund (CEDF).

CMSC Board Chair Keith Kumnick said, "CMSC is embarking on some exciting growth initiatives with the establishment of the Downtown Resource Center and Downtown Revitalization Institute earlier this year. In 2004 I felt honored to be asked to serve as the Chair of this Board and I feel it is my job to help lead the board in a careful assessment of how we can best evolve to support and nurture this growth." Kumnick went on to express his heartfelt thanks, on behalf of the CMSC Board and staff, to departing board members Preston Maynard and Jack Shannahan.

The highlight of the evening was the 2005 Awards for Excellence in

Downtown Revitalization. Jennifer Aniskovich, Executive Director of the Connecticut Commission on Culture &



Master of Ceremonies Jennifer Aniskovich, Executive Director of the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism



The award winning Waterbury Downtown Ambassadors provided an enthusiastic welcome to Waterbury.

Tourism, acted as Master of Ceremonies for the Awards Presentation. Beginning her remarks with congratulations to all who work to revitalize Connecticut's historic downtowns and commercial districts, Ms. Aniskovich expressed the desire to continue to explore opportunities for the Commission to work with the

many partners represented in the room. Clearly impressed by the accomplishments of award winners as she read the prepared script, she added just the right touch of warmth and humor with her off-the-cuff asides.

The Waterbury Downtown Ambassadors, smiling high school students in silk top hats and white scarves, welcomed attendees to the Palace Theater, circulated through the reception while engaging people in conversation, guided them to the Arts Magnet School, and escorted award winners to the stage, where they themselves received the most prolonged applause of the evening as they accepted, with Main Street Waterbury, the award for "Best Volunteer Recruitment Effort."

The event was followed in early July by an editorial in the *Hartford Courant* ("The Shops on Main Street") which congratulated Connecticut Main Street Center and wished it "another productive decade."



Connecticut Main Street Executive Director of the Year Barbara DeBellis, with daughter Sadie.



On-Site at the Talcott Mountain Music Festival, winner of Best Retail Event.

Connecticut Main Street Center 2005 Awards for Excellence in Downtown Revitalization

BEST PRIVATE / PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP

Main Street Waterbury
DOWNTOWN CLEAN TEAM

BEST PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

Simsbury Main Street Partnership & the
University of Hartford
MARKETING PROJECT

BEST FUNDRAISING PROJECT

New London Main Street
*NEW LONDON HISTORIC WATERFRONT
DISTRICT FOOD STROLL AND DINING
GUIDE*

BEST VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT EFFORT

Main Street Waterbury
DOWNTOWN AMBASSADORS

BEST BUILDING REHABILITATION

Simsbury Main Street Partnership
FIDDLER'S GREEN

BEST PRESERVATION SUCCESS STORY

Upper Albany Main Street & the
University of Hartford
*ALBANY AVENUE: NOW & THEN,
PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT*

BEST DESIGN OR BUSINESS INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Friends of Main Street, Winsted
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

OUTSTANDING MAIN STREET VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

New London Main Street	DEIRDRE CAVANAGH
Niantic Main Street	MICHELLE ROYCE
Rose City Renaissance (Norwich)	ROMER YOUNG
Rockville Downtown Association	DEBORAH REYNOLDS
Simsbury Main Street Partnership	SUSAN BULLOCK
Upper Albany Main Street	PIPAT PINYAWAT
Main Street Waterbury	KEVIN BOWLER
Friends of Main Street (Winsted)	SANDI SCHIBI

OUTSTANDING MAIN STREET BOARD MEMBERS OF THE YEAR

New London Main Street	ELIZABETH SUSON
Niantic Main Street	JANE BREDESON
Rose City Renaissance (Norwich)	ELLEN FROST
Rockville Downtown Association	ELIZABETH STEVENSON
Simsbury Main Street Partnership	RICH CORREIA
Upper Albany Main Street	EDWARD JOHNSON
Main Street Waterbury	DONNA GENTILOZZI
Friends of Main Street (Winsted)	JANICE ROY

MERCHANT SERVICE AWARD

Friends of Main Street, Winsted
*CHRISTINE SKUTT, CHRISTINE'S FLOWER
SHOPPE*

BEST IMAGE ENHANCEMENT CAMPAIGN

Upper Albany Main Street &
The Hartford Courant
*"UPTOWN" INSERT & "AVENUE OF
OPPORTUNITY" COMMENTARY*

BEST SPECIAL EVENT

New London Main Street
*LIVING HISTORY PLAY: "NEW LONDON
THROUGH TIME & PLACE"*

BEST RETAIL EVENT

Simsbury Main Street Partnership
*ON-SITE AT THE TALCOTT MOUNTAIN
MUSIC FESTIVAL*

CONNECTICUT MAIN STREET EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

*BARBARA DEBELLIS,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*
Friends of Main Street, Winsted

Darien Designated a Connecticut Main Street Community



Darien's first day as a Connecticut Main Street Community. (back row, from left): Nicholas Troilo, DRI Vice President; Christopher Swann, CL&P Director of Municipal Relations; John Simone, CMSC Executive Director; David Kenny, DRI Treasurer; George McKnight, DRI Recording Secretary; Tom Beeble, Chair of Connecticut Historic Preservation Council. (front row, from left): Tom Geary, Chris Bowes, DRI Co-Presidents; Evonne Klein, Darien First Selectwoman, Barbara Thorne, Darien Board of Selectmen; Ronald Angelo, DECD Deputy Commissioner.

With a proclamation from Connecticut Governor M. Jodi Rell designating June 16, 2005 as "Darien Main Street Community Day" in the State of Connecticut, the downtown of Darien was announced as the newest Connecticut Main Street Community. About 30 people gathered inside the pavilion at Tilley Pond Park, across from the Darien Train Station in the heart of downtown, to celebrate the announcement with state and local officials, Connecticut Main Street Center board and staff, and the board of Darien Revitalization Inc. Media turnout was excellent, as reporters from the local daily papers and a television camera from Channel 12 covered the event.

Representing the State, Ronald F. Angelo, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Economic & Community Development, congratulated the Darien community for their commitment and enthusiasm. "DECD's core functions – housing development, community development and economic development – are all interrelated and essential components of: (1) creating stronger neighborhoods and communities and (2) improving the quality of life for Connecticut residents.

What we in particular appreciate about the Connecticut Main Street program is that it recognizes that a comprehensive approach is needed to bring about meaningful change in our cities and towns. It's not just about housing or retail. It is a combination of several factors that include capitalizing on a municipality's existing strengths. The program also recognizes at the outset that strategic planning and community involvement are two keys to unlocking the potential for any downtown. We have already seen Darien's commitment in these areas, and I think that really bodes well for future economic development efforts here," said Angelo.

Tom Geary, Co-President of Darien Revitalization Inc., said: "We've all known for some time that things are just not jelling correctly in our downtown. We continually blame the location of the railroad trestle, and the traffic congestion on the Post Road, caused by accidents on I-95, for our problems in the downtown area. While these are inconveniences, and don't help our downtown, they are far from being the cause of our problems. Now, with the help of Connecticut Main Street Center, the National Main Street Center, and their expertise and 25 years of experience in dealing with problematic downtowns, we hope to turn the corner and start to rebuild a more vibrant Darien business district."

Other officials participating in the press conference included Darien First Selectwoman Evonne Klein, who took the lead on exploring Main Street Designation in 2003; Tim Beeble, Chairman of the Connecticut Historic Preservation Council; Christopher Swan, Director of Municipal Relations for Connecticut Light & Power Company & Yankee Gas; and John Simone, Executive Director of Connecticut Main Street Center.

Connecticut Main Street Center is the state's leading resource for cities and towns seeking to comprehensively revitalize their "main street" districts. CMSC, a nonprofit organization whose major sponsors are the Connecticut Light & Power Company / Yankee Gas and the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, is a member of the respected National Main Street network, and is committed to bringing Connecticut's commercial districts back to life socially and economically. Darien joins the current Connecticut Main Street communities of: New London, Niantic, Norwich, Portland, Rockville, Simsbury, the Upper Albany neighborhood of Hartford, Waterbury, Windsor and Winsted.

Where We're Headed Connecticut Main Street Center Strategic Plan 2005-2006

GOAL:

To expand the Connecticut Main Street network by:

- Providing more comprehensive services to a growing number of downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts throughout the state
- Institutionalize and brand Connecticut Main Street Center as the leading downtown advocate in Connecticut

We will do this by:

- Expanding our technical service programs to both Designated Connecticut Main Street Communities and Downtown Resource Center members
- Developing a comprehensive marketing and communications program
- Commencing a public policy initiative
- Further development of the Connecticut Main Street Center Board of Directors
- Increasing and diversifying our operating revenues

Connecticut Main Street Center Announces New Staff

Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC) has announced the hiring of two new staff members. David A. Helmin has been named Small Business Development Specialist and Ingrid S. Naumann is the new Office Manager. Both positions have just been created. "We are in an exciting period of growth right now," said Executive Director John Simone. "With the development of our Downtown Resource Center, CMSC is now able to reach out to a growing network of downtown revitalization advocates throughout the state. Dave and Ingrid will complement our existing staff with their knowledge, expertise and dedication to our mission."

Dave Helmin comes to us with twenty six years in the hospitality industry including six years as an owner/operator of two restaurants. Prior to this, Dave spent over nine years with the Morse School of Business initially as an instructor in their Hotel and Restaurant Management Program. Over time, he developed the position of Department Chair for that program and eventually became the Director of Education for the school. Ultimately, Dave collaborated with another colleague to design

and develop the curriculum for the Center for Culinary Arts located in Cromwell, CT.

Most recently, Dave has worked as a consultant with the University of Connecticut, School of Law's Deans Office to develop and implement an espresso bar located on the Hartford West End Campus. Dave lives with his wife and two young children in Manchester.

Ingrid Naumann brings to CMSC a wide variety of administrative and managerial experience. Her career includes over 20 years in the banking industry with experience in administration and small business loan servicing and processing. She spent several years as Associate Marketing Manager for a financial services compliance company where she also acted as the in-house graphic designer. Additionally, Ingrid has worked in the life insurance industry, and real estate management and restaurant management businesses. Originally from Washington State, Ingrid moved to Connecticut with her family in 2000. Her two children attend college in Vermont and Pennsylvania.



The chefs of new London Historic Waterfront District Food Strool, winner of the award for Best Fundraising Project.

LOOK INSIDE FOR Connecticut Main Street Center 2005 Awards for Excellence in Downtown Revitalization



Connecticut Main Street Center
P. O. Box 261595
Hartford, CT
06126

www.ctmainstreet.org