2013 CT Main Street Awards Gala

June 10, 2013
Downtown Hartford
Wadsworth Atheneum
Museum of Art
2013 CT Main Street Awards Gala

John Simone
President & CEO
Connecticut Main Street Center
The Honorable Pedro Segarra
Mayor
City of Hartford
Downtown Hartford

We Are Here!
We Are Here!
Thank You to Our Sponsors

"Welcome to Main Street"
Reception

- **Baywater Properties**
- **Fuss & O’Neill**
- **VHB Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.**
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Sponsor of the 2013 Awards for
Main Street Partnership
and
Business Owner of the Year
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Renaissance Downtowns

Travelers
Special Recognition:
Kip Bergstrom, Deputy Commissioner
State Dept. of Economic & Community Development

“The Troubadour of Placemaking”

What is creative placemaking?
The Connecticut Office of the Arts feels that, simply said, “creative placemaking is creating cities, towns and villages where people want to come to live, to work, to play and to learn.”

Merriam-Webster Dictionary Defines “Troubadour”:
“One of a class of lyric poets that flourished from the 11th through the 13th centuries. Favored at courts, troubadours had great freedom of speech and were charged with creating an aura of pleasant cultivation.”

Since his arrival at DECD, Kip Bergstrom has traversed the State, expounding on the benefits of creating interesting and creative places on the community level.
Kip Bergstrom is leading a statewide discussion that blends planning, design, the natural environment, arts, history, culture, tourism, and economic development – into a phenomenon that results in unique and memorable places. Since his State appointment in 2011, *Creative Placemaking* initiatives have launched in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, Stamford, New London, New Britain, Waterbury, Torrington and other places. From “Project Storefront”, which sets up working artists in otherwise vacant storefronts – with immediate economic benefits; to a 30 by 30 foot mural on the side of a downtown building – that involved 1,200 people (!), Kip’s vision has emboldened and energized communities to think and behave differently.

*Creative Placemaking* results in partners from public, private, nonprofit and community sectors that strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood. *Creative Placemaking* animates public and private spaces, which in turn attract people. The goal is resilient, thriving places that are magnets for talent, centers of local innovation, and models of green values where people want to live and work.

Connecticut Main Street Center applauds Kip Bergstrom, “The Troubadour of Placemaking”, for his vision and his actions in encouraging creative places in Connecticut.
The CL&P Award

Connecticut Main Street Center established the Connecticut Light and Power Company Award in 2001 to recognize individuals and organizations who dedicate themselves to promoting an awareness of the necessity of a comprehensive management approach to the revitalization of Connecticut’s historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.

The recipient of the 2006 National Main Street Business Leadership Award, CL&P is the only private corporation in the country to have founded a statewide Main Street program. Concerned about protecting its significant investment in the infrastructure of older commercial districts across the state, CL&P chose to provide the funding and administrative support needed to start a statewide Main Street program in 1995.

As the statewide Main Street program expanded, CL&P sought public and private support to sustain its future growth. In 1999 CL&P partnered with the State of Connecticut and numerous public and private community and economic development entities to create the nonprofit Connecticut Main Street Center which would take over administering the statewide Main Street program. As a nonprofit entity, CT Main Street Center is able to leverage resources and serve as a visible symbol of renewal and a new future for downtowns across the state.
2013 Recipient

Toni A. Gold is an urban planning and development specialist with expertise in transportation for livable communities, historic preservation, waterfront projects, and commercial revitalization. She is a national expert in Context Sensitive Solutions, which she has taught to state departments of transportation. Toni managed a $24 million capital program for Riverfront Recapture in Hartford, which re-connected downtown Hartford to its riverfront.

As an activist and advocate Toni organized her neighbors in the West End and Asylum Hill neighborhoods of Hartford ten years ago on behalf of a strategic plan for the traffic-calming and commercial revitalization of Hartford’s Farmington Avenue. Most recently she has organized the Hub of Hartford (I-84) Steering Committee, rallying the City, the Region and ConnDOT behind an effort to re-plan and redesign Interstate 84 in downtown Hartford to reduce its intrusive nature and re-knit the urban fabric. Through Toni’s ability to coordinate the many interests represented (residents, business owners, employees, NRZ/community organizations, City staff, ConnDOT & DEEP), the Steering Committee agreed on an option that would provide an opportunity to develop over 1 million square feet of mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the heart of downtown adjacent to a newly-accessible Bushnell Park, thus reconnecting Hartford’s now-bisected neighborhoods.

In this year, when we celebrate the progress made in bringing downtown Hartford back to life, we recognize Toni Gold for her many contributions to Main Street Revitalization.
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A Special Thank You

Shelly Saczynski
CMSC Board Chair
2009 - 2013
National Main Street Program Accreditation, a partnership between CT Main Street Center and the National Trust Main Street Center, annually recognizes the highest performing Main Street programs throughout the country.

Main Street programs that receive this honor have reached or exceeded established performance standards for local Main Street programs.

Congratulations to Simsbury Main Street Partnership, Upper Albany Main Street, Hartford, and Main Street Waterbury for attaining National Accreditation in 2013!
Since 2003, CT Main Street Center’s Awards of Excellence have recognized outstanding community efforts that bring our main streets back to life socially and economically. Communities that are successful in revitalizing their main streets truly embrace and embody a commitment to civic action. Tonight is about celebrating that commitment.
Our jury, representing collective expertise in main street development, has selected this year’s award winners. We thank Barb, Heidi, and John for their generous contributions of time, effort and enthusiasm in the selection of our award winners.

And now, we present our 2013 Awards of Excellence!
[SLIDE #21 – Main Street Volunteers of the Year]

New London Main Street  
Deirdre Cavanagh  
A former First Lady of the City of New London, Deirdre Cavanagh gives generously to New London Main Street as an extension of her love and devotion to the City. Deirdre joined the promotion committee over ten years ago, and has since helped run all sixteen of the famous New London Food Strolls. This year, during a difficult time of transition for the organization, she took the reins of the Spring Food Stroll – keeping momentum high and organizing every detail.

Simsbury Main Street Partnership  
John Schaefer  
A landscape architect, John contributes his talents to the design committee and has helped with everything from streetscape issues to the town’s award-winning charrette process. Over the past year John has spent many hours overseeing the work and improvements at Enon Memorial Hall, coordinating the restoration grant that Main Street wrote on behalf of the Town, and attending numerous meetings with the Town Engineer and the consultant.

Main Street Waterbury  
Carol Gendron  
Since the start of Waterbury’s Main Street program almost 10 years ago, Carol has made numerous contributions to the vision and work of revitalization in Downtown Waterbury. She has served on the promotions committee, served as a strong promoter of the Business Watch Program and, since its inception, has single-handedly pulled together a full roster of performers for Main Street Waterbury’s annual Music at the Exchange program, a summer outdoor lunch time music festival that enlivens a key location in downtown. A downtown business owner for over 20 years, Carol sold her business in 2012. She has worked with the new owners of her coffee shop, brokering an arrangement for Main Street Waterbury’s committees to continue to hold their monthly meetings there. Carol is a former CT Main Street Business Owner of the Year.

Westville Village Renaissance Alliance  
Muffy Pendergast  
Westville-based artist, teach and creative spirit Muffy Pendergast contributed over 75 hours of her time in 2012, most notably transforming an informal Halloween gathering with a few dozen participants into the Giant Puppet & People Making Mayhem Halloween Parade, attracting hundreds of marchers and puppet-bearers into the Village. Preceding the parade Muffy hosts two weeks of free, family-oriented giant puppet-making workshops in a vacant storefront, ensuring a steady stream of participatory fun for the event itself. Additionally, as a member of the ArtWalk Kids Committee, Muffy masterminded the Kid-Powered Spin Art station, a top new attraction for over 500 kids and adults.

We thank these outstanding Main Street Volunteers!
New London Main Street
Carolyn Johnson
Carolyn has been an advocate and supporter of New London Main Street since its inception 15 years ago. A former small business owner and resident of Downtown, Carolyn recently rejoined the Board of Directors after a hiatus. She has an upbeat, contagious attitude and thrives on jumping in to take over activities that need attention – most recently taking on mundane but critical areas of organizational operations. She took on the Annual Appeal, with great success, and is always happy to advocate Main Street’s mission in the community.

Simsbury Main Street Partnership
Rich Correia
Described as “the heart of the organization”, Rich has been the President of Simsbury Main Street for six years. He leads with laughter and fun, so it never really feels like work. A true ambassador of Main Street, it is not unusual for board and staff to get a new idea via email at all hours of the day. A successful commercial real estate broker, Rich’s presidency has seen Simsbury the first and only town in Connecticut named a Distinctive Destination by the National Trust, and the focus of the national spotlight for two recent documentaries. Rich is a very active peer mentor for towns that have recently joined the CT Main Street Network.

Upper Albany Main Street
Christine B. Grant
An active member of Upper Albany Main Street’s Board of Directors for six years, Christine manages the University of Hartford’s public relations with local governments, corporate and community organizations. Chris coordinated and worked tirelessly with CT Main Street Center on the successful Downtown Revitalization Institute “University & Main Street Forum” in June 2011. She serves on Main Street’s Capacity, Governance, Design and Fundraising Committees.

Main Street Waterbury
Tony Guerriero
Outgoing board president Tony Guerriero has chosen to be significantly involved in the organization’s work. He has streamlined Board operations, strengthened the fiscal health of the organization, and heightened the positive community impact of Main Street. Tony also participates in every Main Street event, volunteering, pitching in, setting up, and doing whatever he is assigned. The manager of the Brass Mill Center, the mall on the edge of Downtown Waterbury, Tony has married the best practices of Main Street and Mall Management to the benefit of both.

Westville Village Renaissance Alliance
Gabriel DaSilva
Gabe was the founding Board President of Westville’s Main Street program, serving from 2007 to 2012. An entrepreneur and small business owner in Westville Village, Gabe has played an intricate role in the organization’s formation and success. He is a tireless volunteer, particularly on the annual ArtWalk event, where he coordinates the infrastructure and manages the teen volunteers, thus mobilizing a driving force during the event.

We thank these outstanding Main Street Board Members!
Main Street Partnership

Sponsored by Webster Bank

Brass City Harvest, Main Street Waterbury, Naugatuck Valley Community College, Waterbury Development Corporation, City of Waterbury

Brass City Market on Field
Indoor Farm Market

[SLIDE #23– Title: Main Street Partnership]

AWARD FOR MAIN STREET PARTNERSHIP
SPONSORED BY WEBSTER BANK

BRASS CITY HARVEST, MAIN STREET WATERBURY, NAUGATUCK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WATERBURY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, AND THE CITY OF WATERBURY

for “Brass City Market on Field” Indoor Farm Market in Downtown Waterbury
Let’s begin with the impact of this partnership:
1) a long-vacant, historically significant building in the central business district restored for commercial purposes,
2) increased pedestrian traffic in the downtown area,
3) new business and networking opportunities created between local restaurants, merchants, and other businesses,
4) three Waterbury-based artisans and businesses supported, as well as 21 other Connecticut farms, dairies, specialty food entrepreneurs, and artisans, and
5) the need for access to healthy, nutritious, and fresh food in the downtown central business district addressed.
Brass City Market on Field is a unique indoor, year-round farmers’ market that only sells those agricultural produce and products (meat and dairy) that are raised or produced in the State of Connecticut. Situated on Field Street at the intersection of downtown Waterbury’s commercial and municipal districts, Brass City Market is part of an overarching community food system that is managed by Brass City Harvest, a 501(c)(3) non-profit agricultural organization in Waterbury. The establishment of this indoor market is significant to the citizens of the City of Waterbury because it is located on a local bus route in a food desert area, as denoted by the USDA in its Food Desert Locator Map. People who live in a food desert do not have easy access to fresh produce, healthy grains, low-fat dairy and other nutritionally sound whole foods. The creation of this market addresses that deficiency.

In addition, this market is also significant to downtown – and all of Waterbury – because it has fostered the re-use of an architecturally significant building located in a Cass Gilbert historic district that was vacant for 30 years. Giving new life to this building has also increased retail commerce and visibility that can aid in the economic development and marketing of downtown Waterbury.

Brass City Market on Field is the result of years of groundwork that was initiated by Main Street Waterbury, when it operated the first seasonal farmers’ market on The Green eight years ago. That successful venture was transitioned to Brass City Harvest five years ago because it was a logical step in the evolitional development of this successful downtown program.
Two years ago a team was formed between Brass City Harvest, Main Street Waterbury, and Naugatuck Valley Community College that sought (and won) funds from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture’s Farm Viability Grant Program to fund a feasibility study to gauge consumer acceptance of a year-round farmers’ market in the downtown area. Various facets of this study were undertaken by each project partner. Brass City Harvest was the overall project manager and compiled the data into a final report to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. Main Street Waterbury and interns and professional staff from Naugatuck Valley Community College carried out consumer surveys on The Green during the seasonal farmers’ market and around the downtown area. Main Street Waterbury conducted short focus group sessions with several downtown merchants to determine their position on the potential of the entrepreneurial project. Main Street Waterbury and Brass City Harvest worked together to find a suitable and economically feasible downtown location to be the new home of the year round farmers’ market.

Waterbury Development Corporation was the first to offer crucial business start-up loan funding for building improvements. A private philanthropic group financed inventory procurement and personnel. And good, old-fashioned fundraising activities supplied the rest.

Opening day brought in 235 customers, demonstrating immediate public interest. Approximately 75% are repeat customers. The Market supports a total of 24 Connecticut farms, diaries, specialty food entrepreneurs, and artisans. The variety of items offered has increased by 100% since opening day. And the monthly “Eat Like a Locavore” nutrition and cooking classes held at the market host an average of 20 participants.

The synergy between the project partners gave rise to a unique entity that is a cross between an upscale boutique and a genuine New England country store in the heart of Waterbury’s government district. This indoor farmers’ market makes affordable fresh food and Connecticut specialty food products accessible to all consumer demographics.
From filling a vacant building, to providing fresh produce to an underserved area, to showcasing Connecticut grown and produced food, this market contributes to the realization of Main Street’s mission for downtown Waterbury, and further demonstrates that all is possible when partnerships are forged and groups work together.

*Congratulations, Brass City Market on Field!*
[SLIDE #28– Title: Economic & Business Development]

**AWARD FOR ECONOMIC & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP, UCONN, TOWN OF MANSFIELD, LEYLANDALLY, MILONE & MCBOOM, CIPPARONE & ZACCARO, AND THE BUSINESS OWNERS OF MANSFIELD AND STORRS CENTER**

for “**Make New Friends, but Keep the Old**: Retention & Relocation of Existing Businesses during Development of Storrs Center
For over a decade, the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc. has worked with the Town of Mansfield and the University of Connecticut to create a vibrant, walkable downtown for Mansfield.

While attracting new, vibrant businesses is critical to a downtown’s success, retaining existing businesses is equally important – if not more so. Well-established businesses draw loyal customers, create a sense of place, and bring valuable experience and insight to a successful downtown. Thus, reaching out to the existing business community and keeping them informed and engaged should be at the outset of any revitalization effort.
An early challenge to the development team was the existence of several commercial buildings in the area identified for Storrs Center. The state of the existing commercial buildings ranged from well-maintained and fully occupied to outdated with chronic vacancies. Following lengthy negotiations over several years, LeylandAlliance reached agreements with UConn and two property owners to purchase four of the commercial buildings and three buildings housing University uses. Four other commercial buildings owned by three different property owners remain in private hands; Storrs Center has been designed around these buildings.
While these agreements guided the design of the project, the issue of twenty-five existing tenants remained. From the outset, Mansfield residents voiced a strong desire to retain the businesses, many of which were locally-owned. The Town Council supported these sentiments and pushed the Partnership and Leyland to find a mutually agreeable solution for all parties.
There were several complicating factors when determining how best to assist the existing businesses. First, decisions had to be made before a construction timeline was established. Second, the existing business owners had a broad range of experience and capabilities, and some owners were more enthusiastic about the project than others. Third, most of the businesses had not been paying market-rate rents. The prospect of moving into a brand-new building with higher rents concerned almost all of the tenants, who shared their concerns with the public and the Town Council.

The Partnership, its relocation consultant, and the developer identified three main options for each business: relocate to Storrs Center (once built), relocate elsewhere, or close. The consultant worked with each business over many years to determine which option best fit their individual needs.
Throughout the planning of Storrs Center, the Partnership sought to balance the desire to retain as many existing tenants as possible with the developer’s financial commitments and needs. This required flexibility and creativity. For example, an early idea: to construct a building solely for the relocating tenants, was designed and received zoning approval before ultimately being scrapped due to the high construction costs and projected high costs for the tenants.

An alternative solution: to mix relocating tenants in with the new tenants, required the cooperation of the master developer. LeylandAlliance negotiated leases with each tenant individually. Eight businesses made the move into the new buildings, a few with temporary locations or periods of closure between vacating the old buildings and occupying the new spaces.
[SLIDE #34– the new Head Husky Barber Shop]

Of twenty-five existing tenants (both commercial and university uses), seventeen remain in Mansfield today. The Partnership is proud of this accomplishment, which was the result of over twelve years of hard work, countless conversations, numerous private and public meetings, and a great deal of coordination and cooperation among a diverse mix of public and private entities.
The Partnership recognized that it was making major requests to the existing businesses, some of whom had been in their locations for decades. The process, while successful in the end, was difficult at times. Following a rather contentious early meeting of the Partnership’s Business Development and Retention Committee, at which several of the existing tenants expressed frustrations and fears about the Storrs Center project, the Partnership redoubled its communications efforts with the tenants. Throughout the very long planning process, the Partnership strived to keep the tenants informed about the plans, progress, and delays. Over time, such communication led to positive results: many of those same tenants that voiced frustrations are now open and flourishing in Storrs Center.
Select Physical Therapy’s relocation plan was more complex than others because they needed to move twice before the final relocation to 9 Dog Lane. To accommodate their unique needs, LeylandAlliance built out space for a temporary office.
Storrs Automotive has been in operation since 1975 – their location within feet of Mansfield Town Hall, E.O. Smith High School, and UConn, has always been a key selling point for those choosing a repair and maintenance shop. Naturally they wanted to stay in the downtown, close to loyal customers.
As an automotive repair facility, many State approvals were needed to be included in the comprehensive plan created for Storrs Center. Through the efforts of the Partnership and LeylandAlliance, the CT DEEP grandfathered in this use so Storrs Automotive could continue to serve Mansfield’s downtown.
By retaining so many businesses, the Partnership was able to strengthen the new downtown by creating an inviting mix of the familiar and the novel. The established businesses have helped draw their loyal customers downtown, who also patronize the new businesses that have opened in Storrs Center. And veteran business owners have shared their valuable experience and knowledge of Mansfield with the incoming businesses.
[SLIDE #40– Geno's Ribbon Cutting]

Congratulations, Storrs Center!
[SLIDE #41– Title: Public Space Master Plan]

**AWARD FOR PUBLIC SPACE MASTER PLAN**

**SUISMAN URBAN DESIGN, iQUILT PARTNERSHIP, AND THE CITY OF HARTFORD**

*for The iQuilt Plan for Downtown Hartford*
The iQuilt Plan is downtown Hartford’s urban design strategy for walkability and creative placemaking. It capitalizes on two of Hartford’s greatest strengths: its extraordinary concentration of arts, cultural and landscape assets, and its exceptionally compact downtown. The cultural assets are physically close, but the pedestrian links between them are often weak. The iQuilt Plan strengthens those links. It offers an array of physical and programmatic improvements to the pedestrian network of public space – parks, plazas, streets, and sidewalks.
The projects are a strategic mix of small and large, immediate and long term, public and private. They are being implemented in stages. Each initiative is a patch that contributes to downtown’s overall pattern or quilt. The “i” in iQuilt stands for innovation, and each project incorporates innovative approaches to walkability and placemaking. The goal is for downtown Hartford to become the central gathering place for the neighborhoods of the city and the towns of the region: a place of streets and sidewalks alive with people; a magnet for residents, visitors, creative workers and cultural innovators; a driver of economic activity and growth; and a model of livable, sustainable urban design.
The iQuilt Plan interweaves the urban landscape with the natural one. It honors the city’s history as a thriving riverfront port and as an innovator in the design of public parks by connecting Bushnell Park and the State Capitol to the Connecticut River, and by bringing flowing water back to the riverbed of the Park River. This mile-long connection, called the GreenWalk, provides the east-west backbone for downtown’s 10 mile pedestrian network of streets and sidewalks. Fused with the north-south Main Street ridge, this irregular grid creates the seams of the iQuilt, weaving together more than 40 historic and cultural landscapes, sites, artworks, and institutions.
The early work of the iQuilt Plan was done by The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts as they sought to develop a formal vision for their Capitol Avenue and Bushnell Park neighborhood. Leadership at The Bushnell, with support from their Board, chose to think broadly and look beyond their immediate block. With support from the Greater Hartford Arts Council and the City of Hartford, they moved forward the idea for a master plan focused on walkability.
The plan has almost universal support from multiple constituencies. Mayor Pedro Segarra and the City of Hartford have championed the iQuilt plan as a critical component of One City, One Plan, the City’s Plan of Conservation and Development. City development officials and planning staff are pushing the initiative forward and have been successful in securing a $13 million TIGER IV federal transportation grant to implement portions of the plan. Mayor Segarra has committed additional $10 million in Capital Improvement Program funds over two years to complete transit and streetscape improvements in the core Downtown area.
Since its earliest days in 2008, the iQuilt Plan has engaged the public in the process of developing its themes, concepts, designs, and strategies. This has included more than 17 public presentations and workshops and more than 80 briefings for more than two thousand public officials, stakeholder groups, and private citizens. A website launched in April 2011 has attracted more than 7,500 individual viewers and 25,000 page views. In the relatively new governance structure of the iQuilt Partnership, a 501c3 non-profit organization has been created. This new partnership Board along with a Board of Corporators, that includes 50 members of the public, is responsible for project oversight.
The partnerships that this plan has forged have made, and will continue to make, Hartford a stronger and more unified city. The iQuilt Plan has brought together many different organizations and institutions; all with the aim of making Downtown Hartford more welcoming. And iQuilt will provide “a shared living room for all residents of Hartford to come together.”
Congratulations Suisman Urban Design, the iQuilt Partnership, and the City of Hartford!
Award for Downtown Event

Waterbury Regional Chamber of Commerce, City of Waterbury, and Main Street Waterbury

for Fireball Run 2012 in Downtown Waterbury
Created five years ago, the “Fireball Run AdventuRally’s The Race to Recover Missing Children” brings nationwide attention to missing and exploited children. Each Fireball Run team represents one missing child from that team’s home region, and each team’s adventure includes distributing 1,000 posters of the missing child from their area to aid in that child’s recovery. Since its inception, Fireball Run has helped locate 38 missing children across the United States.

Each Rally is great fun & includes production of a movie made from real experiences along the route as well as live Web streaming. It brings wide publicity to all the participating cities and teams, while also garnering public attention for missing children. Annually a different segment of the country is selected for the travel route. The Northeast was chosen for 2012, and Connecticut was identified as a potential site for a stopover. The Fireball Run planners invited Connecticut cities to apply to fill that role.
[SLIDE #52– The Race to Recover America’s Missing Children]

Waterbury’s economic development administrators saw multiple purposes for undertaking this project. Involvement in Fireball Run was seen as a strong marketing tool. It also provided the opportunity to bring community elements together and demonstrate that: “we are still vital and capable; our downtown is still an attractive destination; we “can do;” and there is much to be proud of in Waterbury.” Local coordinators wanted to demonstrate the City’s spirit; highlight the attractive nature of Waterbury for business development; accentuate the positive about the community; have some fun; and aid in the effort to help find missing children.

Fireball Run 2012 presented an opportunity to showcase Downtown Waterbury as it is today, remind people of its history and past glory, and present a visible sense of what the City can be in the near future. It provided a clear demonstration of what the City Center can be when creative thinking and renewed energy are brought to strategic planning and use of Downtown resources.
The 42 teams of Fireball Run drivers visited Waterbury on September 27, 2012. During their visit, they went on an assigned scavenger hunt at the TimeExpo Museum, the historic Republican-American building, the Mattatuck Museum, and the Waterbury Green. At each landmark they received clues to accomplish missions they were assigned based on local history, geography, and pop culture. This was a fun way to involve many downtown businesses and member of the community. Upon arrival at the Green, drivers were celebrated with a free event for the entire Waterbury community to enjoy, including live music, a re-enactment of John F. Kennedy’s 1960 election-eve speech from the balcony of the former Elton Hotel, games, and a scavenger hunt for children. It was a spectacularly beautiful fall afternoon when they arrived and thousands of people came to the Green to enjoy the highly-spirited activities and fun.

Approximately 5,000 people from Waterbury and surrounding towns came into downtown to be on the Green when the racers arrived. 30 businesses served as sponsors or vendors, and sponsor contributions ranged from $500 to $10,000. 250 people attended the evening soiree that welcomed and entertained the Fireball Run organizers and race participants.
Fireball Run organizers said it was Waterbury’s organized effort, obvious widespread enthusiasm, vision for involvement in pursuing the event’s goals, and strong support from the City’s administration that made it a clear choice as a destination city. Ultimately, it was the quality of the City’s work that caused Fireball Run organizers to declare Waterbury a "Great American City."
Out of this experience came the confidence and vision to establish a new economic development campaign for the City of Waterbury entitled, “Waterbury, Be Here.” Its goal is to tell positive stories about Waterbury, using print, Web, radio, and videos. The plan is to encourage recognition that Waterbury’s positive and significant strengths provide opportunities to residents and businesses and is worthy of investment.

The Fireball Run’s drivers visit was viewed live by over 3 million viewers on fireballrun.com. The website streamed the entire road adventure from Ohio to Maine live between September 21st and 29th. This year, the drivers’ 8-day expedition will be viewed by millions more when the “Fireball Run AdventuRally – Northern Exposure” feature film is released nationwide.
[SLIDE #56– Downtown Waterbury]

*Congratulations, Waterbury!*
[SLIDE #57– Title: Historic Preservation]

AWARD FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HARRISON JUDD, THREAD CITY DEVELOPMENT, INC., EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY, WINDHAM TEXTILE & HISTORY MUSEUM, TOWN OF WINDHAM, TBS PROPERTIES, WINDHAM REGION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ARTSPACE WINDHAM GALLERY

for “End of an Era”: Past Identity / Future Vision and the Portrait Project, Downtown Willimantic
End of an Era: Past Identity/Future Vision gave the Windham community a much-needed opportunity to mourn the loss of an important local icon, with large, poetic photographs that told the smokestack’s story from its former place of prominence in Willimantic’s skyline through the wrecking ball to the last pile of bricks.

In November 2012, this community-centered art exhibition, documented the demolition of Willimantic’s last American Thread Mills Smokestack in a series of large-scale photographs by Harrison Judd, Connecticut photographer and Willimantic resident. One year after the demolition, the exhibition brought the community together to mourn the loss of this iconic symbol, celebrate an industrial past, and begin a dialog about the future.
The exhibition did not simply revisit an idealized version of Willimantic’s past - but honored its present as well, with twenty-four additional photographs of the current urban landscape that called attention to Windham’s present beauty as well as its needs. Most important, true to its name, the exhibition offered a vision for Willimantic’s future in a simultaneous interactive event, the *Willimantic Portrait Project*. 
During the exhibition, artist Harrison Judd created an impromptu photo studio within the gallery and offered free portraits to all visitors. This innovative approach provided direct interaction, a record of participation, and a living, photographic archive of the diverse individuals who represent the future of downtown. *The Portrait Project* re-defined traditional exhibition practice and captivated both local and extended communities, including visitors from many Connecticut towns, Boston, New York, former mill workers and visitors from as far away as Hungary and India. Over two hundred portraits were taken, approved and posted online at *futurehistory.com*
Well over 200 people attended the opening reception, which ran an hour and a half longer than planned. In spite of two other important local events planned for that evening, the exhibition had record attendance which included Windham’s Mayor, State Representative, the President and Academic Vice President of Eastern Connecticut State University, downtown business owners, students, local and regional artists, young and old residents, former mill workers and out of town visitors.
Throughout the run of the exhibition there was unprecedented foot traffic. Visitors signed the guest book, providing a record of an average of 50 or more visitors per day in a gallery space that typically gets one or two visitors per day.

The positive impact of the *Portrait Project* will continue later this year in a follow-up event called *Everybody’s at the Drive-In*, when the portraits will be projected on the big screen of the local Drive-in Theater, bringing the community together again, and including an even wider audience in the celebration of Willimantic’s identity, diversity and unique individuality.
[SLIDE #63– The Portrait Project #1]

Using the transformative power of iconic imagery, *End of an Era* overcame several obstacles. It addressed Willimantic’s Town-Gown gap with academically relevant subject matter; united diverse social groups through universally meaningful content; generated record-breaking attendance at the opening reception and enthusiastic participation throughout the exhibition; created lasting connections through the inclusive experience of the *Portrait Project*; and gave the community a context in which to celebrate its past, honor its present and consciously participate in its future.
Portraits from the *Portrait Project* are easily accessible on the internet and have already been used as professional photos, as Facebook photos, on holiday cards and in company profiles. Photos of the smokestack are now in public and private collections including: the Town of Windham, Eastern Connecticut State University, the Windham Textile & History Museum, Horizons, Inc. and many private homes. This will preserve the memory of Willimantic’s proud industrial history and commemorate this unique celebratory exhibition. *End of an Era*’s memorable images will keep Willimantic’s last smokestack alive in minds and hearts, while the portraits connect citizens to one another in the present as they look forward to the future.
Congratulations, Willimantic!
Main Street Business Owner of the Year

Dr. Richard A. Fichman
Fichman Eye Center

Upper Albany Main Street District, Hartford

[SLIDE #66– Title: Connecticut Main Street Business Owner of the Year]

Award for Connecticut Main Street Business Owner of the Year
Sponsored by Webster Bank

Dr. Richard A. Fichman
Fichman Eye Center, Upper Albany District, Hartford
Many people in the greater Hartford region know of Dr. Richard Fichman of the Fichman Eye Center. His name is synonymous with Lasik, the laser-based vision correction technique that he introduced to the state of Connecticut. Known in the U.S. and around the world for his innovations in ophthalmology, Dr. Fichman developed cataract surgery without needles, done in conjunction with a colleague’s invention that dissolves the cataracts with sound waves. The patient remains awake, without pain, during the entire procedure.
In addition to his busy schedule in his home state, Dr. Fichman finds time about once every six weeks to travel with colleagues to the Dominican Republic to provide laser vision correction to about 15 patients who could not otherwise afford the sight-saving procedure. “My grandparents were penniless immigrants when they came to this country, but their son was able to do anything,” says Dr. Fichman, as he looks back on what led up to his own success.
Richard Fichman’s ancestors came to Hartford in the late 19th century, seeking relief from religious persecution in Eastern Europe. They raised a family, scraped by financially, and found true happiness embraced by their new city. Along with thousands of other immigrants, they transformed Albany Avenue into a gem, where every type of service was readily available, in a real community where neighbors had a true sense of pride. Albany Avenue was the Gateway to the American Dream.
Dr. Fichman notes that, from the 1960s on, Albany Avenue fell on hard times and has seen little revitalization. As he drove down his old hometown avenue, he felt a sense of hopelessness. One day, his son said, “Dad, why don’t we open an Eye Center on the Avenue?” From that moment, Dr. Fichman’s life changed dramatically.

This video features Dr. Fichman – who can tell his story, and his reasons for becoming involved in the Upper Albany Main Street District, better than anyone.
in his own words...

Click on the link below to view an outstanding video of Dr. Richard Fichman, speaking about his decision to open his Center in Upper Albany!

https://files.secureserver.net/0sAjOoHxQgomZw
[SLIDE #72 – Grand Opening on Albany Avenue]

Congratulations, Dr. Richard Fichman!
Connecticut Main Street Center offers our special thanks to:

**Hartford Business Improvement District,**
especially Mike Zaleski, Jordan Polon and Erin Pollard and the Downtown Ambassadors for welcoming everyone to Downtown Hartford

**The City of Hartford Department of Development Services,**
for their knowledge of and enthusiasm for the City of Hartford

**HYPE Hartford,**
especially Julie Daly for sharing her wealth of information about what makes Hartford a desirable location for young professionals

**The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art,**
especially Nick Mandella, Development Events Coordinator, and the entire staff for their professionalism, courtesy, attention to detail and great customer service