

# **WORKING TOGETHER TO ENHANCE THE KENSINGTON VILLAGE AND FIGHT VACANCIES**

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**BERLIN'S FAÇADE & LANDSCAPING MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM**



# WHO WAS INVOLVED?

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- **PARTNERS**

- **OPM – STEAP Funding – 2016 - \$500,000**
- **DOT – Responsible Growth Funding – 2018 - \$500,000**
- **Town of Berlin (Economic Development Office/Planning & Zoning Office)**
- **Jacunski Humes Architects**
- **Property Owners in Berlin**
- **Business Owners in Berlin**

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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The Town of Berlin offered grants up to \$50,000 per property for façade and landscaping improvements along our main corridor (Farmington Avenue) as well as 3 other roads which branch off of it – New Britain Road, Mill Street and Webster Square Road

1. Program reimbursed monies after the project is complete (with Building Department sign-off), for up to 50% of the eligible costs (determined by the Economic Development Commission)
2. A lien was put on the property for a term of 5-years for the amount of the grant, and if the property is not damaged, or the work done is not taken off (or redone), the lien is removed.

# LOCAL EXPERTISE – JACUNSKI HUMES ARCHITECTS

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Brian Humes, one of the 2 principals of Jacunski Humes was under contract for \$25,000 of the \$500,000 to provide the Town of Berlin (and property owners) before and after electronic renditions of what their buildings could look like.

## Why Engage The Private Sector?:

- Local knowledge of Brian to create a look that fits the history of Berlin, as well as using more economical materials with the same look.
- Most commercial property owners do not really know much about construction, materials, look, etc.
- A number of property owners used the after rendition to get quotes for the work
- We now have 2 cupolas on buildings on Farmington Avenue because Brian put them into renditions

# EXAMPLE OF A BEFORE AND AFTER RENDITION

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**BEFORE - BLAND**



**AFTER - A LITTLE ZING...**



# ACTUAL LOOK AFTER THE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

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# WHAT DID THIS \$1,000,000 IN STATE FUNDING DO FOR OUR KENSINGTON VILLAGE?

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## Benefit to Berlin:

- Over \$1,300,000 in private sector investment - \$1.30 for every \$1.00 of taxpayer \$
- More 50 properties were improved as well as 7 Businesses/Buildings received funding for signage or signage improvements (multi-tenant properties)
  - Small helpful grant for small (growing) businesses – no lien if less than \$1,500.00
- Property owners saw what neighbors were doing, so they engaged us to discuss their properties and possible funding
- Existing tenants more likely to stay in place in an improvement building
- Vacant spaces more likely to be leased once improvements are made

# THANK YOU!

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