MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, January 5, 2017
Mansfield Town Hall
Town Council Chambers

4:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Opportunity for Public to Comment

3. Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2016 (attachment)

4. Executive Director Report

5. Review and Approval of Memorandum of Understanding Between the Town of Mansfield, University of Connecticut, and Mansfield Downtown Partnership (attachment)

6. Review of Additional Consultant Assistance from Christiansen Consulting for Partnership Governance Tasks (attachment)

7. Monthly Review of Strategic Plan Dash Board (Updated Dash Board attached)

8. Report from Committees and Task Forces:

    - Advertising and Promotion including events i.e., Celebrate Mansfield Festival
    - Business Development and Retention
    - Finance and Administration
    - Governance Task Force
    - Growth Task Force
    - Membership Development
    - Nominating
    - Planning and Design
    - Positioning Task Force
    - Executive

9. Communications including letter from Steve Smith (attachments)

10. Adjourn

Mansfield Downtown Partnership

23 Royce Circle
PO Box 513
Storrs, CT 06268
(860) 429-2740
Fax: (860) 429-2719

January 5, 2017

Board of Directors
Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Re: Item #3 – Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2016

Dear Board members:

Attached please find the minutes for the Board meeting held on December 1, 2016.

The following motion would be in order:

Move, to approve the minutes of December 1, 2016.

Sincerely,

Cynthia van Zelm
Executive Director

Attach: (1)

MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, December 1, 2016
Mansfield Town Hall
Town Council Chambers

3:30 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Steve Bacon, Matt Hart, George Jones, June Krisch, Paul McCarthy, Toni Moran, Diana Pelletier, Anthony Raggi, Joy Sgobbo, Steve Smith, and Paul Shapiro

Director Emeritus: Betsy Paterson

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

1. Call to Order

President Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

2. Opportunity for Public to Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of November 3, 2016

Paul Shapiro made a motion to approve the minutes of November 3, 2016. June Krisch seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Executive Director Report

Cynthia van Zelm said the Governance Task Force has recommended that an initial survey be sent to the Board about Board functionality. Partnership staff will prepare the survey to be sent to the Board this month with responses to be sent to Board President Steve Bacon.

Ms. van Zelm said Chris Whitten, who is currently working in the Town Manager and Planning and Development offices, will work for the Partnership for 10 hours a week, taking Alicia Talarico's place.

Ms. van Zelm said she was working on two applications to recognize Storrs Center – the American City & County magazine award and the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence.

Ms. van Zelm said Winter Welcome is this weekend with Santa, carolers, vendors, ice sculpture and more.

Matt Hart updated the Board on some of the discussions around economic development staffing. He said the Town is looking at economic development as a priority including business retention and recruitment.

The Town's Economic Development Commission is reviewing staffing models for economic development.

One idea is to look at whether the Partnership could assist with economic development. Mr. Hart said he looks forward to discussing this with the Partnership's Growth Task Force, and receiving feedback from the Economic Development Commission and the Partnership Board.

Steve Smith asked about the possibility of a regional economic development organization. Mr. Hart said this has been discussed – there is no such organization for the Mansfield region at this time.

Toni Moran and Paul Shapiro said they would want to make sure whatever structure might be proposed would preserve Town interests.

Steve Bacon reminded Board members that Ms. van Zelm had sent Board members options for how they can participate in the Partnership.

5. Recommendation of Governance Task Force To Appoint Tom Callahan as Director Emeritus

Matt Hart made a motion to appoint Tom Callahan as a Director Emeritus to the Mansfield Downtown Partnership Board of Directors. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Approval of 2017 Board Meeting Dates

Ms. Moran made a motion to approve the Mansfield Downtown Partnership meeting dates for 2017. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

7. Monthly Review of Strategic Plan Dash Board

Ms. van Zelm reviewed the status of the Partnership's strategic priorities from the Strategic Plan. She said a meeting was planned with the Storrs Center property owners to discuss the Public Spaces Plan. With respect to the MOU between the Town/UConn and the Partnership, a draft MOU has been reviewed at the staff level and is ready for review by the Growth Task Force on December 12. A separate shared services agreement between the Town and the Partnership is being reviewed at the staff level.

8. Review and Approval of DRAFT Bylaws Changes

Mr. Bacon said the Board had made changes to the draft Bylaws presented by the Governance Task Force. The Governance Task Force reviewed the changes and are presenting a final draft to the Board today. Mr. Bacon reviewed the proposed changes to the Partnership Bylaws.

Mr. Hart made a motion to approve the amendments to the Partnership's Bylaws and recommend to the Partnership members that they ratify these amendments to the Partnership's Bylaws as approved by the Partnership's Board of Directors. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

After discussion of a date for the membership to ratify the Bylaws, Mr. Hart made a motion to set March 2 as a meeting date for ratification of the Partnership Bylaws by the Partnership membership. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

9. Review and Approval of DRAFT Articles of Incorporation Amendments

Mr. Bacon said the Articles of Incorporation are being amended to reflect the change in mission of the Partnership. A reference specifically to Four Corners and King Hill Road has been deleted. The reference to specific membership dues has also been deleted. The Bylaws call for specific due rates to be approved by the membership.

Mr. Hart made a motion to adopt the proposed amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, and to recommend to the Partnership members that they approve the amendments to the Articles of Incorporation. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Mr. Hart made a motion to set March 2 as a meeting date for ratification of the Partnership Bylaws by the Partnership membership. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

10. Review and Approval of DRAFT Request for Qualifications for Professional Services to Develop a Positioning and Marketing Plan for the Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Ms. Moran said the Positioning Task Force, made up of some members of the Advertising and Promotion Committee, reviewed a draft Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Professional Services to Develop a Positioning and Marketing Plan for the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

Ms. Moran said the Task Force made several recommended changes to staff's draft of the RFQ. She said the draft asks for a proposal and a fee schedule. A specific request for a cost to undertake the work will be requested once consultants are narrowed down after proposals are received.

Ms. Moran said the proposal should address both marketing Downtown Storrs AND the Partnership.

Betsy Paterson said it will be important to address the Storrs vs. Mansfield issues – Storrs is part of Mansfield.

Mr. Bacon made a motion to approve the Request for Qualifications for Professional Services to Develop a Positioning and Marketing Plan for the Mansfield Downtown Partnership. George Jones seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Ms. Moran made a motion to authorize the Partnership Executive Director to release the Request for Qualifications for Professional Services to Develop a Positioning and Marketing Plan for the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, and to work with the Positioning Task Force to interview and identify a consultant team to be presented to the Board for approval. Diana Pelletier seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

11. Report from Committees

Finance and Administration

Ms. van Zelm briefly reviewed the Partnership September 30, 2016 financials. She said the UConn contribution for the current fiscal year had been received. She said all events were in the black. Ms. van Zelm said the 3rd payment from Beebe for the Town Square had been requested last month.

Ms. van Zelm said the initial FY2017-2018 Partnership budget will be presented to the Committee on December 15.

Governance Task Force

Ms. van Zelm said the Governance Task Force also met to discuss a Governance Manual for the Board. She said the goal will be to bring it to the Board for its review in early 2017.

Membership Development

Mr. Jones said the Committee reviewed the draft membership renewal packet. The Committee made some suggested changes. The packet will go out in early 2017.

12. Communications including letters from S. Bacon and B. Kumiega

Partnership Vice President Moran said Board members are required to notify the Board if they have a potential conflict of interest. She referred to a letter from President Steve Bacon indicating that he or his firm was representing some buyers at Main Street Homes. Ms. Moran said she received the letter since Mr. Bacon could not sent it to himself as Board President.

Mr. Bacon said a similar letter had been sent to him from Board member Bonnie Kumiega who was in a similar situation as Mr. Bacon regarding Main Street Homes.

13. Adjourn

Mr. Shapiro made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Pelletier seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.

Item #5

Mansfield Downtown Partnership

23 Royce Circle
PO Box 513
Storrs, CT 06268
(860) 429-2740
Fax: (860) 429-2719

January 5, 2017

Board of Directors
Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Re: Item #5 – Review and Approval of Memorandum of Understanding Between the Town of Mansfield, University of Connecticut, and Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Dear Board members:

Per my updates to the Board over the last few months, enclosed is a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Town of Mansfield, University of Connecticut, and Mansfield Downtown Partnership regarding the operations of the Partnership (to save paper, I did not include Exhibit A – the Partnership Strategic Plan, of which the Board already has a copy). I have discussed the MOU with Mike Kirk (UConn), Matt Hart (Town), and Steve Bacon (Partnership). The development of an MOU was a key recommendation of the Partnership's Strategic Plan. The draft MOU has been reviewed by UConn's Office of General Counsel, Partnership Attorney John Zaccaro, Mansfield's Town Attorney, the Assistant Town Manager, and Town Finance and IT staff. On December 13, the Partnership's Growth Task Force recommended the MOU to the Board for its consideration.

I have drafted a separate shared services agreement between the Town and the Partnership which lays out the financial, information technology, employee benefits, and human resources services that the Town provides to the Partnership, and the Partnership's contributions to the downtown. This draft agreement is under review by Town staff.

If the Board approves the MOU, it would then be included on a future Town Council agenda for the Town Council's review. Once both the Partnership and the Town have signed off on the MOU, it will be sent to UConn's Executive Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer for signature.

The following motion would be in order:

Move, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Town of Mansfield, University of Connecticut, and Mansfield Downtown Partnership re: Operations of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

Sincerely,

Cynthia van Zelm
Executive Director
Attach: (1)

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September 28, 2016 MDP Executive Director DRAFT
UConn Office of General Counsel (OGC) Comments 10/14/2016; updated 10/26/2016
CvZ edits 10/26/16
Okayed by UConn OGC and Partnership Attorney on 11/1/16
With changes from Town Finance Director and Town IT Director on 11/7/16
With changes from Assistant Town Manager and Town Attorney on 11/28/16
CvZ edits 12/1/16 for review by December 6 (only additional changes received from UConn OGC)
Recommended by Growth Task Force to the Board of Directors on December 13, 2016

MEMORADUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Town of Mansfield/University of Connecticut/Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.

Operations of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.

Whereas, the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc. ("MDP") was organized to promote the rehabilitation and public use of the Town of Mansfield's Storrs Center, King Hill Road and Four Corner areas;

Whereas, the Town of Mansfield ("Mansfield") and the University of Connecticut ("UConn") have each supported MDP's mission of promoting the rehabilitation and public use of Storrs Center, a mixed use retail and residential development;

Whereas, MDP recently completed a strategic plan, attached hereto as Exhibit A (the "Plan"), that, among other things, recommends strategies for MDP's continued support of the economic development and operations at Storrs Center and for expanding MDP's support to other rehabilitation and development initiatives in the area surrounding Storrs Center ("Downtown Storrs");

Whereas, MDP, Mansfield and UConn wish to enter into this Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") to describe how MDP will fulfill the objectives outlined in the Plan and how Mansfield and UConn will each support MDP's activities and undertakings in furtherance of the objectives outlined in the Plan;

Now therefore, Mansfield, UConn, and MDP do hereby agree as follows:

1. **Purpose; Term and Limitations**.

(a) Purpose. This MOU outlines MDP's commitment to fulfill the objectives outlined in the Plan and describes how Mansfield and UConn each anticipate supporting MDP's activities and undertakings in furtherance of the objectives outlined in the Plan.

(b) Term. This MOU will commence on the date it is signed by all of the parties and will continue until June 30, 2020, unless earlier terminated as provided herein.

(c) Limitations. This MOU is not a binding contractual obligation of the parties and no legally binding obligations are created by this MOU. Any party can terminate its respective commitments under this MOU at any time by giving sixty (60) days prior written notice of such termination to the other parties hereto.

2. **MDP Commitments**. MDP hereby commits to engage in the following activities and undertakings to fulfill the objectives outlined in the Plan in the manner described below.

(a) Economic Development. MDP will assist in economic development and operational activities by:

i. Promoting business retention/attraction to Downtown Storrs;

ii. Promoting positive commercial tenant relations;

iii. Convening regular meetings with commercial merchants;

iv. Developing and maintaining a regular occupancy recording and reporting tool;

v. Developing an annual report card on the state of Downtown Storrs; and

vi. Assist with disaster recovery for the Downtown Storrs private sector.

(b) Infrastructure. MDP will assist in managing and providing oversight of infrastructure in Downtown Storrs by:

i. Managing the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center in a manner agreed to with Mansfield from time to time;

ii. Overseeing maintenance of public infrastructure in consultation with Mansfield's Facilities and Public Works staff;

iii. Supporting maintenance of private infrastructure by weekly walkthroughs, reports and follow-up conversations with apartment and commercial property owners;

iv. Coordinating private visible infrastructure maintenance with apartment and commercial property owners i.e., building facades, windows, parking areas;

v. Continuing to evaluate and revise (as necessary) the Storrs Center Special Design District Guidelines with Mansfield's staff;

vi. Implementing plans for continued beautification and wayfinding signage with Storrs Center Public Spaces Study as a guide; and

vii. Preparing and/or managing grant applications to fund continued improvements for Downtown Storrs.

(c) Position/Promotion. MDP will assist in positioning and promoting Downtown Storrs as a regional arts, entertainment, dining and recreational destination where people choose to live, work and visit by:

i. Coordinating, developing, and managing special events;

ii. Promoting Downtown Storrs at local and national conferences;

iii. Advocating for Downtown Storrs at all levels of government including as part of consortium of Connecticut downtowns (through CT Main Street Center);

iv. Positioning and marketing Downtown Storrs as a regional destination by managing the development and implementation of a comprehensive Downtown Storrs Marketing Plan; and

v. Acting as ombudsman/concierge of Downtown Storrs addressing citizen interests and concerns and serving as the liaison organization/communications hub for Mansfield and UConn, as well as property owners and businesses for Downtown Storrs issues by:

1. Developing and distributing monthly informational e/newsletter to merchants, owners, students, residents, etc.;

2. Developing and managing a welcome center at the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center for visitors to Downtown Storrs; and

3. Positioning and marketing MDP as the one-stop place to go for questions, resources, etc. relating to Downtown Storrs.

(d) Organization. MDP will also support organization functions that enhance the above priorities and continue to staff and facilitate related Downtown meetings (i.e., Operations, Merchant, Parking, etc.).

3. **Mansfield's Commitments**. Mansfield agrees to reasonably assist MDP's activities and undertakings in furtherance of the objectives outlined in the Plan in the manner described below.

(a) Financial Support. Mansfield will provide financial support to MDP and its programs, in amounts and at times mutually agreed upon by MDP and Mansfield from time to time.

(b) MDP Board Appointments. Mansfield will designate representatives to serve on MDP's Board of Directors pursuant to MDP's bylaws and other governing documents.

(c) Staff Access. Mansfield will use reasonable efforts to make Mansfield's staff available to assist MDP with the management and promotion of Downtown Storrs.

(d) Administrative Services. Mansfield will provide financial management, information technology, employee benefits and limited human resources services as may be mutually agreed upon by MDP and Mansfield from time to time.

4. **UConn's Commitments**. UConn agrees to reasonably assist MDP's activities and undertakings in furtherance of the objectives outlined in the Plan in the manner described below.

(a) Financial Support. UConn will provide financial support to MDP and its programs, in amounts and at times mutually agreed upon by MDP and UConn from time to time.

(b) MDP Board Appointments. UConn will designate representatives to serve on MDP's Board of Directors pursuant to MDP's bylaws and other governing documents.

(c) Staff Access. UConn will use reasonable efforts to make UConn's staff available to assist MDP with the management and promotion of Downtown Storrs.

5. **Annual Review**. MDP, Mansfield and UConn will designate representatives to meet and discuss MDP's progress in fulfilling the objectives outlined in the Plan and the respective assistance and financial support being provided by Mansfield and UConn. Such meetings are expected to take place at least on an annual basis during the month of October.

[*signature page follows*]

[Signature Page to Memorandum of Understanding]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this MOU as of the date first above written.

THE TOWN OF MANSFIELD

By: _____
Matthew W. Hart
Town Manager

Date: _____

THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

By: _____
Scott Jordan
Executive Vice President for Administration
and Chief Financial Officer

Date: _____

THE MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP, INC.

By: _____
Cynthia van Zelm
Executive Director

Date: _____

Exhibit A- MDP Strategic Plan (September 1, 2016)

Item #6

Mansfield Downtown Partnership

23 Royce Circle
PO Box 513
Storrs, CT 06268
(860) 429-2740
Fax: (860) 429-2719

January 5, 2017

Board of Directors
Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Re: Item #6 – Review of Additional Consultant Assistance from Christiansen Consulting for Partnership Governance Tasks

Dear Board members:

Our consultant Francine Christiansen of Christiansen Consulting has proposed that she continue to work with the Governance Task Force to help with some of our outstanding governance tasks, particularly finalizing the Partnership's Governance Manual for Board review and completing a Board Handbook template. I have attached her proposal which includes an additional $2,000 cost.

I would recommend that we engage Ms. Christiansen for this final governance work so that the Partnership organization is fully equipped with the tools it needs to put an effective structure in place. I have discussed Ms. Christiansen's proposal with Board President Steve Bacon. The funding would come from the Partnership's fund balance. On January 7, 2016, the Board originally approved a total of $20,000 for consultant and potential sub-consultant work related to the Strategic Plan. Ms. Christiansen's total costs will be $20,014.79 including expenses for sandwiches for a meeting. We have paid Ms. Christiansen $13,014.79 thus far. An additional $1,000 will cover the cost of the work on governance by Ms. Christiansen and leave a small encumbered balance if needed.

If the Board agrees, the following motion would be in order:

Move, to approve up to an additional $1,000 for implementation costs for the Partnership's Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,

Cynthia van Zelm
Executive Director

Attach: (1)

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Christiansen Consulting

Date: November 8, 2016
To: Cynthia van Zelm, Executive Director
Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.
23 Royce Circle, PO 513
Mansfield, CT 06268

Subject: **Proposal to Support Governance Committee Development**

Rationale/Context:

As I was completing the enclosed Governance Handbook and reviewing the work that the Governance Committee needs to complete in the future, I realized there is still some important foundational work to conclude. While Cynthia could focus on this or you may be able to find an intern to support this project, I suggest that I can complete it with minimal direction from the executive director with optimal results, assuring that the foundational governance processes and tools are solid so you can effectively move forward. Therefore, I present this implementation proposal for your review. (You will note I have reduced my hourly rate substantially for this project.)

Summary	**Billing Amount**
Governance Proposal Details: **Three Meetings** – **2 Governance Meetings** – **1 Additional Meeting: Options:** Strategic Plan Monitoring at 6- or 9-month mark; Growth Decision Template; Additional Governance **Potential Deliverables** – **Work Plan:** Support in Governance Work Plan implementation—**Manual page 7** – **Evaluation:** Conduct and tabulate Board Evaluation (bubble page)-**Manual page 9** – **Handbook:** Complete Board Handbook Template-**Manual page 16** – **Skills Matrix:** Complete Skills Matrix to quantify Board skills/gaps-**Manual page 18-19** – **Orientation:** Complete Orientation PowerPoint Template—**aligned with Handbook**	
TOTAL: Estimated 20 hours	**$ 2,000**

Item #7

Mansfield Downtown Partnership

23 Royce Circle
PO Box 513
Storrs, CT 06268
(860) 429-2740
Fax: (860) 429-2719

January 5, 2017

Board of Directors
Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Re: Item #7 – Monthly Review of Strategic Plan Dash Board

Dear Board members:

Please see the attached updated Dash Board for your review. I will go over it at the Board meeting on January 5.

Sincerely,

Cynthia van Zelm
Executive Director

Attach: (1)

Mansfield Downtown Partnership Dash Board Template—based on 13 Strategic Imperatives

(A tool to be updated and alerts discussed at every Board meeting/as of December 19, 2016)

Dashboard (Using Plan Priority Goals and Strategic Imperatives)	Status	Activities/Comments (as of August 25, 2016)
Multi-year strategic plan meets targets (Below are target highlights)		• Strategic Plan to be approved at Sept. 1, 2016 Board meeting. Completed.
Economic Development		
1. **Tenant/Owner Relations:** Formalize business visits/phone calls—using Board/Staff—2X/yr.		• Meeting with Business Development and Retention Committee on January 12 and will discuss.
2. **Report Card:** Develop report card for the Downtown to include occupancy, tax revenue etc.		• TBD
Streetscape/Infrastructure		
3. **Operations Plan:** Formalize and maintain a comprehensive Operations Plan.		• Monthly walkthrough and evaluation of infrastructure needs is on-going. Need to review/revise Plan as necessary.
4. **NZTC:** Evaluate, refine and maintain oversight of Center.		• Partnership with Library to support staffing.
5. **Parking:** Hire parking evaluation consultant and execute recommendations.		• In process. On Sept. 20, 2016, Town requested Leyland to update its Master Parking Study for Storrs Center.
6. **Public Spaces Plan:** Fund and implement Public Spaces Plan.		• In process. Board accepted Public Spaces Plan at October 6 Board meeting. Cynthia met with Town staff on Nov. 9 to review recommendations. Met with property owners and Steve Bacon on Dec. 7. Cynthia needs to do follow-up including implementation plan.
Positioning/Promotion		
7. **Ombudsman/Concierge Role:** Solidify role as the hub—providing information and linkage		• In process. See below re: hiring a consultant to prepare plan.
8. **Promotion Role:** Reach agreement with Town, UConn, owners about the Partnership's role and funding in promotion of the Downtown.		• Growth Task Force met on December 13 to begin discussion of property owner contributions to the Partnership. Positioning Task Force should be involved with promotion piece. Continued discussion at January 4, 2017 Growth Task Force meeting.
9. **Positioning/Marketing Plan:** Develop/implement comprehensive plan—that includes Partnership and Downtown Storrs branding and promotion strategies.		• RFQ for Branding and Marketing Consultant approved by Board at December 1, 2016 meeting. RFQ released on Dec. 15 with deadline of January 20, 2017.
Sustainability		
10. **Partner Relations—(MOU):** Complete and execute MOU with Town and UConn; Explore feasibility of MOU with owners; Consider strategies to maintain relations	Alert	• DRAFT MOU to be considered at Partnership Board meeting on January 5, 2017.

11. **Governance:** Evaluate and implement Board structure required to achieve strategic priorities; Convene ongoing Governance Committee to manage future Board recruitment, orientation, development and evaluation.	February	• Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation to be considered by membership on March 2. Governance Manual and Board Manual drafts will be brought to full Board in February.
12. **Staffing:** Align staff job descriptions and work plans with available resources.		• New org chart/job descriptions TBD post MOU
13. **Fee-For-Service:** Develop criteria to evaluate fee-for-service opportunities with focus mission enhancement and/ or sustainability.		• Growth Task Force (subset of Finance and Growth Committee) will convene to explore. Meeting held on Dec. 13, 2016. Will continue discussion on January 4.

Green=complete; Yellow= in process; Gray=not started; Red=alert: requires Board discussion

Mansfield Downtown Partnership

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January 5, 2017

Board of Directors
Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Re: Item #9 – Correspondence and Communications

Dear Board members:

The following correspondence was sent via email in PDF format for your perusal:

1. Letter from Steve Smith of Dog Lane Café regarding the Mansfield Downtown Partnership Conflict of Interest Policy and Town of Mansfield Code of Ethics dated November 28, 2016
2. Email from CT Main Street Center regarding Downtown Update Newsletter for December 2016 dated December 15, 2016

The following communications were sent via e-mail in PDF format for your perusal:

1. Article in The Daily Campus entitled "FroyoWorld's Nitro is a must" dated December 1, 2016
2. Article in The Chronicle entitled "Welcome winter with Mansfield events" dated December 2, 2016
3. Article in The Chronicle entitled "Christmas, Storrs Center style" dated December 5, 2016
4. Photograph in The Chronicle entitled "Popping good time" dated December 6, 2016
5. Article in The Hartford Courant entitled "Holiday Season Ushered In" dated December 12, 2016
6. Article on PlaceMakers.com entitled "What Makes a Good Main Street Work?" dated December 13, 2016
7. Article in The Chronicle entitled "New water lines operational in Mansfield" dated December 14, 2016
8. Article in The Connecticut Landscape Architect entitled "The Small Landscape Architecture Studio" dated fall 2016
9. Article in The Chronicle entitled "Storrs garners national ranking" dated December 16, 2016
10. Photograph in The Chronicle entitled "A chilly welcome to winter" dated December 17, 2016

Sincerely,

Cynthia van Zelm

Cynthia van Zelm
Executive Director

Attach: (10)

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November 28, 2016

Mr. Stephen M. Bacon, President
Mansfield Downtown Partnership
23 Royce Circle
P.O. Box 513
Storrs, Ct. 06268

Re: **Notification of potential or direct conflicts of interest with the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.**

Dear Mr. Bacon,
I am writing to you as required by the Mansfield Downtown Partnership Conflict of Interest Policy and the Town of Mansfield Code of Ethics.

I am a co-owner of the Dog Lane Café Restaurant. I am also a member of the Board of Directors for the Norwich Community Development Corporation or NCDC.

I do not know of any potential Conflicts of Interest at present.

I welcome any questions or comments from you, the board of directors or its counsel.

Steve Smith
Co-Owner/General Manager
Dog Lane Café
860-429-4900
steve@doglanecafe.com

Cynthia A. vanZelm

From: CT Main Street Center <info@ctmainstreet.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2016 1:31 PM
To: Cynthia A. vanZelm
Subject: Downtown Update - December 2016

Having trouble viewing this email? Click here

Downtown Update

Newsletter of the Connecticut Main Street Center

CONNECTICUT MAIN STREET CENTER

Our mission is to be the catalyst that ignites Connecticut's Main Streets as the cornerstone of thriving communities.

Happy Holidays to All

It's hard to believe yet another year is drawing to a close. We'd like to take this time to thank you for your continued support of CMSC and all of Connecticut's downtowns, and we hope you enjoy a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends. We look forward to working with you for a fruitful 2017!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

CMSC News

There's been a lot of activity at CMSC recently. Here's a quick recap of the latest news and activities:

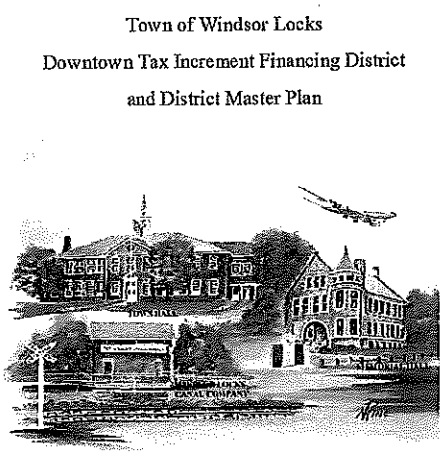
- **CMSC President & CEO John Simone announced his retirement**, effective August 2017. **Read the announcement**
- CMSC Board member Shelly Saczynski was awarded the **2016 Kenneth L. Roberts Lifetime Achievement Award** from the Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS). The award is presented to an individual "whose career has greatly contributed to the advancement of the Connecticut economy." **Click for more.**
- **Shelly is also retiring from her post at UIL**, where she has served since 2001. She will continue to serve on the CMSC Board during her retirement, and while we

wish her the best on her new endeavors, we're delighted she will continue to support CMSC as a valued member of the Board. **Read about Shelly's accomplishments.**

- CMSC's **Susan Westa was part of a team recognized with a CT Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) Award** for the Eastern Highlands Health District for its Plan For Health web toolkit.
- **CMSC's interns, Lydia Chen and Paris Hanon-Bogosh concluded their work** with a final presentation of their research to CMSC staff. We wish them the best of luck in their Spring semester and a relaxing winter break!
- CMSC is showcasing our member communities with a **photo exhibit at the Legislative Office Building (LOB)** throughout the month of December. Legislators and visitors will be treated to 125 feet of beautiful photos showcasing our downtowns as they walk along the concourse between the Capitol and LOB.

Photo Credit: Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.

Windsor Locks Approves CT's First TIF District



In mid-November, Windsor Locks became the first municipality in the State to approve establishing a Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF District), taking advantage of the 2015 law, which is designed to help municipalities revitalize their downtown commercial areas. In general, TIFs allows municipalities to take advantage of future monies for present purposes.

The Windsor Locks TIF District will encompass the abandoned Montgomery Mill building on Main Street. Plans were recently approved for Boston-based developers Beacon Communities to invest $64 million to convert the building into 164 upscale one and two bedroom apartments, and cited the TIF District as contributing to their confidence in the development.

Click here to learn more about Windsor Locks' TIF District & Master Plan.

Historic Tax Credits Reach Cap

Those seeking Historic Tax Credits should be advised that the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program has reached the annual cap of $31.7 million with which to make tax credit reservations for the remainder of the current fiscal year (ending June 30, 2017). The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has prepared a plan to move the program forward. **Click for more information.**

Re-Mains of the Day

- **Mansfield Downtown Partnership Seeks Marketing Consultant**
- The Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc. is seeking to obtain the services of a qualified Consultant who will work with staff, the Partnership Board of Directors, and key stakeholders to develop a comprehensive positioning and marketing plan for both Downtown Storrs and the Mansfield Downtown Partnership organization. See the full Request for Qualifications

- **Save the Date for CMSC Main Street Overview Webinar** - Mark your calendar for January 18th, when CMSC's Kimberley Parsons-Whitaker hosts a webinar introducing the CT Main Street Program and the Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization. Whether you're new to Main Street or just need a refresher, this webinar will provide you with valuable information on the Main Street program.

- **National Trust for Historic Preservation and American Express Announce *Partners in Preservation*** - *Partners in Preservation: Main Streets for 2017* is a new Partners in Preservation campaign building on Main Street America's decades of success in partnering to advance community-based preservation across the country. While the rules of the campaign are still being finalized, American Express will be providing $2 million in funding for preservation projects in 20 main streets across the country, and there will be a public voting process to determine which main streets receive the funding. The project will launch Fall 2017.

- **CT Council for Philanthropy Offering Free Program** - The Connecticut Council for Philanthropy is presenting *Being Grounded in Philanthropy*, a free program geared towards Connecticut state and municipal elected officials and their staff, state agencies and economic development professionals. The program will teach participants about how philanthropy works with the public sector.

- **Creative Placemaking Guide Available** - The National Endowment for the Arts has published *How to Do Creative Placemaking: An Action-Oriented Guide to Arts in Community Development*. The book features 28 essays from thought leaders active in arts-based community development as well as 13 case studies of projects funded through the NEA's creative placemaking program. It's intended to be a primer for those interested in bringing the arts to the community development table as a tool - along with housing, transportation, public health and other sectors - to advance revitalization efforts.

Spotlight on 2016 Awards of Excellence

2016 Award of Excellence for Events & Programming,
Holiday Window Display Competition, Downtown Waterbury
to Main Street Waterbury

Main Street Waterbury's goal was to harness the spirit of the holiday season and foster an environment of cheer and friendly competition among shop owners in the Main Street district.

The harsh wind and cold of winter can serve as a bleak backdrop to the brick and concrete

buildings that populate downtown. But by encouraging store owners to decorate their front windows with holiday scenes and displays, Main Street Waterbury's program helps transform downtown into a cluster of streets that look like they belong in a Norman Rockwell painting, creating a sense of community among the merchants and a cheerful respite for holiday shoppers.

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THE DAILY CAMPUS

FroyoWorld's Nitro Lab is a must

By Chris Hanna

01 December 2016

I am a huge fan of all things dessert, whether it is frozen yogurt, ice cream, cookies, you name it. With a sweet tooth like mine, almost any type of dessert tastes good, so it takes something extremely special to wow me. However, FroyoWorld at Storrs Center may have done just that with their latest creation.

Recently, the frozen yogurt company began experimenting with a new dessert concept called "The Nitro Lab." The idea is based off a similar experiment at Milkcraft Creamery in Fairfield, Connecticut, which has garnered rave reviews for its fantastic flavor and incredibly smooth ice cream.

This nitro lab at FroyoWorld allows customers to choose from numerous flavors of ice cream, ranging from vanilla to cookies and cream and more. Then, the ice cream is blended with liquid nitrogen in a completely safe reaction that extracts air bubbles from the ice cream and essentially gives the ice cream a perfectly creamy texture.

A big scoop of the nitrogen-infused ice cream is topped off with a warm bubbly waffle cone and the customer's choice of the usual toppings for just $5.49. Alternatively, one can forego the bubbly waffle for additional scoops of the ice cream for $1.99 per extra scoop.

After I heard about the new concept from a friend who works at FroyoWorld, I just had to try it out for myself. I personally decided to keep it simple by choosing vanilla ice cream and topping off the ice cream with strawberry, mango and kiwi bobas, along with some Reese's peanut butter cups.

I also went with the bubbly waffle cone instead of the extra scoops of the ice cream. Going with the bubbly waffle was the best decision I made that night, as the warm cone complemented the ice cream very well. Each bite was an explosion of flavor of the smooth ice cream, bobas and warm waffle. The dessert was very filling too, and was a great value given how much one gets for the price.

While the concept is still in its infancy at FroyoWorld, the nitro lab is definitely worth a try if you visit the store in the future. You won't regret it one bit, as it is about same price as a large cup of frozen yogurt and tastes incredible, leaving you clamoring for more.

I give FroyoWorld's newest creation a 4.5 out of 5 for its innovation, fantastic flavor and excellent texture. On top of that, it has a decent price, giving me the impression that it could potentially be the optimal late night snack for the college student's budget.

From: *The Daily Campus*
Accessed: 01 December 2016
http://dailycampus.com/stories/2016/11/30/froyoworlds-nitro-lab-is-a-must

Welcome winter with Mansfield events

By COREY SIPE 12/11/16 Chronicle
Chronicle Staff Writer

STORRS — If you are looking for some winter fun, look no further than Winter Welcome, sponsored by the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Saturday from 2 to 5 p.m. in downtown Storrs.

Events will take place on or around Betsy Paterson Square, named after the former mayor of Mansfield who was instrumental in making the Storrs Center development a reality.

Paterson Square was formerly called the Mansfield Town Square and is located at the junction of Royce Circle, Dog Lane, Bolton Notch Road Extension and Storrs Road.

"It will be held rain or shine but if it's bad weather only some activities will be able to be moved inside," said Kathleen Paterson, communications and special projects manager for Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

In its fourth year, the Winter Welcome will feature Santa Claus, caroling, ice sculptures, a puppet show, local vendors and a number of activities.

Paterson said "each year it gets a bit bigger," adding the event started before the square was completed.

Groups of young musicians and carolers from the University of Connecticut marching band tubas, Mansfield Middle School Chamber Singers and the E.O. Smith Chamber Choir will be strolling through downtown from 2 to 4:30 p.m., helping visitors get into the holiday spirit as they take advantage of sales and specials at participating businesses throughout Storrs Center and the nearby University Plaza, at 1232 Storrs Road.

Paterson Square will feature ice sculptures, crafted by UConn Dining Services representatives, a make-your-own-wreath station by The Flower Pot, and other local vendors who will be offering gifts and food on the square, such as Tiny Acre Farm of Woodstock, Keifer's Kettle Korn of Voluntown, Mansfield Art Center of Mansfield and Running Rabbit Press of Mansfield.

Additionally, there will be winter games, offered by the UConn chapter of the Alpha Sigma Phi fraternity, at no cost and a "ring of fire" activity with prizes offered by Blaze Pizza of Storrs Center.

Winter Welcome will also feature a winter-theme puppet show at the Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry.

"The Snowflake Man," inspired by Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley, who as a self-educated Vermont farmer and scientist was the first person to photograph a single snowflake, will be performed at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., will be held in the museum's theater at 1 Royce Circle.

For more information about the performance, visit bimp.uconn.edu. To buy tickets, visit bimp.ticketleap.com.

Santa Claus will visit Barnes & Noble UConn at Storrs Center, also t 1 Royce Circle, from 2 to 4 p.m.

"We appreciate that the bookstore continued a tradition started by the Co-op, who first started hosting Santa," Paterson said.

She also said there will be tours of the apartments at the Oaks on the Square, at 12 Royce Circle, and tours of the Leyland Building, at 37 Sherwood St., part of Main Street Homes.

The event ends with a community sing-a-long at 4:30 p.m. at Paterson Square, which is being led by the E.O. Smith High School Chamber Choir.

Those who are planning to go to the Winter Welcome are reminded two-hour free parking is available at Storrs Center Garage and there is a $1 charge every hour thereafter, with a daily maximum charge of $8.

For more information about the winter welcome, visit mansfieldct.gov/winterwelcome.

Al Malpa photos

Chronicle 12/5/16

Christmas, Storrs Center style

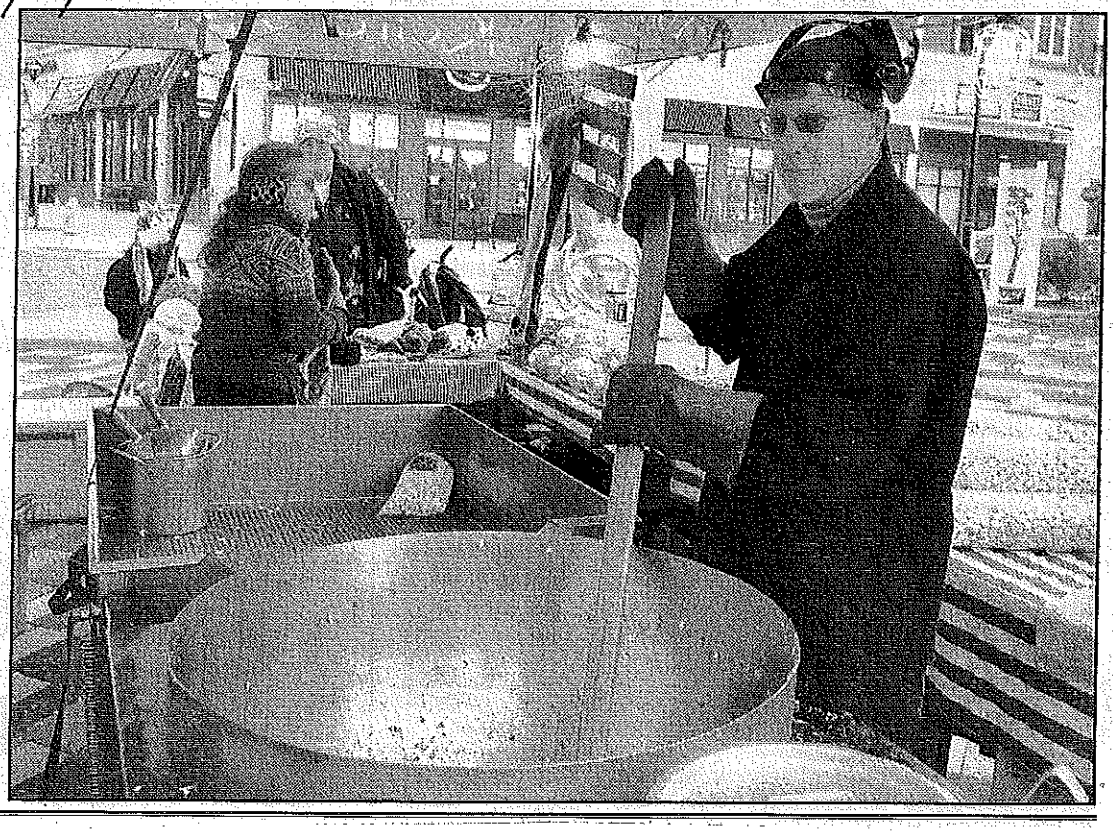
The Mansfield Downtown Partnership hosted its fourth annual Winter Welcome on Saturday at Storrs Center. The weather was brisk, but attendees didn't seem to wane as they strolled about Betsy Paterson Square. UConn Dining Services representatives made ice sculptures and visitors made their own Christmas wreaths with materials and instruction from the Flower Pot. There was fresh-made Kelfers Kettle Corn and local vendors were open, offering gifts, food and origami lessons. In the mid-afternoon, a puppet show called 'The Snowflake Man' was given at the Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry. The E.O. Smith High School Chamber Choir performed carols in the square toward the end of the event. ABOVE: Sitting on Santa's lap is Alexandra Koplowitz, 3, left, who was with her brother, Brian Hubble, and father Joshua Koplowitz at the Barnes & Noble bookstore, which hosted Santa Claus, right. BELOW: Storrs Center was crowded with holiday revelers looking to kick start the season.

Chronicle
12/6/16

Popping good time

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership held its annual Winter Welcome on Saturday at Storrs Center. The weather was brisk, but attendees didn't seem to mind as they strolled about Betsy Paterson Square. Here, popcorn chef Glenn Hutton cooks up another batch of Feifer's Kettle Corn. He was continually stirring the pot from which aromas of sweet popcorn wafted across the square.

Al Malpa



THE HARTFORD COURANT: COURANT COMMUNITY

Holiday Season Ushered In

By Melanie Savage

12 December 2016

The town of Mansfield held its annual Winter Welcome on Dec. 3. Here, Ken Johnson leads the Mansfield Middle School choir inside the UConn Co-op.

The town of Mansfield ushered in the season on Dec. 3, with the fourth annual Winter Welcome, sponsored by the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

The event invited visitors to stroll through Downtown Storrs and visit participating businesses, which were offering treats, sales, and specials.

At Betsy Paterson Square, UConn Dining Services representatives demonstrated the art of ice sculpture. The square also hosted wreath-making, sponsored by local business, The Flower Pot, as well as kettle corn and other local vendors.

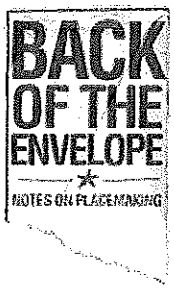
Groups providing live musical performances included several local middle school choirs, as well as the E.O. Smith Chamber Choir, leading a community sing-along.

Santa greeted children inside the UConn Co-op, behind the square.

From: *The Hartford Courant*
Accessed: 15 December 2016
http://www.courant.com/community/mansfield/

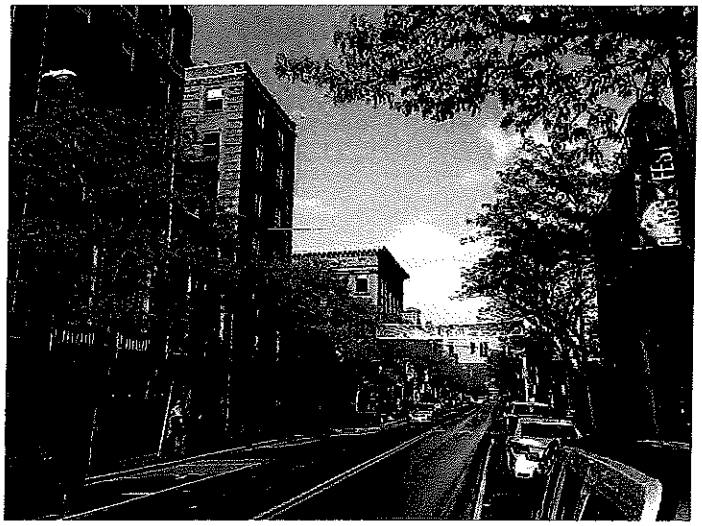
December 13, 2016 | 12:08 am

What Makes a Good Main Street Work?



Shortly before this essay's original posting, I participated in a terrific conference called *From Main Street to Eco-Districts: Greening Our Communities*, hosted by a chapter of the American Institute for Architects in Corning, New York. Held a block off of Corning's own, magnificent "Main Street" (actually named Market Street), and including many of the people who have helped make that street so successful, the conference started me thinking about the whole idea of Main Streets and what makes the best of them such delights to experience.

I have written at length about Main Streets before, most notably in an article in February 2013 addressing both the metaphorical and literal manifestations of the phenomenon, and lamenting that they seem to be a thing of the past in much of America; in that article I highlighted Sandy Sorlein's evocative photos of principal shopping streets in small-town America, many of them mere ghosts of their past glory. (More recently, I wrote of a notable adaptive reuse of an older, formerly vacant retail building on Rutland, Vermont's Main Street.)



White some Main Streets seem well past their prime, others – like Corning's – remain thriving to this day. Why? A lot of it has to do with the towns and cities in which they are located, of course; it's hard to have a well-functioning Main Street in a down-and-out community. But there are also elements of design and context that matter. What are they? The answers matter to sustainability, because traditional Main Streets tend to have central

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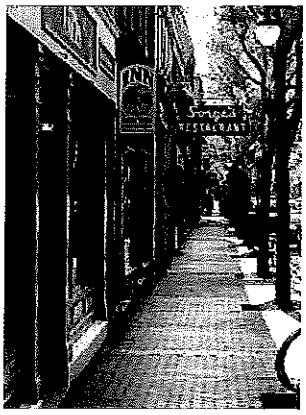
locations and good walkability, both of which reduce carbon and other emissions associated with driving; over time, they also recycle land, buildings and infrastructure.

Here is an attempt to set forth some key elements that I believe can make Main Streets more likely to thrive:



1. A superior pedestrian experience. Main Streets are for walking, browsing, lingering; while they should also be efficient for those looking for a particular item at, for example, a particular pharmacy or hardware store, they have to be highly walkable to succeed. This leads to a lot of potential design features, including ample sidewalks; convenient, well-highlighted crosswalks; vehicle traffic at calm speeds; entertaining, transparent storefronts abutting or very close to the sidewalk; relatively short block lengths; in particularly hot climates, shading.

Motor vehicle traffic is very, very important: I think some of it is actually helpful to the experience, particularly if it draws customers to the street's businesses and uses on-street parking, with the effect of buffering walkers from moving vehicles. Yet too much of it will kill the feel of the street for walkers. In particular, there should not be too many lanes of moving traffic so as to make street crossings inconveniently long; in most cases, two lanes of moving traffic, one in each direction, should be enough.

2. Density, but at human scale. A Main Street won't be walkable without a significant minimum density. Yet it shouldn't be overwhelming, leading to both vehicular and pedestrian congestion, diminishing the pleasure of a leisurely stroll and blocking light. Victor Dover and John Massengale, in their epic and highly recommended book *Street Design*, write eloquently about the best ratios of building height to street width. Personally, I like a mixture of building heights ranging from two to about eight or so stories. It's all situational, of course: Fifth Avenue in New York City is a Main Street of sorts and can be terribly exciting for the pedestrian; but a two-story building would be way, way out of place there. That noted, Fifth Avenue is not the kind of smaller-scale, true "Main Street" I'm trying to describe today.

3. Viable local businesses. This one is tricky. So many macro- and micro-economic forces are stacked up against local businesses that I find it remarkable that some do, in fact, survive and thrive. Yet a "Main Street" with only chain stores and no locals (imagine the sort of "lifestyle centers," outdoor shopping malls, really, that were emerging in the last decade) won't feel sufficiently authentic to provide a rewarding experience. Some chains are fine, I think; it's not the 19th century anymore. But not too many.

And, while we're on the subject of locality and authenticity, I must add that the best Main Streets I tend to encounter are found in places that have a bit of history to them (see my recent article on legacy architecture and continuity of place), and a local economy boosted at least in part by tourism. Corning's Market Street feels that way: I patronized two restaurants and an art gallery on the street in my two days there, all local businesses; each time, the clientele seemed a mixture of locals and visitors.

I should add that, although a successful Main Street need not be historic, it does seem to help if it is. Dover and Massengale's *Street Design* devotes some 35 pages explicitly to Main Streets, with about as many photos; by my count, all but two (excluding illustrative drawings) are of historic streets. (The historic buildings are almost always repurposed, but the architectural fabric remains.) Yet one can find what I might call neo-Main Streets in newer developments, too. The highly successful suburban retrofit Bethesda Row includes a Main-Street-like environment that is exceptionally pleasant; so does the new (and beautiful) Atlanta infill neighborhood Glenwood Park, for which Dover's firm served as master

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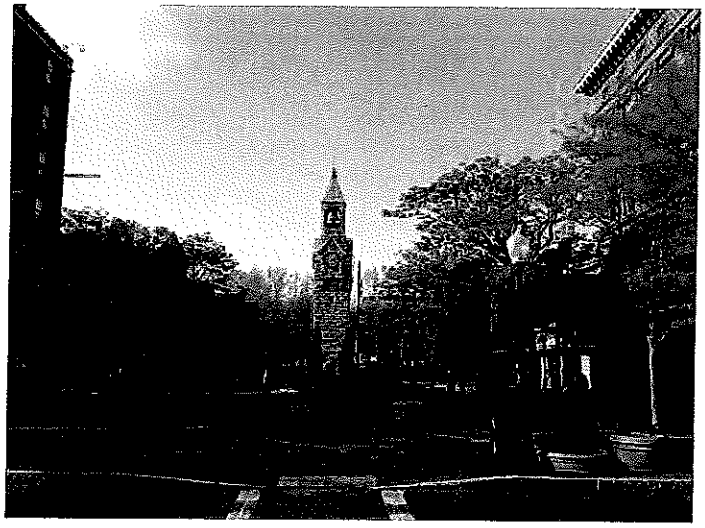
Vince Graham

planners, though the shopping area there is not quite mature. But I think some degree of local businesses may be essential.

4. Nature. In a shopping district, a little bit of nature can go a long way. Some urbanist designers I know are fond of pointing to historic districts internationally (Florence, for instance), that have almost no greenery downtown. Ah, but look closely and one will see window boxes; hanging baskets of flowers; trees here and there. Our innate biophilic instinct is so strong that humans will find a way to add nature to even the most man-made of places. I maintain that cities need visible and functional nature, and Corning incorporates it beautifully in its street trees. Without them Market Street would not feel nearly so pleasant and alive. Corning also has a small square and park at the heart of the shopping strip.

5. Nearby residences. This is part of walkability, I suppose: I think it helps tremendously if there are residences right on a Main Street, ideally including apartments on the upper floors above the commercial storefronts. (I'm not sure if this is the case in Corning.) But the idea is to have enough residents living nearby to provide a steady clientele to the businesses. They can be supplemented, of course, by patrons who travel to the Main Street and walk once they are there, or by workers in nearby offices; but, if there are no residents at all living close enough to walk, I'm not sure you have a true Main Street. You have something akin to a quaintly designed shopping center.

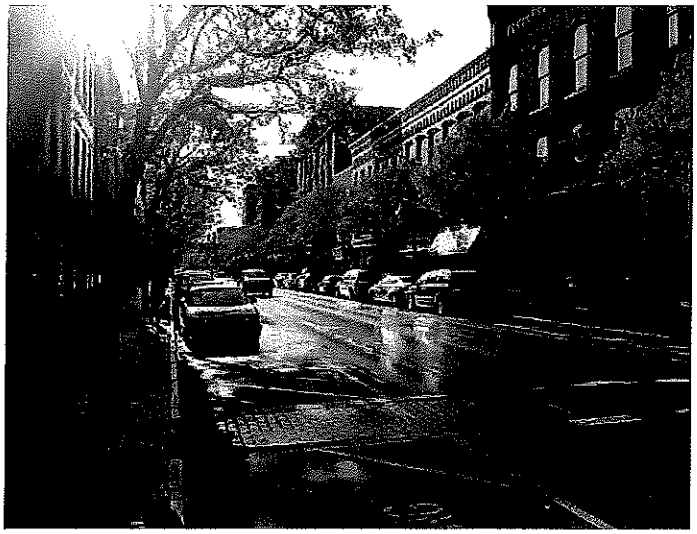


So that's what I came up with. I'm curious what others might add to or subtract from the list.

The National Main Street Center, interestingly, avoids a definition or list of preferred characteristics for successful Main Streets. Rather the Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, stresses such streets' importance, and the organization's program for revitalizing older commercial districts:

> *"We all know where our Main Streets are, but do we know what they are and why they matter? Whether they are named First Avenue or Water Street or Martin Luther King Boulevard, what they represent is universal. Main Street is the economic engine, the big stage, the core of the community. Our Main Streets tell us who we are and who we were, and how the past has shaped us. We do not go to bland suburbs or enclosed shopping malls to learn about our past, explore our culture, or discover our identity. Our Main Streets are the places of shared memory where people still come together to live, work, and play.*
>
> *"So what is Main Street? The phrase has been used to describe everything from our nostalgic past to our current economic woes, but when we talk about Main Street®, we are thinking of real places doing real work to revitalize their economies and preserve their character. Specifically, Main Street® is three things: a proven strategy for revitalization, a powerful network of linked communities, and a national support program that leads the field."*

The most important process elements for a successful Main Street revitalization are elucidated, in part, by a set of ten "national accreditation standards of performance," each fleshed out with narrative discussion on the Main Street Center's website. Corning, incidentally, was one of the first communities to participate in the Main Street program when the National Trust began its work on the issue decades ago.



Many cities and towns have detailed Main Street design guidelines, and the state of Oregon offers a 105-page handbook on public infrastructure helpful to supporting good Main Streets. Dover and Massengale's *Street Design* mostly teaches by detailing several examples of great Main Streets, but also includes a two-page set of design guidelines from retail expert Robert Gibbs on such matters as storefront design, signage, awnings (ten points on awnings alone!), sidewalks, street furniture, and lighting.

Dover and Massengale are at their best, however, when they sum up the essence of the Main Street experience in a single paragraph:

> *"While main streets vary, one thing is constant: a successful main street in a sustainable, walkable town or city is a place where people want to get out of their cars and explore. There are many factors that contribute to that, including things to do (like shopping or going to a concert), interesting sites to look at (including people – we like to people-watch), and a level of physical and psychic comfort. As we walk along, we like to feel safe and secure. Beauty is also important to making a place where we want to be."*

I can't express it any better than that. Corning's Market Street is a great example. One could do a lot worse than emulating it, with the above five concepts in mind.

Originally published on the NRDC Switchboard and now archived here. Republished with permission. All photos are of Corning, New York, ©2014 by F. Kaid Benfield.

–Kaid Benfield

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2 Comments

Chronicle 12/14/16

New water lines operational in Mansfield

By COREY SIPE
Chronicle Staff Writer

MANSFIELD — It's official. The University of Connecticut is out of the water business.

Those approximately 200 people who are its former water customers shouldn't worry though.

They are now automatically customers of the Connecticut Water Co., a Clinton-based company providing public water service to more than 300,000 people in 56 Connecticut towns.

The changeover occurred after the recent completion of the new 5-mile water line underneath Route 195, between Tolland and Mansfield, which was built by Connecticut Water, according to Daniel Meaney, spokesman for Connecticut Water.

Those customers will receive two bills starting in January, one for water service through Connecticut Water while the other will be for sewer service, which will still be managed by UConn.

Waste water for UConn and portions of Mansfield is still processed at the university's waste water pollution control facility at 25 LeDoyt Road in Storrs.

Mansfield Town Manager Matthew Hart said the changeover "should be relatively painless." He explained the town spent a lot of time negotiating with officials from Connecticut Water and UConn to ensure customers would pay the same rates as they paid previously.

"Those rates are pretty competitive compared with what other customers in the state pay," Hart said, adding water pressure and quality will match what customers experienced through UConn's water service.

Confirming that promise to those affected by the changeover, Eric W. Thornburg, president and chief executive officer of Connecticut Water, promised in a letter "Connecticut Water is not going to change water rates for existing customers in Mansfield."

Existing customers will retain their account numbers that they had when they were university water customers.

The letter states new customers connecting to the system and those transferring ownership of an existing home or business will be assessed rates approved by Connecticut Water, which has a full rate table on its website at www.ctwater.com.

Meaney said "while the university will no longer receive the water revenues from those customers, they will no longer have the costs and responsibilities to own, operate and maintain the portion of the system that serves those customers."

The university will still operate its own water system on-campus, he said, which includes its residential halls. UConn has a connection, just north of Laurel Way, to the new waterline as an additional source of water.

Meaney said "many students that live off-campus are now served by other local water companies, such as that of their particular apartment or condominium complex," and are not expected to be affected by the changeover.

The new waterline was built to accommodate planned future off-campus growth and will also meet current additional demands at UConn as it grows.

While he is expecting a change in UConn water conservation alerts, he said those changes will be done in cooperation with Connecticut Water, UConn, the Town of Mansfield and state regulatory agencies with information shared with customers before the changes are implemented.

Meaney said the new water line was first operational for the Jensen's Rolling Hills Community, near the Mansfield Four Corners, at the junction of routes 44 and 195, back in November. That area of Mansfield is poised for increased commercial growth because of this water line and the expected completion of a sewer project.

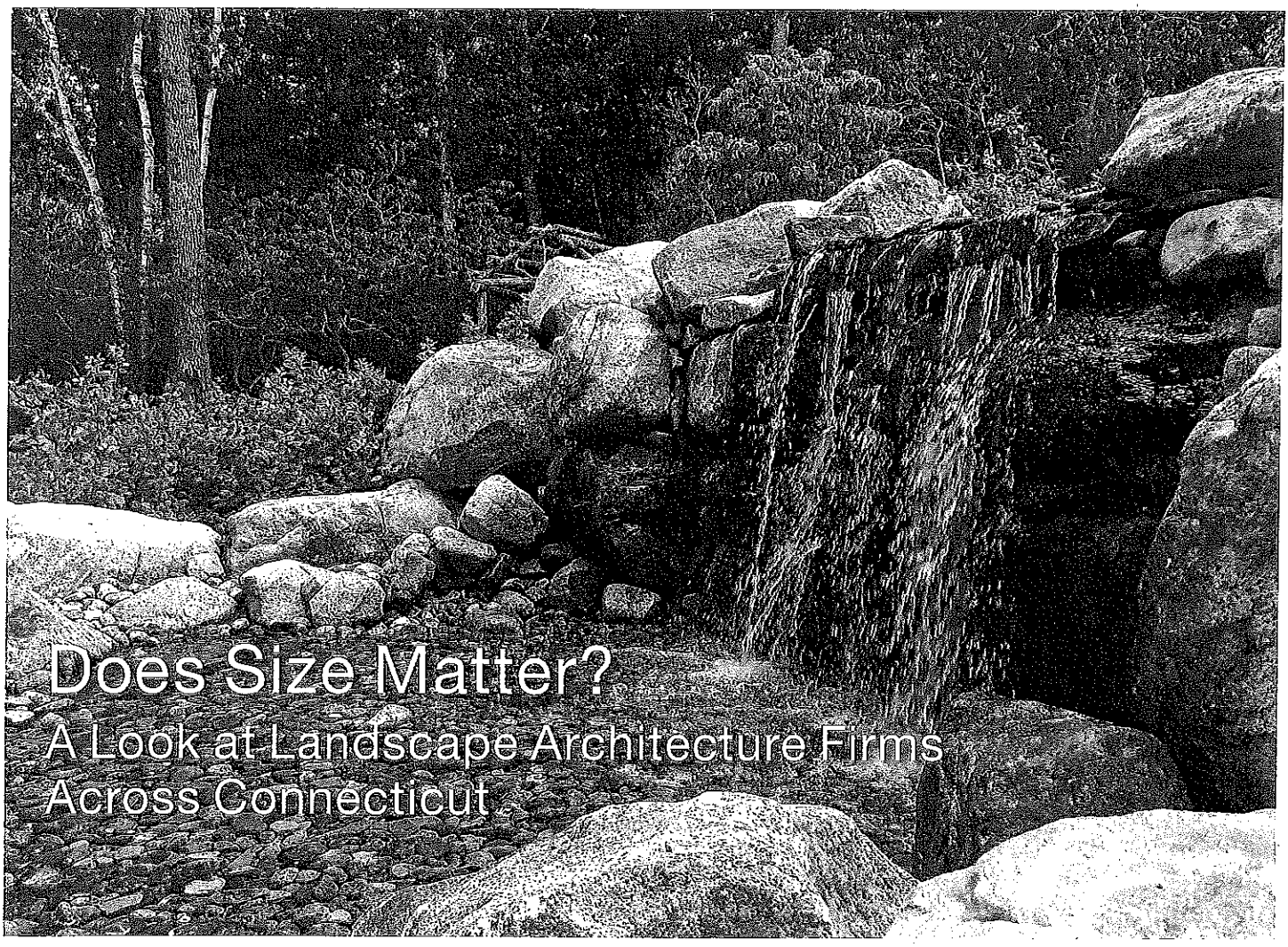
Many are glad the project has been completed because, during the construction phase, it required alternating one-way traffic and lengthy delays along Route 195, a main thoroughfare in town especially for those heading toward and away from UConn.

This was necessary not just to install new pipe, but also for paving and milling work of pavement that was disturbed as part of the project.

The project is a long time coming as it was the result of a long-term water supply agreement approved between the UConn Board of Trustees and Connecticut Water on Dec. 11, 2013 and approved between the Mansfield Town Council and Connecticut Water on Jan. 13, 2014.

The Connecticut Landscape Architect

FALL 2016



Does Size Matter?

A Look at Landscape Architecture Firms Across Connecticut

The Small Landscape Architecture Studio

KENT + FROST is a four-person landscape architecture firm located in Mystic, Connecticut specializing in planning, design, and project management. The firm was founded in 2000 by Brian Kent, a graduate of the University of Georgia. Chad Frost, a graduate of the University of Connecticut, joined the firm in 2003 and became partner in 2007. The firm has completed a wide variety of projects including residences, commercial developments, urban streetscapes, parks, municipal facilities, and town-wide master plans.

***Brian Kent, ASLA** provided the following insight to the firm.*

What type of work does your firm do?
Kent+Frost works on a wide spectrum of project types with the majority in the following:

- Institutional/cultural – museums, colleges, nature centers
- Municipal – parks, trails, streetscapes, bike/ped, Complete Streets plans
- Residential – mostly high-end single-family

What is the size of the landscape architecture staff?
Currently four full-time landscape architects.

How is your practice affected by the size of your firm?
Four to five employees is a long-term sustainable size for us. We compete with much larger firms routinely. For these larger projects we form teams of allied professionals that share the workload. Our small size requires that each person shares responsibilities on various projects.

What advantages do you see to working with a small firm?
A small firm seems well placed to adapt to fluctuations in the market. Clients seem to appreciate the personal contact they receive from the firm's principals. The workplace atmosphere is serious about the work, but friendly and casual on an interpersonal basis.

Why did you choose to practice landscape architecture in your present environment?
All the members of Kent+Frost live in the Mystic area.

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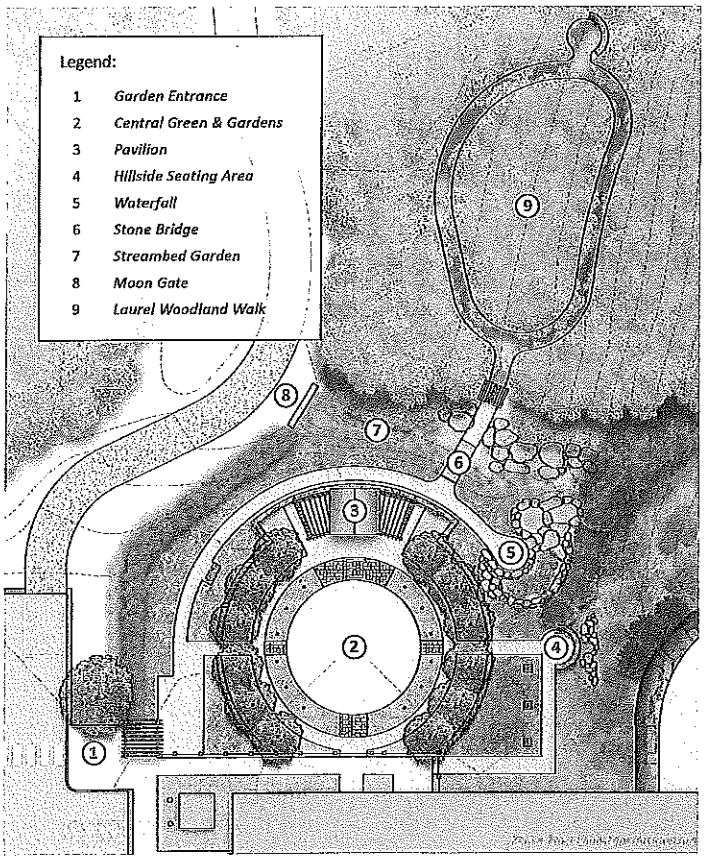
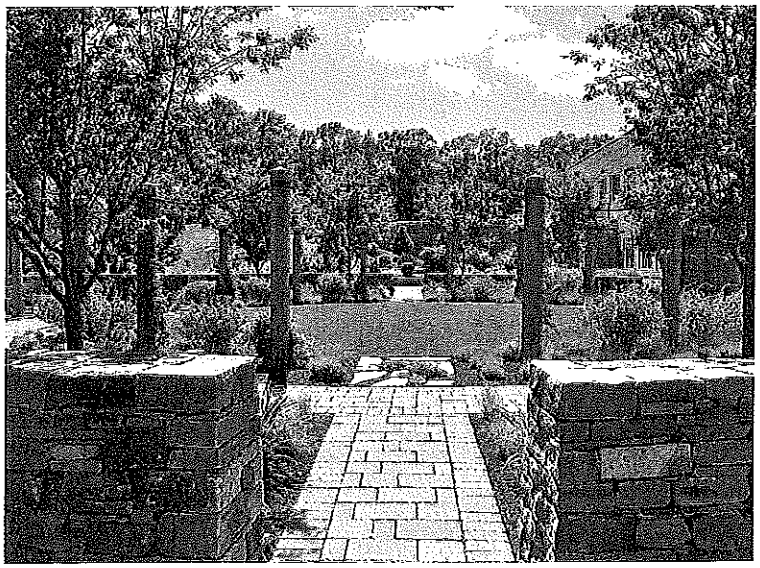


Four to five employees is a long-term sustainable size for us. We compete with much larger firms routinely. For these larger projects we form teams of allied professionals that share the workload.



The Falcone Healing Garden, designed by Kent+Frost, is a refuge for patients, families, friends, and staff. It transitions from formal design to natural balance. Right: The Central Terrace was designed as a compelling scene visible from treatment rooms, offices, and lounge.

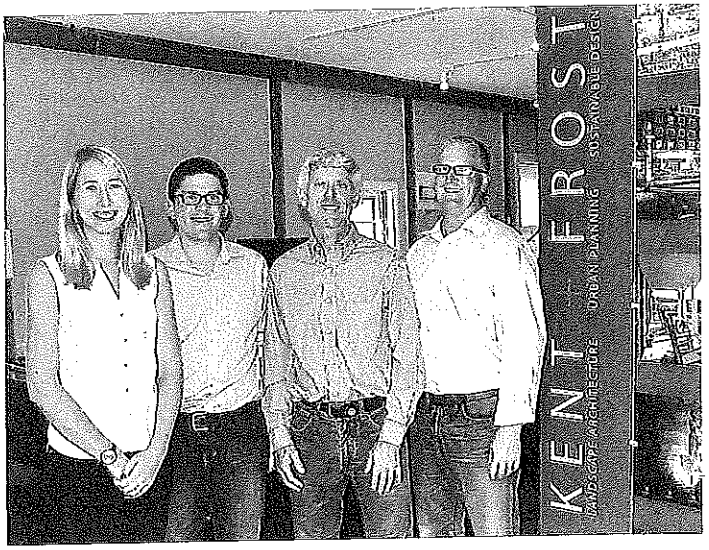
Small Landscape Architecture Studio cont'd

What challenges do you see for the profession and how does your firm address them?
The work of landscape architects tends to be relegated to a narrow "landscaping" scope when they are subconsultants to other design professionals. Kent+Frost advocates for a role as prime consultant/team leader whenever possible.

Does your firm typically lead projects or act as a consultant to other design professionals?
We serve as lead a majority of the time.

Do you feel that landscape architects can compete effectively in the marketplace with civil engineers, planners, and architects promoting site design?
Yes, we always promote our comprehensive approach to planning and design.

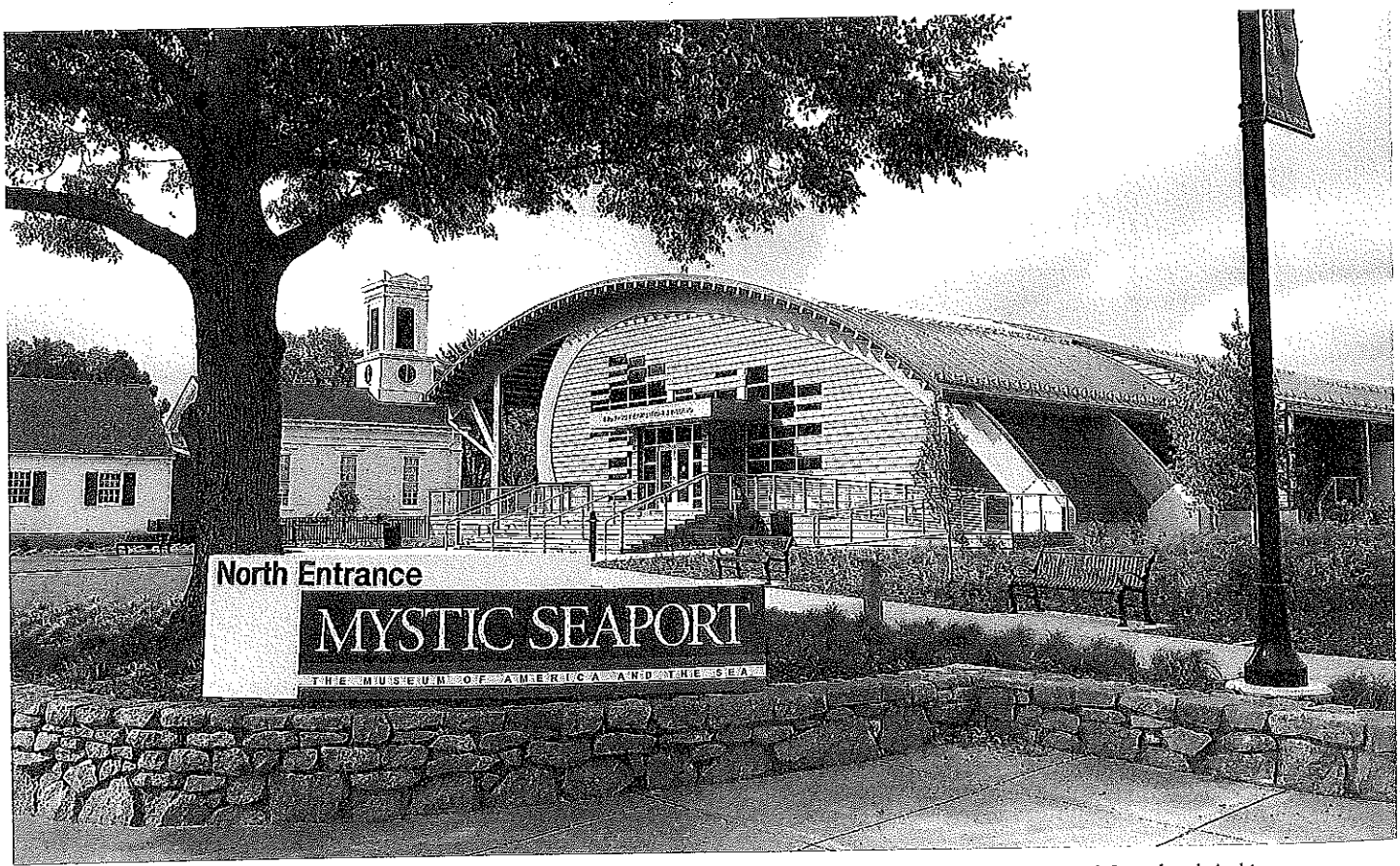
What size firm do you feel is the best poised for success in today's marketplace and why?
Much depends on the region where a firm/offices is located. Large firms like Michael Van Valkenburgh Assoc., James Corner Field Operations, Carol Johnson, etc. can work almost anywhere and provide state-of-the-art services and cutting-edge design. Small firms are best poised to provide high quality work in their local areas.



Elisa Magee, Tim Magee, Brian Kent, Chad Frost.

Is landscape architecture gaining or losing ground in the area of public respect and understanding?
Landscape architecture is gaining respect and understanding in our opinion. Our firm is repeatedly recognized for its work on local projects by the local media. We are well known for important projects in our Southeast CT region.

Are your professional goals best realized in a small or large firm?



The newly opened Thompson Exhibition Building at Mystic Seaport is part of a north campus transformation guided by Kent+Frost and Centerbrook Architects.

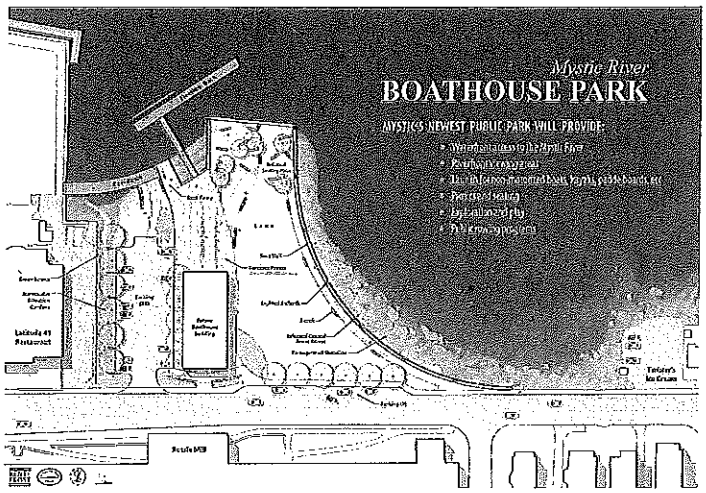
Small firms allow an employee to experience many types of projects and responsibilities. However a larger firm may offer more options for specialization. I have always worked in a small firm environment and feel that it suits my professional goals.

Does your firm function best as a consultant to other design professionals (architect, engineer, etc.) or when hired directly by an owner?

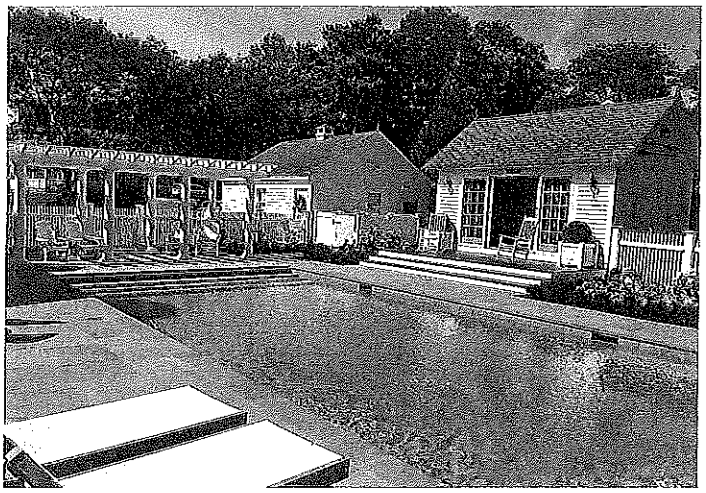
We prefer to be hired directly and have done our best work with this type of relationship.

What are a few of the firm's signature landscape architectural projects?

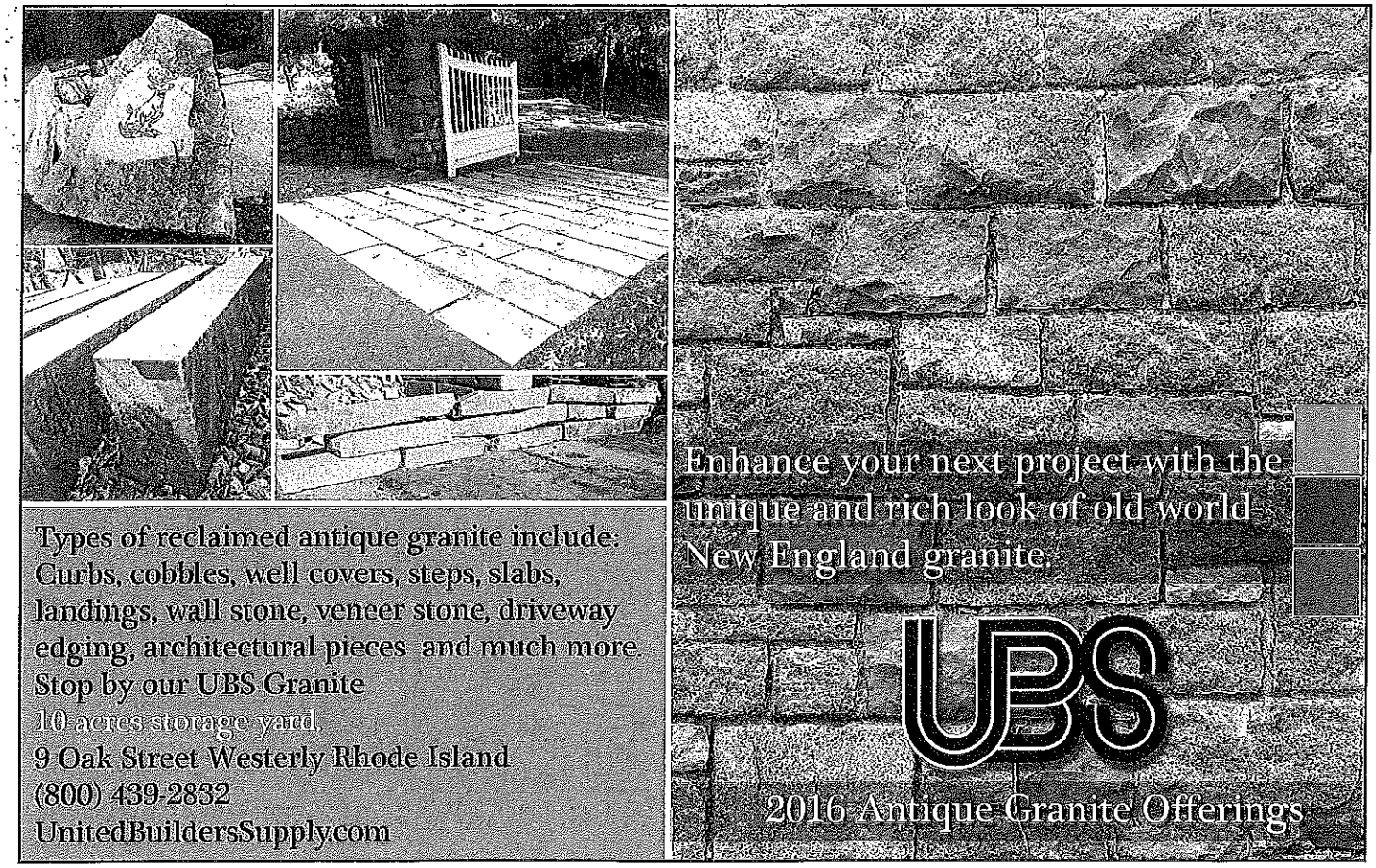
1) Hygienic Art Park, New London, CT.
2) Mansfield Town Square, Storrs Center, CT.
3) Middletown, CT Complete Streets Master Plan.

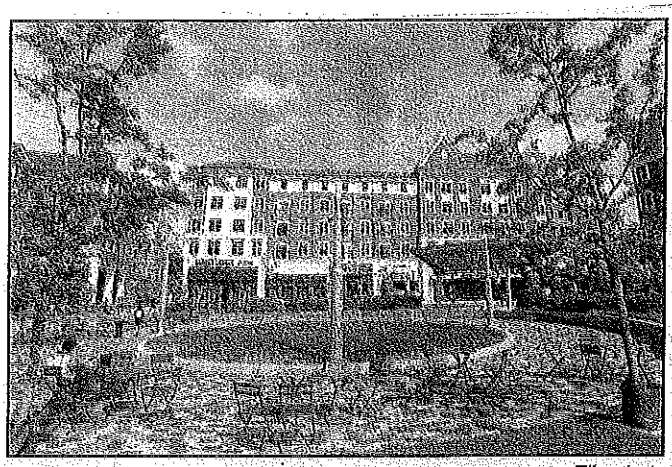


The proposed Mystic River Boathouse Park has just been approved by Stonington voters for acquisition.



Mystic residence by Kent+Frost. Project involved pool, pergola, shed conversion to pool house, fencing, lighting, landscaping.





File photo

Storrs was ranked as the 15th best small college city by by the website WalletHub.

Storrs garners national ranking

Chronicle
12/16/16

By COREY SIPE
Chronicle Staff Writer

STORRS — The University of Connecticut has a top-ranked women's basketball team.

That much is well known.

But now, the state's flagship university has a ranked college town — something that, say, a decade ago would have seemed preposterous.

But the massive, $200 million Storrs Center redevelopment project has changed the local landscape a bit.

In fact, Storrs — home to UConn — was ranked as the 15th best small college city in 2016's Best and Worst College Towns and Cities in America.

Its quite a distinction by personal finance website WalletHub, which defines "small cities as communities with less than 125,000 people."

The company examined 415 U.S. cities that host colleges and universities to look at academic, social and economic growth potential.

WalletHub assigned numerical scores based on a number of factors associated with college towns on a scale of 100, similar to a course grade.

When the numbers were crunched and final assessments categorized, Storrs received a total score of 60.09.

Of the schools evaluated, the lowest score was 26.60 and the highest 71.11.

Specifically, the Storrs portion of Mansfield has greatly benefited from the Storrs Center 12-building development that has increased residential, commercial, entertainment and employment opportunities not only for UConn, but for all of the Mansfield area.

Cynthia van Zelm, executive director for the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, said "we are pleased that downtown is highly ranked, certainly Storrs Center transformed the area, we didn't have much of a downtown before."

(Storrs, Page 4)

Storrs garners national ranking

(Continued from Page 1)

Storrs also includes a number of smaller commercial plazas around the UConn campus, such as University Plaza and Storrs Commons.

It ranked No. 2 in the highest share of part-time jobs for students, with 94 percent of jobs available as part-time, among best small college cities.

Regarding that ranking, van Zelm said "My guess is a lot of it has to do with the base with the (E.O. Smith) high school across the street and, of course, the UConn population."

UConn is within walking distance to Storrs Center, which is especially beneficial to students without a vehicle.

She said the many restaurants in Storrs Center give young people a great opportunity to work part time while they study.

While WalletHub ranked Storrs as No. 410 in having the fewest nightlife options per capita, van Zelm said more additions are coming to the restaurant and bar scene already located in Storrs Center.

"Grill 86 will be coming early next year and they will have several TV screens to watch games, which will be great to have. It is such a strong sports community at UConn," she said, adding Tang, a Chinese barbecue and karaoke restaurant, will be great for "those who are karaoke fans."

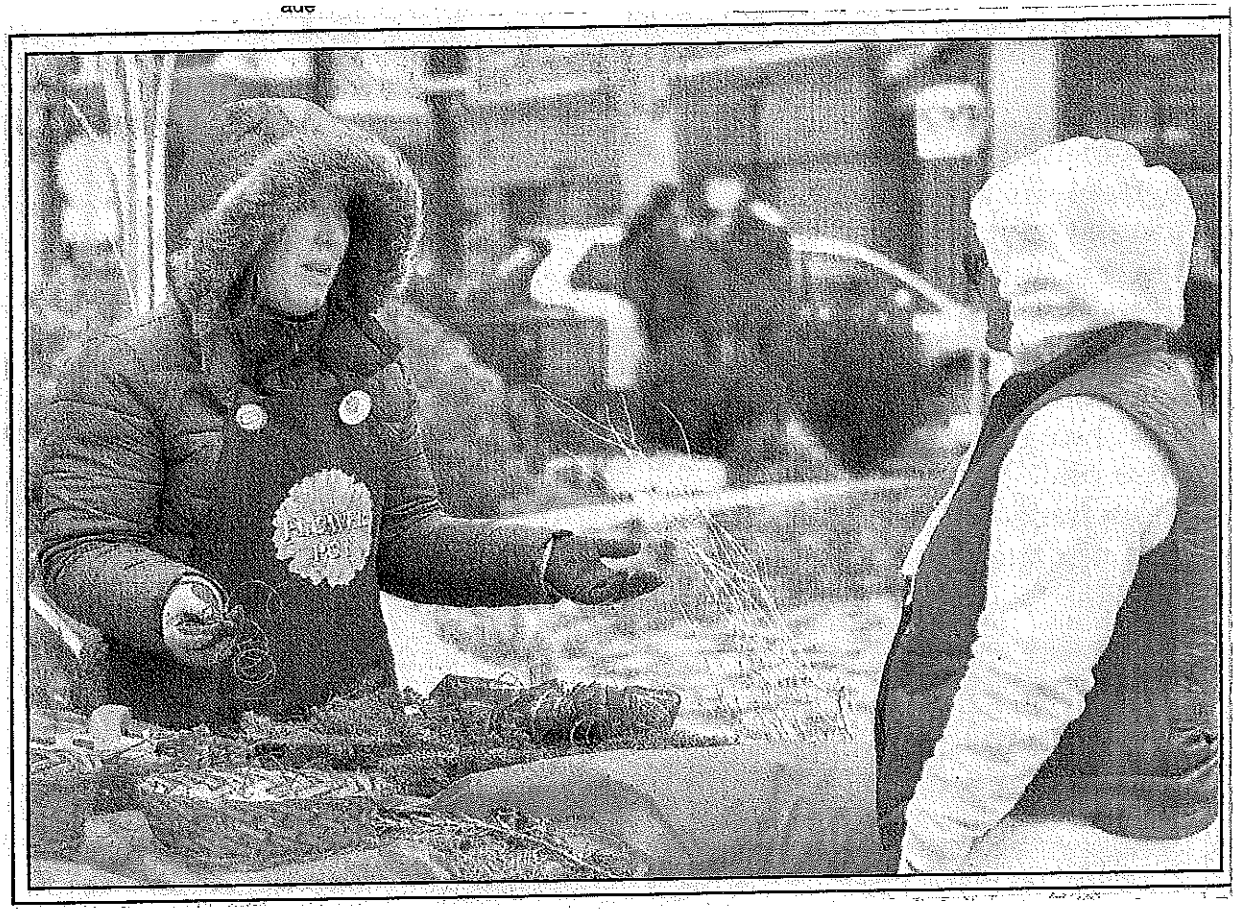
Both Grill 86 and Tang will be located at 33 Wilbur Cross Way, a building across the street from the Storrs Center parking garage, which offers free two-hour parking for visitors.

Mansfield Mayor Paul Shapiro also weighed in on the success of Storrs Center.

"It's a tribute to the hard work that went into the creation of Storrs Center. UConn students and the community are eating, shopping and having fun," he said. "It was meant to break down the town and university barrier and in many respects, it has succeeded."

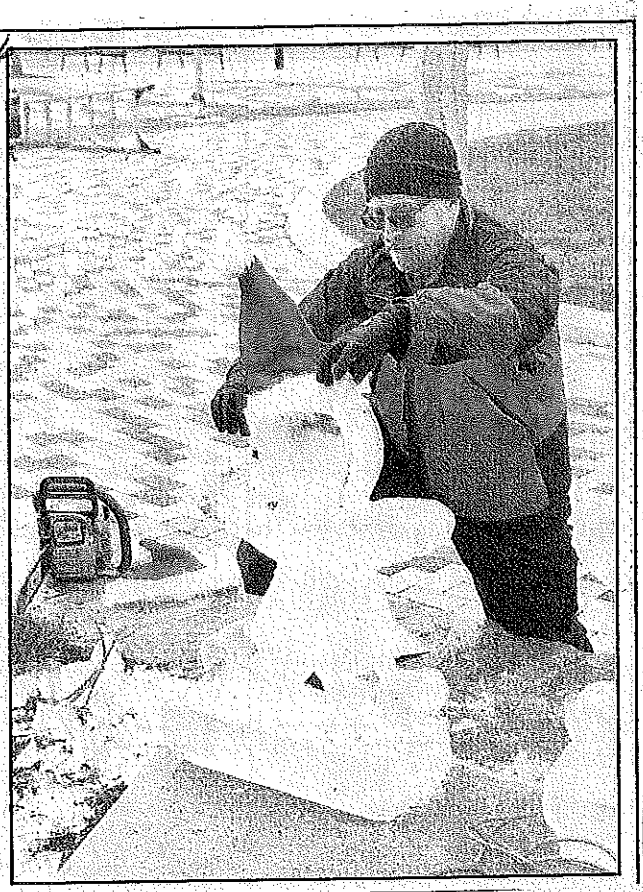
According to Jill Gonzalez, an analyst from WalletHub, only the Storrs section of Mansfield was examined in this study, with information coming from a number of governmental agencies such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau.

More information about the study can be found by visiting https://wallethub.com/edu/best-worst-college-cities-and-towns-in-america/8974/.



Chronicle 12/17/14

A chilly welcome to winter

LEFT: Linnea Nikitas from the Flower Pot, left, explains wreath-making techniques to Pat Lofman of Mansfield during the Mansfield Downtown Partnership's fourth annual Winter Welcome recently at Storrs Center. RIGHT: Ice carver Eric Janssen, an employee of the University of Connecticut's Department of Dining Services, puts a Santa hat on one of two gingerbread man carvings he just finished.

Al Malpa photos