

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT, SANDY GOLDSTEIN

*Stamford Downtown Events – A Major Economic Engine*

Sandy Goldstein, President

Stamford Downtown (DSSD) is the proud producer of seven signature events held over the course of each year. Some of these events bring hundreds of patrons to the Downtown; some bring multiples of 1,000. A question often asked is whether spending so much time and treasure to produce these events is worth the effort. Of course in addition to the economic benefits of the events, which will be discussed in greater detail shortly, there are several other important reasons for event production. First, events create a phenomenal sense of place, making the Downtown environment safe and attractive for patrons and residents. Second, successful events are major selling points for corporations which want to lure employees to Stamford and whose potential employees want a lively and engaging nighttime environment. Last, residential developers trumpet the events to potential residents who want to live in a "hip" environment, which is why 65% of downtown residents are between the ages of 25 and 34 with a median income of \$108,000, (\$24,000 more than residents who live in the rest of Fairfield County.)

While we produce seven signature events (Alive@Five, Art in Public Places, JazzUpJuly, A Grand Summer Night, Arts and Crafts on Bedford, Heights and Lights and the UBS Parade Spectacular, preceded by the phenomenal Point72 Asset Management Inflation Extravaganza), we produce as well, several smaller events such as our Broker and Developer Seminars, Downtown Restaurant Weeks and the Downtowner Get-Togethers. In order to empirically determine the economic benefits of these events, Stamford

Downtown engaged Witan Intelligence Strategies, Inc., a highly regarded market research company to profile our events. We analyzed the two largest (attendance-wise) and most costly events, the Parade and Alive@Five, to determine whether and by how much the economy was stimulated.

The UBS Parade Spectacular is held on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Police estimate that approximately 200,000 people line the almost one mile Parade route. Witan surveyed a parade sampling which is statistically 95% correct.



UBS Parade Spectacular

The survey results depict an event which is a true economic engine. According to Witan, the average "party" of four estimated their spending on Parade Day as \$71 and those staying for meals later that day, would spend an average of \$111. Thus, \$3,550,000 is poured into the economy as a result of the Parade. Downtown restaurateurs tell us a similar story. To them Parade Day ranks as one of their most successful winter business days. According to Eugene Marraffa, a partner at Remo's Brick Oven Pizza Company, Remo's experiences "a 35-50% increase in business volume during Parade Day year after year." He goes on to say that "15-20% are new faces, people living outside of Stamford coming with kids to see the Parade."

Alive@Five is a dynamic concert series held on 6 Thursday evenings during July and August which attracts upwards of 40,000 attendees. Witan interviewed a significant sampling at the first two concerts. According to the survey each attendee spent \$42 during the concert, effectively bringing \$1,680,000 into the economy. Fifty seven percent of the attendees stayed after the concert spending an additional \$62. The math is easy: A total of \$3,093,000 was poured into the economy as a result of Alive@Five. Another important index of success is the anecdotal information from the Downtown restaurateurs. According to Todd Kosakowski, Manager of McFadden's on Main Street, "McFadden's does more than four times better on Alive@Five nights than on a regular Thursday night. That is like having 24 additional high return nights every year." Michael Marchetti, owner of Columbus Park Trattoria, concurs with Kosakowski. He said, "Alive@Five definitely has a positive impact on our business. Throughout the years sales have been up due to the concert series. We can actually do up to five times the amount of sales on a concert night as compared to a regular night and we really appreciate it."

The data garnered from this past year's surveys will be retested this coming November & July when we conduct additional surveys. Furthermore, we will survey the attendees at the Point72 Asset Management Inflation Extravaganza to determine that event's economic impact.



The crowd at Alive@Five watching the Under the Sun tour

B.B. King playing at Jazz Up July  
year after year



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## MONKEYING AROUND DOWNTOWN

For the last twenty years, a group of dedicated Stamford Downtown supporters, “Friends of Stamford Downtown,” have helped to organize and promote an annual fundraiser, A Grand Summer Night, which just celebrated its 21st year. Net proceeds from the event are used to purchase outdoor art to grace the Downtown streets and to help defray the costs of significant Downtown art exhibits.



“Mommy’s Shoes” by Prince Monyo  
Milhailescu-Nasturel



“Gossip” by Martha Pettigrew

The three distinguished works purchased to date are: “Gossip” by Martha Pettigrew on display in Latham Park, “Uninvited Advice” by J. Seward Johnson in Columbus Park and “Mommy’s Shoes” by Prince Monyo Milhailescu-Nasturel in Latham Park.

This year the Friends of Stamford Downtown will purchase a bench which was on display at our annual art exhibit, Art in Public Places: Street Seats in Stamford Downtown. The bench will be donated to the City of Stamford. The chosen bench, “Monkeying Around,” was created by Diana Orbanowski and features cutouts of playful monkeys. The bench is planned for placement in a park in Stamford Downtown for all to enjoy.



“Uninvited Guest” by J. Seward  
Johnson



“Monkeying Around” by Diana Orbanowski

## ANALYZING PUBLIC SPACE IN STAMFORD DOWNTOWN

Stamford Downtown’s Public Space Advisory Committee has been taking to the streets this summer to investigate some of the downtown’s most heavily traveled sidewalks and public spaces. The committee is comprised of 12 individuals from the DSSD Board of Commissioners, Stamford Board of Representatives, City of Stamford Land Use Bureau, Stamford Partnership, Regional Plan Association, and our local member of the CT Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Board. The committee is tasked with the mission of creating a Public Space Action Plan for the downtown as it relates to improving the experience of pedestrians and cyclists in the downtown, activating public space, and improving the physical design of new and existing streetscapes.



Stamford Downtown’s Public Space Advisory Committee



The Committee Auditing Columbus Park

The committee embarked on “Walking Audits,” which are walking assessments of neighborhoods or streets to determine the walkability, safety, accessibility for all users, and vibrancy. Special guests from Tri-State Transportation Campaign and South Western Regional Planning Agency participated on the walking audits to help identify facilities that need improvement. The Main Street corridor from “The Purple Bridge” to Greyrock Place, the corridor between the Stamford Transportation Center and downtown, and the Bedford Street corridor are the areas that were walked and analyzed. Frequent problems identified were the lack of visibility and safety of crosswalks, the excessive width of certain streets, the lack of pedestrian refuge islands, the lack of bike lanes and racks, the lack of automatic pedestrian signalization, and the lack of wayfinding signage. The data derived from these walks will be part of a comprehensive written plan for the Downtown.

## RETAIL CORNER

Stamford Downtown is delighted to welcome a wonderful new restaurant to our thriving culinary scene: Gastro Bar. Opened by the owners of Bianco Rosso in Wilton, it promises to continue the excellence of Stamford Downtown restaurants.

### Gastro Bar

Gastro Bar brings a unique Mediterranean flair to Stamford Downtown’s restaurant landscape. Featuring a comprehensive wine list and extensive selection of Mediterranean tapas and large plates, Gastro Bar is much more than just an ordinary wine bar. A taste of the incredible Brussels’ Sprouts Salad garnished with truffle oil, lemon juice, and a crispy risotto cake, will keep diners coming back for more. Whether to enjoy a leisurely glass of wine, or to enjoy many of the delectable dishes, Gastro Bar offers diners a trip along the Mediterranean in the heart of Stamford Downtown.



Gastro Bar

### Pappa’s Pizza: A Columbus Park Landmark

In 1958 commercial Jet Service from NYC to Miami began, the American Express charge card was introduced, the Hula Hoop became all the rage and Pappa’s Pizza opened its doors on Main Street in Stamford Downtown. Originally opened by the Pappadopoulos family, Pappa’s began its long history of serving great little pizzas, which today would be called “personal pizzas.” The price? 70 cents!

In 1971, Philip Sgouris purchased this little neighborhood gem in the heart of downtown. He and his wife Audrey and their daughter Sue worked there. In 1985, Harry Zopoumidis came to Stamford and was encouraged to meet Sue by his college friend’s mother, whose family owned Victor’s Deli, now the site of Garden Catering.



Three Generations of Sgouris Family  
Pictured: Ellie Zopoumidis, Alexa Zopoumidis, Philip Sgouris, Audrey Sgouris, Sue Zopoumidis, Harry Zopoumidis

Harry and Sue married that year and have been making pizzas together ever since. Their two daughters Ellie and Alexa grew up learning the family business. According to Harry, they produce 500-600 pizzas a week. The most popular choice of course is cheese, which sells for \$7.50 with Pepperoni and Sausage a close second. The recipe for the sauce and the grinders are exactly the same as they were in 1958.

The pizza parlor seats 36 but 65% of business is take-out and delivery service, which began in 1999. The busiest night of the week is Friday and the busiest days of the year? Super Bowl Sunday, Good Friday and Stamford Downtown’s own Alive@Five!

*Congratulations Pappa’s Pizza on 55 + years in Stamford Downtown.*

### Atlantic Street: A burgeoning retail destination

#### Scout Adventure

Chuck Yun, owner of Scout Adventure at 36 Atlantic Street has been located on Atlantic Street for 15 years. Straight out of college, Chuck worked for the former Sportscape previously located at 37 Atlantic Street (an urban inspired footwear & apparel shop). Chuck became the owner of the store in 1997 and in May of 2012, the store changed its name and rebranded into Scout Adventure.



Scout Adventure

Relocating to the former Joseph A. Bank location gave Chuck the opportunity to expand his merchandise by adding outerwear and thus increasing his market share to customers outside of Stamford. Scout Adventure’s motto is “premium presentation, product & service” with popular brands such as Jordan, Nike, North Face, Timberland, Red Wing Shoe, Clarks and Asics, all attractively displayed in a hip setting similar to Urban Outfitters. Scout Adventure also sponsors Community events like the “Kids challenge” incentivizing young customers to give back to their communities through donation and volunteering.

#### Footgear

Esther Lee, the owner of Footgear, located at 103 Atlantic Street, has owned the store since 2001. From the moment she took over, Esther knew that the location had the potential to be a regional destination for one-stop accessory shopping. Working avidly to achieve this goal, Esther has renovated the interior of Footgear to better match the high end brands she carries. The modern, sleek renovations earned her a commendation from Nike Inc. and has piqued Lacoste’s interest in the Atlantic Street store.



Esther Lee Owner of Footgear

As Esther continues to enhance Footgear, she envisions an expansion into family shopping, as well as a focus on even more upscale brands. With the continued shift towards high-end shopping, Footgear acts as a natural complement to Scout Adventure and looks forward to the expansion of trendy retail on Atlantic Street.



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# Stamford Downtown Events, Fall 2014

## Giant Balloon Inflation Party

*presented by  
Point72 Asset Management*

Saturday, November 22, 2014  
3-6 pm

Summer & Hoyt Streets

Join us for this backstage look at the parade and watch the giant helium balloons come to life.

## UBS Parade Spectacular

*presented by  
Stamford Town Center  
and The Advocate/Hearst Media*

Sunday, November 23, 2014  
12 noon step-off

Summer to Broad to Atlantic Streets

One of the largest helium balloon parades in the country, it features everyone's favorite giant balloon characters, award winning marching bands and fabulous floats. Fun for the whole family.

## Heights & Lights

Rappelling Santa and Holiday Tree Lighting  
Presented by Reckson Associates,  
A Division of SL Green

Sunday, December 7, 2014  
5:00 pm

Landmark Square and Latham Park

From 22 stories high above Stamford Downtown, watch and cheer for Santa Claus as he makes his daredevil descent, twisting and flying from the top of one of Stamford's tallest buildings, Landmark Square. Then follow Santa up Bedford Street to Latham Park for an evening of holiday music and fun and join in the countdown of the annual lighting of Stamford's Holiday Tree.



Presented by Stamford Town Center  
and The Advocate  
**Seeking Star Volunteers!**

- Clowns
- Helium Balloon Handlers
- Route Marshals

No Prior Experience Necessary • Free Training Session

Stamford Downtown Special Services District  
is looking for enthusiastic individuals  
for the 2014 UBS Parade Spectacular on

**Sunday, November 23, 2014**

Clowns & Balloon Handlers must be at least 16 years of age.  
Route Marshals must be at least 21 years of age.

**Please sign-up by Friday, November 7, 2014**

To download a volunteer application, please visit the signature event calendar at  
[www.stamford-downtown.com](http://www.stamford-downtown.com)  
or contact us at:  
[volunteer@stamford-downtown.com](mailto:volunteer@stamford-downtown.com)  
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