

# the Stamford DOWNTOWNER



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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT, SANDY GOLDSTEIN



Over the course of the last decade, it became increasingly clear that there existed a deep chasm between current zoning regulations for downtown development and the reality of the numerous zoning amendments needed to create viable downtown residential and commercial projects. Amendments to facilitate parking, density and height were just a few of the changes necessary to develop significant projects in a 21st century urban center. Because there has never been a comprehensive downtown rezoning effort since the inception of zoning in 1951, currently, the only way to ensure that appropriate, modern development occurs in the downtown is through an amendment process.

The DSSD and the URC recognized the need to jump start a comprehensive rezoning process for the downtown which would articulate new regulations that embrace the downtown's growth, urban character and future development needs. These new regulations would then be presented to the Planning and Zoning Boards for their

consideration. Because the Regional Plan Association wrote the 2002 Master Plan revisions after a thorough community wide process and was therefore very familiar with the downtown, RPA was engaged as consultants to lead an inclusive process which would include roundtables and workshops regarding various aspects of downtown development. Downtown stakeholders, community leaders, developers and other people active in downtown zoning and planning would be invited to the roundtables. Following that, interested citizens would be invited to a community workshop.

There were several basic principles that were integral to the project's scope: the quality and sense of place that is intrinsic to the downtown core must be protected and enriched, the pedestrian experience must be nurtured, transit-oriented development must be promoted, increased density must be recognized as an essential ingredient for a vital urban environment, multiple state-of-the-art parking options which would facilitate cutting edge development must be explored, and best practices in nationwide zoning which ultimately result in quality projects must be researched. Concurrent with the above, the study must identify the ways in which current zoning diverges from the actuality of the zoning revisions for downtown projects approved by the Zoning Board during the last ten years.

Two roundtable discussions were held during the summer. The first dealt with parking and raised numerous issues and questions relating to sound 21st century development including:

- Is excessive parking benign and necessary or does it erode the sense of place and the pedestrian experience?
- Should parking ratios be required in the downtown and geographically tailored to reflect local specificities including availability of public parking, accessibility to transit and other factors which influence behavior?
- How should the preponderance of public parking in close proximity to redevelopment areas be used to encourage private residential development?
- Should there be more significant uses of current and new technologies which have been proven in projects around the country as well as Stamford, such as elevators, lifts and valet parking?

The second roundtable dealt with relevant design amenities which would be useful tools to achieve robust development and which would result in a win-win-win for the city, the developer and most important, the people. Conversation centered on the relative values of amenities such as public art, pedestrian connection, green building technology, affordable housing, bike paths and numerous other thought provoking amenity ideas.

To round things out a community workshop will be held on October 8th at UCONN at 5:30pm. It will provide the community with an opportunity to opine on land use, building form, public realm and regulatory framework for the downtown through a series of interactive design tools. Three dimensional digital models, photo simulations and visual preference photographs will be used to critique various massing and design concepts and their application on key sites. An interactive discussion will enable participants to voice their concerns and visions for the city's core. Anyone interested in attending is welcome to do so. Please call the DSSD or the URC office for more information.

The results of the research, workshops and roundtables will be synthesized into various white papers and a report defining the goals and objectives which would appropriately be included in comprehensive downtown rezoning. The draft reports and zoning revisions will be presented to the stakeholder committees for their input, after which they will be presented to the Planning and Zoning Boards.

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## Alive @ Five

Thursday nights in the Summer have become something of a ritual for many who make it a point to come down and enjoy the music, atmosphere and vibrancy of our Downtown. On August 6th, more than 12,000 people came to celebrate the Summer and rock Stamford Downtown with Alive @ Five headliner, Sugar Ray. The energy of the crowd was palpable as Mark McGrath, Sugar Ray's front man, known for his on-stage antics, sang hit after hit. On one of the hottest days of the year, the band blasted "Under The Sun," a fan favorite from the group's 2001 album. The tune turned out to be an anthem, providing the perfect coda to a summer season strewn with rainy days and chilly nights.

Despite the inclement weather, the DSSD succeeded beyond expectations with regard to the goals set forth at the beginning of the concert series. New rules, a new festival entrance fee and a new enclosed concert area all added to the challenge of producing a recurring seven week event. From informing the public, to working out the logistics of a main entry gate in the heart of Stamford Downtown, our events team (with the support of the City of Stamford and many fabulous volunteers) was able to "step up" the quality of the series and provide a wonderful opportunity for concert-goers to experience the Downtown.

In addition to the fantastic line-up and operational changes, Alive @ Five 2009 offered even more opportunities for Downtown businesses to participate in this signature Summer event. This year, the sponsor tents were moved off the street and into a brand new food court with tasty options from Remo's Brick Oven Pizza Co., Butterfield 8, Sundance Café & Wine Bar, Rack N' Roll Café, Carvel Ice Cream, Maui Wowi and EOS Greek Cuisine.

By the end of the seven week series, The Heineken Stage was home to the likes of Gilby Clarke, Josh Gracin, Bo Bice, Better Than Ezra, Tonic, Smash Mouth and Sugar Ray, all top notch performers with solid fan bases. Each year Alive @ Five proves that Stamford Downtown really is the place be! And, this past summer 42,000 patrons ensured that it really was the HAPPENING place.

## Pops in the Park

With strong acts that run the gamut from show tunes to classical symphonic ensembles, Pops in the Park continues to grow each year. Approximately 3,000 people came out on July 15th to watch 70's sensation, The Stylistics, take the Heineken Stage in Columbus Park. As the crooners hit their harmonies, smiles could be found from one end of the park to the other, as concert-goers laid out blankets, picnic dinners and beach chairs to relax and enjoy the music.

A week earlier, the Stamford Symphony Orchestra, masterfully conducted by Eckart Preu, kicked off the concert series with its Henry Mancini retrospective and other famous composers. Classic scores from well known movies filled the park as patrons sat at the outdoor cafés that lined Columbus Park and enjoyed the 60 piece orchestra. Tiernan's Bar, Columbus Park Trattoria and Market Restaurant were favorites with the Pops crowd, offering comfortable outdoor seating and perfect views of the Heineken Stage.

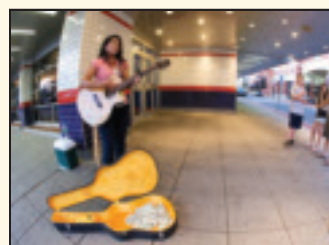


The Stylistics at Pops in the Park

## Stamford Downtown Street Beat



The Bows



Cindy Gauman Lozano

Did you hear something? We certainly hope so! For two nights this Summer acoustic street musicians could be found playing their tunes on street corners and other spots around the Downtown. Modeled after the NYC Subway performers program, musicians and musical acts of all kinds entertained passers-by as they strolled to and from restaurants, shops and apartment buildings. Created to add a bit of ambiance to the Downtown, the program provides the opportunity for amateur and professional musicians alike to reach an audience and hone their craft. Among the acts that graced our streets were The Bows, a harmonic group of women with a golden oldies repertoire, Cindy Gauman Lozano and her guitar, and The Infinite Roots, an African drumming troupe. Some of our Street Beat artists even performed at our Arts & Crafts festival on Bedford Street and during our Grand Summer Night evening near various restaurants around town!



Swirl



## Volunteer Party

Alive @ Five is a massive undertaking and the DSSD can't do it without help from some very important people. YOU!

From selling tickets and tending bar to collecting admission and distributing concert bracelets, our volunteers were there every week to help us out. Once all the bands had played and the 2009 concert series had come to an end, the DSSD said thank you to the volunteers that lent us a hand throughout the

Summer. Hula Hanks Island Grille & Bar was kind enough to open its doors and host a happy hour with snacks and beverages for our volunteers.

If you're interested in volunteering for any one of our events, please don't hesitate to contact us. There are plenty of opportunities to assist us throughout the year, including the upcoming UBS Parade Spectacular in November!

## Arts & Crafts on Bedford

Eighty artists and crafters set up shop on Bedford Street as thousands of people, young and old alike, strolled up and down the thoroughfare. Closed to traffic throughout the weekend, Bedford Street quickly filled with jewelers, potters, woodworkers, papermakers and more who made sure there was something for everyone. For the adolescent crowd, there was the Imagination Station in Latham Park where families could have fun at the petting zoo provided by the Stamford Museum & Nature Center, as well as get their faces painted and even create some crafts of their own. The Bartlett Arboretum was also on hand with a spectacular butterfly station as well as a terrarium where the brave and less squeamish could "pet" an African cockroach.

The weather was glorious on Sunday as people took a brief respite from browsing and shopping the craft booths and dined at the outdoor cafés on Bedford Street provided by Remo's Brick Oven Pizza Co., Bradford's Bar & Grill, BUtterfield 8, Capriccio's Café, Tigin Irish Pub & Restaurant, Chéz Jean Pierre and Brick House Bar & Grill.



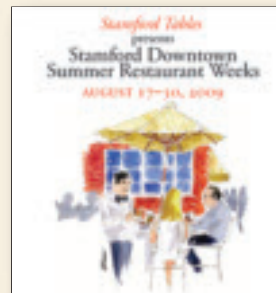
## HOTEL ZERO DEGREES



Opening in October in the heart of Stamford Downtown is *Hotel Zero Degrees*, a boutique hotel offering both style and comfort right on Washington Boulevard, just south of its intersection with Main Street. The hotel features 97 modern rooms and amenities such as 32" flat screen TVs, a wine bar in the Fahrenheit Lounge and a complimentary shuttle service to all local area attractions. Along with the hotel, the YMCA has been renovated and will once again offer a large array of services.

### Did you know...?

That the *i-Shop Stamford Downtown card* has generated over \$100,000 in local sales revenue in just three months!



And that the 15 Stamford Downtown restaurants who participated in *Stamford Tables Summer Restaurant Weeks* served a total of 6,088 lunches & dinners during the last 2 weeks in August!

## Spotlight on Restaurants

### SYNERGY ON SUMMER STREET...

#### *Barcelona, Buffalo Wild Wings & Mary Ann's* rev up Summer Street with Summer openings



Since 1996, co-owners Sasa Mahr-Batuz & Andy Pforzheimer have been entertaining people at their wine and tapas bars: warm, welcoming places with great wine lists and small plates of tantalizing food. Today, *Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant* is the biggest Spanish restaurant group in the United States, including six locations in Connecticut. The newest *Barcelona* is located across from the Courtyard by Marriott at 222 Summer Street. Now a local draw with a steady clientele, music and laughter spills onto Summer Street from the restaurant & bar seven nights a week. On-premise owners, Sasa and Andy's passion for delicious dishes and cocktails is driven by fresh produce from local markets and nearby farms, and by imported Spanish spices, rich olive oils, vinegars, fine cheeses, olives and savory cured meats. All of this bounty is used in their local dishes that are cooked simply so that the flavors burst into life. Sasa and Andy invite you to come celebrate "wine, food and life at *Barcelona!*"

Now managing his fifth *Buffalo Wild Wings* location, General Manager, Mark Lichocki reports, "It has been exciting to watch Summer Street come alive with the opening of all three new Summer Street restaurants." Now on one of the busiest pedestrian streets in Stamford Downtown, *Buffalo Wild Wings Grill & Bar* located at 208 Summer Street, is drawing people from all over Fairfield and Westchester Counties. The 220 seat restaurant which opened April 18th, boasts 42 televisions as well as an outdoor patio. "With football season upon us, we are expecting large crowds for college football on Saturdays and the NFL season on Sundays, followed by the NCAA basketball's March Madness," reports Mark Lichocki. Mark left the company's #1 performing *Buffalo Wild Wings* restaurant in Michigan this year to give Stamford Downtown's location the same success recipe. "Consider this your stadium away from the stadium," explains Mark, who encourages you to "look out for *Buffalo Wild Wings*' outdoor patio tailgating parties which will begin this month."



In May, we welcomed *Mary Ann's Mexican Restaurant* to its new home at 184 Summer Street, adjacent to the Majestic Theatre. With three locations in Manhattan and one in Port Chester, this popular Mexican favorite delights by using only the freshest homemade ingredients which are hand chopped in its Mexican kitchen. "Even our corn chips are served fresh, with *Mary Ann's* famous Guacamole, which are both made in-house," claims Anthony Jordan, *Mary Ann's* General Manager. Whether you're a quesadilla, enchilada, fajita or tostadas fan everything on the menu at *Mary Ann's* is authentic, including the award-winning Margaritas!

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<http://stamforddowntownevents.blogspot.com>

<http://www.facebook.com/stamford.downtown>

# 15 Years and Counting...

The DSSD is pleased to congratulate the following **Stamford Downtown** businesses which are celebrating 15 years or more of doing business in the downtown. *Ernie DiMattia, President of the Ferguson Library* and a downtown 15 year plus veteran considers the library to be located "in a dynamic and vibrant downtown which is the perfect place for business longevity." Similarly, *Toni Simpkins, owner of Landmark Tailors* located in Landmark Square for 24 years adds, "As a business person it's been both challenging and rewarding to be part of the high-level energy that exists in the Stamford Downtown business district." *Steve Feurst, manager of Pedigree Ski Shop* said, "All of us at Pedigree would like to thank the local community for its support throughout the years and look forward to continuing our great relationship." *Salon Shabin* celebrates its 15th anniversary this year. The salon's owner, *Shahin Farzam* explains, "We have been dedicating each moment to opening our minds to the endless possibilities of the Art of Hair which has kept us motivated for the last 15 years."

Many Stamford Downtown Commissioners chimed in to congratulate those businesses which have thrived in the downtown:

*"It's been a wonderful experience watching the restaurant community grow in Stamford Downtown from a handful of restaurants to a diverse group of eclectic restaurants, bars & nightclubs, many of which have managed 15 years of longevity."*

*Michael Marchetti, owner of Columbus Park Trattoria*

*"As a major member of the Stamford community since 1851, First County is delighted that so many establishments have been part of the downtown community for a minimum of 15 years."*

*Richard Taber, Chairman & CEO First County Bank*

*"Sir Speedy is proud to be a part of Stamford Downtown's resurgence."*

*Courtney Nelthropp, owner Sir Speedy*

*"Since 1977, the Stamford Marriott has been an integral part of the downtown business district. We applaud the DSSD for the many programs which help make doing business in Stamford Downtown both fun and successful."*

*Joe Kelly, General Manager of the Stamford Marriott Hotel & Spa*

*(continued above)*

*DSSD would like to acknowledge the following businesses, doing business for over 15 years, for their accomplishments in making Stamford Downtown what it is today...*

Atlantic Pizza House  
Avon Theatre  
Bobby Valentine's Sports Gallery Cafe  
Charles Schwab & Co., Inc.  
JP Morgan Chase Bank  
Columbus Park Trattoria  
Curley's Diner  
Daddy's Junky Music  
Engel's Furs  
Fairfield Farm Mini-Mart  
Federal Hairstylists II  
Ferguson Library  
Fidelity Investments  
First County Bank  
H&R Block  
Il Falco Ristorante  
Izet's Leather Goods  
James Daniel Music

Janie Lee Decorators  
Jos. A. Bank Clothiers  
Kotobuki Japanese Restaurant  
Kujaku Japanese Restaurant  
La Jolie Salon & Spa  
Landmark Tailors  
Laurel House Thrift Shop  
Macy's  
Mario the Tailor  
Mary's Furs  
Meera Indian Restaurant  
Mona Lisa Ristorante  
McDonald's Restaurant  
Mr. Guilford Fashions  
Palace Theatre  
Park View Variety  
Pearle Vision  
Pedigree Ski Shop  
People's United Bank  
Rapid Press

Safavieh Home & Carpet  
Saks Fifth Avenue  
Salon Shahin  
Sema Body & Skin Care  
Sir Speedy  
Stamford Center for the Arts  
Stamford Marriott Hotel & Spa  
Stamford News  
Star Wines & Spirits  
Subway Sandwiches  
Tacos Guadalajara  
The Original Pappa's Pizza  
Two Brothers Beauty Supply  
Vision Consultants  
Wolfe's Cleaners  
Zemo Men's Store

## Fall Events in Stamford Downtown

SAC Capital Advisors Giant Balloon Inflation Party  
Saturday, November 21

3-6pm, 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

**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 2009 UBS Parade Spectacular on

**Sunday, November 22, 2009**

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 6, 2009

Contact us at: 203.348.5285  
events@stamford-downtown.com  
www.stamford-downtown.com

Title Sponsor: UBS

The UBS Parade Spectacular  
Presented by Stamford Town Center

Sunday, November 22

12 noon step-off,  
Stamford Downtown

One of the largest helium balloon parades in the country, featuring everyone's favorite giant balloon characters, award winning marching bands and fabulous floats. Fun for the whole family. Starring Grand Marshals, Connie Chung and Maury Povich and Master of Ceremonies Alan Kalter from the Late Show with David Letterman!

Heights & Lights

Presented by  
First County Bank and Reckson,  
A Division of  
SL Green Realty Corp.

Rappelling Santa and Tree Lighting Ceremony  
Sunday, December 6, 4:30pm, Landmark Square

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 ending with a fireworks display. Then follow Santa up Bedford Street to Latham Park for an evening of holiday fun with live music and join in the countdown of the annual lighting of Stamford's Holiday Tree.



## \$\$\$avings\$ for Downtown Residents

If you are a Stamford Downtown resident you can now buy long-term parking in either the Bedford Street, Bell Street or Summer Place garage for \$46/per month, 39% off the regular price of \$75/month.

Contact the office of Cashiering and Permitting at 977-4979 for more details.