

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



FIRE AT 184 BEDFORD STREET

On Friday, March 7th, a fire erupted at 184 Bedford Street, causing significant damage to an icon of the historic Bedford Street corridor and temporarily displacing several businesses, including:

- Atelier Valoar Couture
- Chez Vous Bistro
- Shiro
- U + I Deco
- Whim
- Women's Business Development Council

This event underscores the importance of Stamford Downtown's historic assets, as well as its dining and entertainment corridors. Stamford Downtown supports MarLo Associates, the property's owner, in its mission to restore the building and return the displaced businesses to their homes.

Stamford Downtown will work closely with MarLo Associates to help find temporary spaces for the displaced businesses, provide financial support for impacted employees, implement temporary measures to drive demand to the businesses, and display artwork to mask the exterior fire damage.

Within this newsletter, you will find information on how members of the public can provide financial support to the impacted businesses. Stamford Downtown will continue to share updates regarding the restoration and rebuilding of historic 184 Bedford Street. We ask that you join us in this effort.

BEDFORD STREET WELCOMES A TASTE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA...



Returning to her beloved Stamford, owner Myrna L. and her partners in the **BarVera Restaurant Group** have brought 25 years of culinary experience to their new upscale BarVera Mediterranean Restaurant, located at 148 Bedford Street. Enlisting award-winning Lebanese Chef Charbel Hayek, the winner of Season 5 of the TV series *Top Chef Middle East & North Africa*, this new upscale eatery aims to offer a diverse selection of international flavors from Italy, France, Spain, Greece, Israel, Turkey, and Lebanon, paired with a unique international wine list.

Myrna is excited to be opening a second restaurant in the area. Her sister restaurant Flavors was established in 2020, just off Greenwich Avenue at 148 Mason Street. She explains,

"We already feel right at home on Bedford Street in a city that we hold dear. BarVera is a culmination of years of experience from everyone who is involved, and it features our favorite dishes, wine, and cocktails, and reflects our commitment to service and hospitality."

Flaunting a casual vibe with its upscale interior décor, BarVera Mediterranean aims to bring fine dining to the area. Beautiful hand-painted murals grace the walls of this cozy venue with 60 seats and a 30-seat patio. The brick oven, located in the middle of the restaurant, creates fresh pita bread daily, served with their special Labneh Tapenade dip and their Manouche of Zaatar and Lahmajour, both elevating the region's staple dishes. Pasta lovers will adore the Pistachio Pesto Orecchiette or try the grilled whole Branzino. A specialty dessert is a Lebanese rice pudding called Riz Bi Halib, served with strawberry, rose, and pistachio. Currently open for dinner only, BarVera will soon expand to offer lunch and brunch as the warm weather approaches.



MR. FALAFEL MEDITERRANEAN CUISINE & GELATO

As you turn the corner from Lower Summer Street onto Broad Street, you may have noticed the brightly lit **Mr. Falafel Mediterranean Cuisine & Gelato** eatery. A family-owned business for 10 years, Mr. Falafel is located at 68 Broad Street beneath their popular Coco Café, the airy pink café in the sky, which looms over Summer Street. Both businesses are owned by the same family.



Patrons will enjoy the large brick oven, designed to bake their fresh Falafel with Eggplant, creamy cheese or Za'Atar. Unique dishes such as Arabic Style Chicken Shawarma or mixed Kebobs are featured on the daily menu. The gelato bar will open this spring just in time for the warm weather.

For menu details, visit [Mr. Falafel](#) or [Coco Café](#)

BEDFORD STREET FIRE

Our hearts go out to the businesses affected by the fire that recently broke out on Bedford Street. Thankfully, emergency services responded quickly, but the damage is significant.

Stamford Downtown is committed to helping the businesses through this trying time and will work closely with Mayor Simmons, the City of Stamford, and the Stamford Chamber of Commerce to support the business owners, their employees, and everyone impacted by this unfortunate event.

We look forward to rebuilding and making Bedford Street stronger than ever!

[GoFundMe fundraisers info - Click Here](#)



SALA TREE YOGA HOUSE FINDS A HOME IN STAMFORD DOWNTOWN



With a rapidly growing population of residents, daytime workers, and UConn students, Stamford Downtown became an appealing location for Jen Irwin, the owner of the popular **Dew Yoga** LLC in northern Stamford, founded in 2010. An offshoot of Dew Yoga LLC, Jen founded Sala Tree Yoga House in 2025 to bring yoga and meditation to all parts of Stamford and underserved communities. The beautifully renovated studio on the second floor of 135 Atlantic Street was formerly the home of Future 5. The founder shares her vision...

"I saw a need for a quiet space in downtown where the environment is noncompetitive, sober, and warm. We are a diverse studio with a curated staff of teachers that represent multiple demographics and speak multiple languages. The new studio will welcome all wellness activities including yoga, meditation, as well as special events. We want people to come, make friends in real life, and discover themselves along the way. Think of it as a treehouse, a refuge from work, screen time, and the stressors of our modern world. You can walk to it, too!"

Jen has been studying yoga and meditation since 2007 with a focus on yoga for healing from physical injury, mental health challenges, and recovery. She teaches to all levels of experience, including yoga teacher trainings which she started in 2017. With a passion for building community as an integral part of our whole health, Jen also loves going upside down "because it gives you a chance to see things in a new way."



Jen Irwin



Classes are offered seven days a week and can accommodate up to 45 students. The class offerings include Vinyasa, Hatha Yoga, Yin Yoga, Kripalu Yoga, Restorative Yoga, Pranayama (breathing), and Meditation. Classes are distinguished as being Strong, Soft, or Still, depending on one's energy level each day. Events are a strong focus for the 'treehouse' where culture and wholesome social experiences come to life through sound baths, cacao ceremonies, tea and tarot readings, bonsai workshops, local artist meet-ups, story-telling jams, and much more.

For more details and class times, visit salatreeyoga.com

NEW SOLAR-POWERED DIGITAL WAYFINDING KIOSKS



Stamford Downtown is excited to announce the installation of five new solar-powered digital wayfinding kiosks in partnership with **Soofa Signs**, which will enhance community engagement and accessibility. Stamford Downtown unveiled the kiosks with Mayor Caroline Simmons, Soofa Co-founder and Vice President Jutta Friedrichs, and guests at Heritage Park on March 6th.

Soofa’s innovative digital kiosks provide residents and visitors with real-time transit updates, city announcements, local events, and a wayfinding map featuring key landmarks. The technology is 100% solar-powered, requiring no wires or excavation for installation, making it a sustainable addition to Stamford Downtown.

“Stamford Downtown welcomes Soofa to Stamford and thanks Mayor Simmons and the City of Stamford for their support in executing this project,” said Michael Moore, President of Stamford Downtown. *“As Downtown’s population and economy expand, it is essential that we enhance wayfinding and physical connectivity to better accommodate and guide residents, corporate travelers, commuters, and visitors. Stamford Downtown hopes its partnership with Soofa is the first step in creating a more comprehensive wayfinding program for Downtown.”*

Soofa Signs, founded in 2014 by women out of the MIT Media Lab, has established itself as the leading provider of solar-powered communication tools for cities and advertisers. Their eight-foot-tall kiosks continue to gain traction across the country, offering a sustainable and efficient way to deliver hyperlocal information.

Kiosk Locations:

1. Bedford Street (next to The Ferguson Library)
2. Kiwanis Park (69 Atlantic Street)
3. Heritage Park (Intersection of Main Street and Bank Street)
4. One Greyrock Place
5. 677 Washington Boulevard
(to be installed at a later date)



Marisa Rogo, Mayor Caroline Simmons, Soofa Co-founder and Vice President Jutta Friedrichs, and Michael Moore



2025 Transportation Showcase

Save the date



Event:

2025 Transportation Showcase: Keeping Connecticut Moving—The Future of Public Transportation.

Date:

April 1, 2025

Time:

8:00am – 10:00am

Location:

Connecticut Science Center
250 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford CT 06103



You're invited to the **2025 Transportation Showcase** brought to you by the **Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)** and **CTrides**. Explore how historic investments in our public transportation system will revolutionize the way people live, work, and connect in Connecticut.

TOUCH A TRUCK ON APRIL 15TH

Touch A Truck is a family-friendly event designed to allow children to explore, climb and touch vehicles of all shapes and sizes from Stamford Fire Department, Stamford Police Department, Stamford Emergency Services, City of Stamford Operations Department, CTTransit and more.

The event will feature other activities including: face painting, crafts, bubble zone and hula hooping.
Thank you to our sponsors: YogaSix Stamford & Star 99.9



FREE!

TOUCH-A-TRUCK

APRIL 15, 2025 | 10AM-1PM
VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK (130 ATLANTIC STREET, STAMFORD)

A family-friendly event for children to see, touch & explore their favorite city vehicles!

STAMFORD DOWNTOWN
STAMFORD-DOWNTOWN.COM

 **CITY OF STAMFORD**
innovating since 1641