

Portland Community Marketplace Opens for Business

The Portland Community Marketplace, an EDC sponsored outdoor market featuring locally grown produce, garden plants, natural products, craft items and displays by community groups opened at 9 a.m. on Saturday, June 20th, at 127 Main Street. The idea for the Community Marketplace began nearly two years ago, when EDC member Mike Elliott recognized the need for a gathering spot where home based businesses, entrepreneurs, local farmers, community groups and customers could come together. Mr. Elliott runs **Stor-U-Self**, the self storage facility at 147 Main Street adjacent to the location of the Marketplace, and volunteered his parking lot and office staff to help with the weekly event. The Public Works Department prepares the lot each week and lines the stalls for vendors.

The Community Marketplace has evolved into more than a place for vendors and customers to meet. The Marketplace offers vendor space at **no cost** and requires **no registration fee**. This makes it an attractive place for community groups to provide information, hold fund raisers and meet the public. Vendors love the flexibility to schedule space the day before the event, and not having to commit to the Marketplace for the entire season. Most importantly, a group of volunteers with a background in business will be working as “Business Development Interns”, helping to develop a business and marketing strategy for the 2010 Community Marketplace. In this difficult economy, the internship positions offer valuable hands-on experience to college students and others seeking employment.

The Community Marketplace will be open at 9 a.m. each Saturday morning through September 12. Vendors and customers are invited to park at **Stor-U-Self**, accessible from Main Street and Pickering Street via Wolcott Avenue. New vendors and community groups are always welcome. Registration for a vendor stall for the entire season or a single day may be made by calling the **Stor-U-Self** office at (860) 342-1445 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. Vendors may set up tables, tents, or any other equipment required to display their products or services beginning at 8:30 a.m. on the morning of the event. Electric service is not available. There is no closing time however, it is anticipated that the Marketplace will wind down between 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. All displays, products, signage and trash must be removed by the vendors at the close of business for the day.

Business of the Month Recognition Program Continues

The “Business of the Month” Program is sponsored by the EDC to recognize business for exceptional customer service, product selection, pricing or community service. Businesses are selected by the EDC at their monthly meeting. The winning business is then recognized with a sign designating them as “Business of the Month”, and a press release submitted to the River east.

Have you had a great experience dealing with a local business? Nominations from citizens and customers are always welcome. Any business operating within the town of Portland is eligible. To nominate a business, send a short note indicating the business and its’ address and the reason for the nomination. Nominations may be mailed to:

Economic Development
Commission
c/o Portland Town Hall
P.O. Box 71
Portland, CT 06480.



“PORTLAND’S BUSINESSES: PAST AND PRESENT DISPLAY” TO RECOGNIZE PORTLAND’S BUSINESS HISTORY

The EDC will present “Portland’s Businesses: Past and Present“, a photographic display, at the Portland Brownstone Festival in September and the Portland Agricultural Fair in October. The display will highlight specific buildings and locations in our business districts, from the last century to the present. Economic Development Consultant, Mary Dickerson, is currently collecting photographs and stories from “lost” businesses, those fondly remembered and those currently active. Anyone with photographs or stories to share is asked to contact Mary by e-mail at marydickerson@yahoo.com or by phone at (860) 342-7302.



Employees of Strong & Hale Lumber

This building was moved to its' present location at 5 Main Street to make way for construction of the Arrigoni Bridge.

Resume Seminar to be Held August 27th

The Economic Development Commission’s popular Resume Seminar will be back for an encore presentation on Thursday August 27, 2009. The Seminar will be held at the Portland Senior Center, 7 Waverly Avenue, beginning at 7 p.m. There is no charge for the Seminar, but reservations are required.

The program will be conducted by Jeffery Theirfeld; a business professional with over 30 years of writing experience will conduct the Seminar for Portland residents and business owners. Jeff received his BS in Business Administration from Central Connecticut State University and his MA in Communications from the University of Hartford. Jeff instructs an enrichment workshop for Middletown Adult Education: *Resumes, Cover Letters, and Interviewing Skills*, and will be donating his services for this workshop.

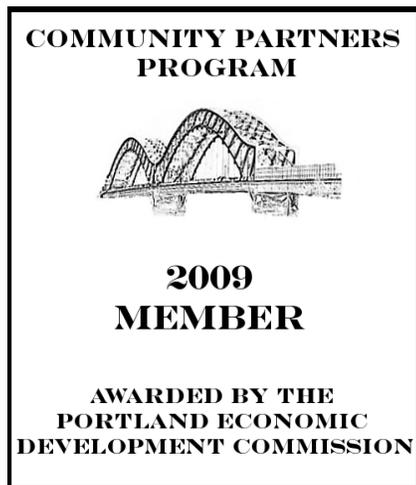
Reservations will be taken beginning August 1st and may be made by contacting Mary Dickerson, EDC Consultant, by e-mail at marydickerson@yahoo.com or by phone at (860) 342-7302 during regular business hours.

VILLAGE DISTRICT PARKING SIGNAGE COMING SOON!

One of the essential elements to an active and successful downtown is adequate parking. The two town owned public parking lots, adjacent to the Portland Police Department and Cavaliere’s Bakery, are often overlooked by visitors and shoppers. To remedy this, the EDC has purchased signs indicating that, “Village District Public Parking”, is available in these areas. The signs were created by **Signs & Designs**, and mirror the style of the signage in The Brownstone Industrial Park. In an effort to provide a unified look to our businesses, the signs were created using the colors most often associated with our town, red and black. The signs will be installed by members of the Public Works Department.

Community Partners Decals Recognize Businesses That Support Portland

Local businesses are sporting a new decal this summer. The Community Partners Program Decal can be found on the windows and doors of more than 100 Portland businesses. The decal, shown below, indicates that the member business supports a wide variety of activities, including educational programs, recreational programs, religious organizations, organized sports programs, community outreach programs and nonprofit groups.



The Community Partners Program 2009 Decal

The Portland EDC developed the program and its' accompanying decal, as a way to recognize the contributions of these businesses and convey the importance of this involvement in the success of many community programs and projects. Many of the activities and events that define our community are a result of monetary and in-kind support from local businesses.

Businesses who have not received a decal in recognition of their contributions during the previous calendar year may complete the application process at anytime. Applications are available in the Planning Office at the Portland Town Hall, on line at www.portland.org. Completed applications should be sent to The Portland Economic Development Commission c/o Portland Town Hall, P.O. Box 71, Portland, CT 06480.

EDC Works with Legislators to Obtain Tourism Signage

It has been nearly a decade since the Portland Brownstone Quarries were designated as a National Historic Landmark. Despite the magnitude of this accomplishment, the State of Connecticut had not provided any signage directing visitors to this nationally recognized site. In January, the EDC contacted state officials to request the installation of signage for the Portland Brownstone Quarries. Due to the efforts of State Senator Eileen Daily and State Representative Jim O'Rourke, this signage has finally been obtained.

State funded signage will be added along Route 9 in Middletown, directing visitors to the Portland Brownstone Quarries and the Portland Exploration and Discovery Park. The funding for the signage was included in HB 6649, passed on the last night of the General Assembly's regular session. This new signage adds the historic quarries to the long list of tourism sites advertised at the expense of the State of Connecticut along public roads. It is hoped that this exposure will bring increased tourism to our recreational and historic areas and increased revenue to our commercial businesses.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDC CHAIRMAN

The Economic Development Commission is composed of five Portland residents appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The EDC meets the second Thursday of each month at 8:30 a.m. at the Portland Town Hall. Residents and members of the business community are invited to attend. The EDC has retained a part-time business consultant, Mary D. Dickerson, a Portland resident, to work directly with our business community.

The mission of the EDC is to work to promote and retain our existing businesses and to attract new businesses appropriate to our community. Members of the EDC have provided testimony in support of business owners before town policy and regulatory boards and can assist local business owners in their efforts to make changes at the local and state level. We welcome any suggestions you may have regarding improving Portland's business climate.

Sincerely,
Fred Knous
EDC Chairman
P.O. Box 71,
Portland, CT 06480
Phone: (860)833-3286

EDC Offers Assistance to Portland Businesses Seeking to Lower Electric Bills

The Portland Economic Development Commission would like to inform local business and homeowners who currently use CL&P as their electric supplier about an opportunity to reduce their monthly electric bills. Connecticut state law allows customers to choose the company that supplies their electricity. By choosing an electrical supplier other than CL&P, you are changing only the company that generates your electricity. Transmission and distribution of power to your home or business will remain unchanged, and CL&P will continue to respond to outages, deliver electricity to your home and bill you for all of your electric service.

If reducing your monthly electric cost is your objective, review your monthly electric statement to determine your generation service charge. The generation service charge is the part of your bill that will be affected by choosing an alternate service provider. Most customers can expect to save between 10% and 15% per month on their generation service charge. Alternative electric suppliers must offer to supply small businesses and residential customers at a fixed price per Kwh for not less than twelve months.

Additional information about electric choice can be found on the back of your monthly electric bill and at the Department of Public Utility website, www.wattsnewct.com. These resources will allow you to get more information about each supplier and compare pricing information. Information about the process required to change suppliers and required form are also available on the website.

Mary Dickerson, Economic Development Consultant is also available to assist businesses in determining which supplier may best fit their needs. She may be contacted at marydickerson@yahoo.com or at (860) 342-7302 during regular business hours on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

The **Portland Business Journal** is a quarterly publication of the **Portland Economic Development Commission**. Issues are published in March, June, September and December. If you have ideas for future articles, or notices for meetings or events that you would like to be included in the **Portland Business Journal**, please contact Mary D. Dickerson, EDC Consultant at 342-7302 or by e-mail at marydickerson@yahoo.com.