

OYSTER BAY

Main Street Association



*Annual Member Meeting
Tuesday, September 15, 2009, 7-9pm
Christ Church Parish Hall
55 East Main Street, Oyster Bay*



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Meeting
09/15/09

*'Celebrating
a Decade of Improvements
in Downtown Oyster Bay'*

*Tuesday, September 15, 2009, 7-9pm
Christ Church Parish Hall
55 East Main Street, Oyster Bay*



*with special guest,
Superintendent Thomas Ross,
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site*



President's Note



**Dear Oyster Bay Main Street
Association Members and Friends,**

Ten years ago this month some visionary and determined citizens led by our founding president DAVID LAMB, came together and published the report, the 'FUTURE OF OYSTER BAY HAMLET' calling for downtown revitalization. The Main Street model that was selected utilized the principles of historic preservation, and was both incremental and comprehensive.

When looking back at the work of our organization over the last ten years, I am mildly amazed by the changes we have made working with our partners to improve our beloved Hamlet.

In these past ten years we have attracted \$1.4 million in private and philanthropic dollars to help us do our work as an organization. Not resting there we were able to attract an additional \$1 million in grant dollars for physical improvements. Together these resources allowed us to directly or indirectly complete 30 façade and signage improvement projects, transform our streetscape and parking lots, and create an environment receptive to new businesses. In the last year alone we have seen ten new businesses open.

What I ask of you is that upon reviewing this report if you are inspired at all by what we have accomplished in the last ten years, that you consider joining us as a member and participating on one of our volunteer committees – Promotion, Design, and Economic Restructuring. By joining you will help to chart the course of our organization in the next ten years to follow.

The success of our organization has been in our effectiveness to inspire a grassroots citizen movement to bring about change. The success of this model reminds me of words Theodore Roosevelt said in 1906 when asked "how might we be good Americans." TR said, "The best way to be good citizens of this nation is to be good citizens of Oyster Bay."

I hope you agree with me that one of the best ways to be a good citizen of Oyster Bay is to join the Main Street Association, and help to continue with our efforts to make Oyster Bay an even better place to live, work, and play. I think this is what TR had in mind when he spoke those prescient words over a century ago.

Ellen Roché, *President*
Oyster Bay Main Street Association

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Getting Our Start

The Moore Building first built in 1901, gained significance when TR had his staff take offices here while he served as U.S. President. Today the building is home to the popular restaurant Wild Honey (below).



A group of Oyster Bay residents came together in June 1999 emboldened by the efforts to restore the Moore Building where President Theodore Roosevelt had his summer executive offices. In this single project they saw the potential for historic preservation to drive the resurgence of historic downtown Oyster Bay.

Looking back at the impact of their efforts since forming the Oyster Bay Main Street Association over a decade ago, the numbers speak for themselves: over \$1.4 million in private and philanthropic dollars have been raised to support the work of the program; over \$1 million in grants have been attracted from local, state, and federal government to go towards improvements; and over three dozen public space, façade, and signage improvement projects have been completed.

Supporting these efforts all along has been the National Trust for Historic Preservation and their Main Street Approach to commercial district revitalization, first established in 1980. This model calls for improvement that is both comprehensive and incremental, by using historic preservation as a tool to drive economic development.



*Moore's Building, late 1990's,
before rehabilitation was undertaken*



Change is accomplished by organizing community groups and residents into four grassroots committees that drive the revitalization process.

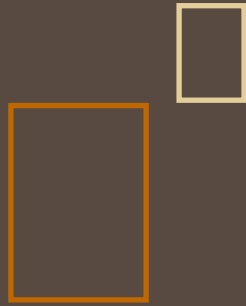
ORGANIZATION: Builds consensus and cooperation among the many groups & individuals who have a role in the revitalization process.

PROMOTION: Markets the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens, and visitors.

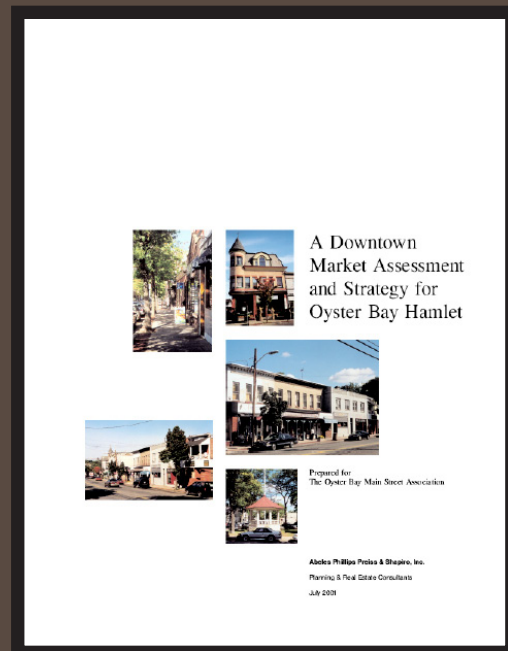
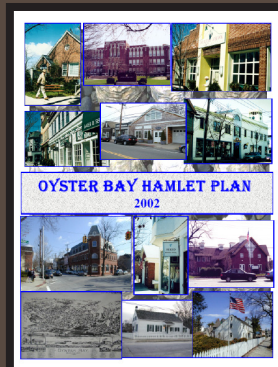
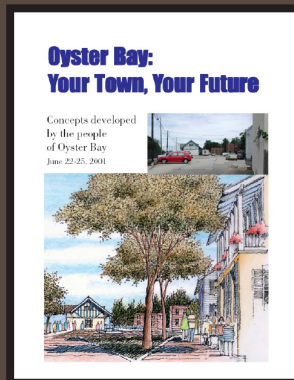
DESIGN: Gets downtown in top physical condition through rehabilitating historic buildings, supporting new construction, and encouraging cleaning and maintenance.

ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING: strengthens the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand it to meet new opportunities and challenges from outside the program area.

Layout and graphic design by Cristina Vaccacio; printing by Corporate Color



Laying the Plan



'A Downtown Market Assessment and Strategy for Oyster Bay Hamlet'



For a complete library of documents and plans, please visit our website at oysterbaymainstreet.org



Design committee members Ellen Roché, Dennis Belfiore, Chris Robinson

and Vision

Like most meaningful efforts, the Oyster Bay Main Street Association started as an idea shared among a small group of people. A document titled 'THE FUTURE OF OYSTER BAY HAMLET' and published in 1999, made the case that no one organization or individual could lead the revitalization of Oyster Bay. Instead what was needed was "a collective vision and mission that directly influences the historic economic revitalization of the Hamlet". The report further suggested to "divide up the responsibilities to each organization that is best suited to tackle them." This report included supporting documents from the Oyster Bay Chamber of Commerce, Oyster Bay Civic Association, and Oyster Bay Historical Society.

While 'THE FUTURE OF OYSTER BAY HAMLET' provided a strong statement of direction, it was not until a Provisional Charter was issued on April 4, 2000, that Main Street officially got its start. These early months were filled with meeting government officials, other community groups, and establishing the support needed for the organization to be successful and to thrive.

A roundtable discussion was held on March 15, 2001, titled 'HOW DOES HISTORIC PRESERVATION FIT INTO OYSTER BAY'S EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE ITSELF.' This was followed the next month by the first of several workshops moderated by Dan Burden of Walkable Communities. One highlight of these efforts was a 3-day community event from June 22 to 25, 2001, where hundreds of people came together to create the visions and plans for a revitalized downtown Oyster Bay.

Around this same time 'A DOWNTOWN MARKET ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY FOR OYSTER BAY HAMLET'(OPPOSITE PAGE) was commissioned by Main Street. This study and the result of the Burden session were then incorporated into the Hamlet Plan. Adoption of the Oyster Bay Hamlet Plan by the Town Board occurred on May 14, 2002; it marked the end of visioning and the start of action. The Main Street Association having received its 501(c)(3) status on April 5, 2002, was well positioned to serve as steward of the Oyster Bay Hamlet Plan and to play a leading role in its implementation.



For a complete library of documents and plans, please visit our website at oysterbaymainstreet.org

OYSTER BAY

Main Street Association

Celebrating a Decade of Improvements in Downtown Oyster Bay

For more information, please visit:
www.oysterbaymainstreet.org



1. Moore's Building



2. Not Just Art *



3. Canterbury Ales



4. For Pets Only *



7. Oyster Bay Water District Building



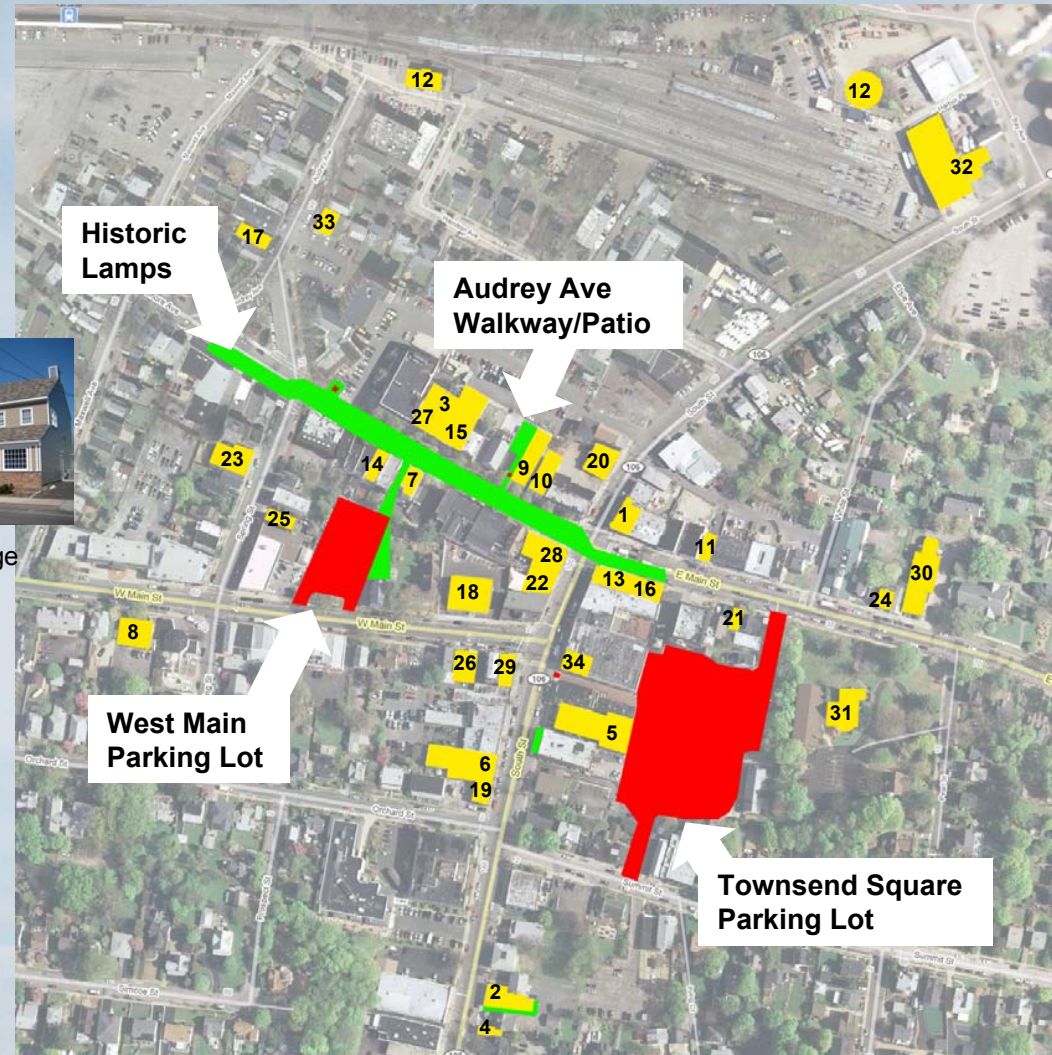
9. Oyster Bay Bank Building



10. Gone Dancing *



11. Subway Sandwich Shop *



12. Oyster Bay Long Island Railroad Station & Turntable



15. Buckingham Variety Store *



18. Matinecock Masonic Lodge



20. 78-80 South Street *



21. What's Cooking *



22. Glamour Inn



23. Walden Engineering



24. Wilson House



26. Insurance Plus



28. Oyster Bay Coin Gallery



29. Ludlam Building (Appliance World)



30. Christ Church Parish Hall

Over three dozen façade, signage, and public space improvement projects have been completed in the past ten years. Several received technical assistance and support from Main Street and the Town of Oyster Bay.

Other Completed Projects – No Photo Shown

- 5. Nassau Hall
- 6. Evolution Fitness
- 8. 71 West Main St
- 13. Nobman's Hardware
- 14. Oyster Bay Travel
- 16. Gooseberry Grove
- 17. Ben's Garden *
- 19. Bernsteins*
- 25. Bladykas & Panetta
- 27. 50 Audrey Ave.*
- 31. First Presbyterian Church
- 32. Oak Cliff Yacht Club
- 33. RR Museum Preview Center
- 34. Friends of the Bay



* Projects with a star were done in collaboration with Island Properties/Renaissance Property Associates.

Early Efforts at Implementation



Nautical Themed Kiosks



Historic Oyster Bay Map

“An attractive appearance is a key element to the success of any commercial area. Façade improvements are one of the simplest and most effective ways of enhancing the image of a commercial area and ultimately attracting more business.”

*—John Venditto,
Town Supervisor*

With the Hamlet Plan in hand, each of the four Main Street committees sought to make their impact fairly early on. Design Guidelines were created to provide recommendations for façade elements, façade materials, and other architectural features. A grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development—providing up to half of façade and signage rehabilitation costs—helped to assure the new guidelines took hold.

Meanwhile the Design and Promotion Committees designed and built NAUTICAL THEMED KIOSKS (OPPOSITE PAGE) that were placed throughout the downtown area. Around the same time the HISTORIC OYSTER BAY MAP (OPPOSITE PAGE) was developed to help promote area historic sites and attractions. Together these were expressions of the goal and desire to make Oyster Bay a friendly and welcoming place to residents and visitors alike.

As progress was being made on the design and promotion fronts, efforts to improve the TOWNSEND SQUARE AND WEST MAIN PARKING LOTS (RIGHT) were nearing completion. This dramatic transformation brought historic materials and improved parking facilities as a partial answer to the parking management needs downtown.

Not willing to rest on their laurels, at a board retreat on November 23, 2003, the goal of connecting the waterfront with the downtown was first discussed. This would later grow to become a major focus of the organization for many years to follow.

Acting on a somewhat smaller scale, a HOLIDAY WINDOW PAINTING COMPETITION IN 2003 (BELOW) judged by Vinny Testaverde would result in Main Street getting national recognition through the Main Street Center newsletter.



Townsend Square Parking Lot (before)



Townsend Square Parking Lot (after)



Townsend Square Parking Lot (after)



Award-winning window design from Buckingham's Variety Store



Refining The Vision



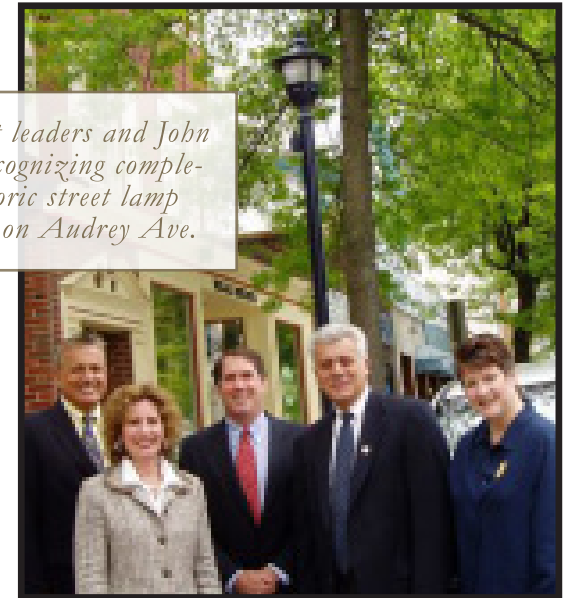
Passport Trolley

Meanwhile, early promotion efforts got a boost in 2004, when the Friends of the Arts were awarded a \$10,000 grant for development of the Passport program to promote area historic sites and attractions. A PASSPORT TROLLEY (LEFT) provided rides among area attractions during the summer of 2004. Around the same time Main Street commissioned Claire Bellerjeau to produce an audio walking tour of the downtown. Audio wands were later secured with help and assistance from Senator Carl Marcellino.



Public officials and community letters accept ceremonial check for the NYS Quality Communities grant

Main Street leaders and John Venditto recognizing completion of historic street lamp installation on Audrey Ave.



On October 20, 2004, Dan Burden came back to Oyster Bay for a return visit and to assess the progress that had been made. There was a lot to review from the kiosks, to refurbished parking lots, to a growing movement to promote historic and cultural attractions in and around Oyster Bay. These efforts were further recognized at a general meeting on April 13, 2005, when Bernadette Castro, then the New York State Commissioner of Parks and Recreation and Gay Vietzke, the Superintendent of Sagamore Hill both gave presentations to Main Street members.



Matinecock Masonic Lodge following a tragic fire

Historic street lights were installed along Audrey Avenue in 2004, thanks to a \$30,000 NYS Dormitory grant and \$45,600 was awarded in 2006 through the NYS QUALITY COMMUNITIES PROGRAM (OPPOSITE PAGE) to assist with the Railroad Museum project.

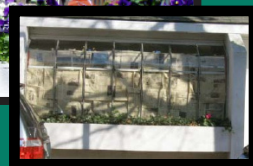


Reconstructed Matinecock Masonic Lodge opens in 2006

Revitalization efforts and the Hamlet of Oyster Bay were dealt a devastating blow with the fire that led to destruction of the MATINECOCK MASONIC LODGE (RIGHT) and Nobman's Hardware in close succession. In both cases the community rallied and new buildings were placed where others had been lost. In the case of the Matinecock Lodge an effort was made to reconstruct what was lost. While at Nobman's a "smart growth" project resulted in a building of similar massing, but with 8 apartments on upper floors; providing for a residential population and helping to promote vitality downtown.



Growth & Challenges



Signs of improvement in the district emerged with several façade and signage improvements giving the downtown a new appearance. This perhaps emboldened a new wave of business openings, including BEN'S GARDEN (LEFT) in 2005, and CHRISON AND BELLINA (BELOW) in 2006.

Revitalization efforts received a major boost in late 2004 when William Joel donated \$500,000 to the Main Street Association. This gift was intended to help restore Nunley's Carousel and place it in Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Park. When efforts to bring this carousel to Oyster Bay fell through, then a second plan emerged for a Theodore Roosevelt themed carousel to be created.



Plans for The Future of Oyster Bay Railroad Museum

At the Annual Meeting on November 14, 2006, Ben Jankowski spoke on 'PLANS FOR THE FUTURE OYSTER BAY RAILROAD MUSEUM.' (ABOVE) Funds were awarded from the New York State Quality Communities Program in March 2007 to develop plans for a Railroad Plaza in front of the Oyster Bay Long Island Railroad Station. A separate Historic Structures Report was completed to guide rehabilitation of this building.

At the Annual Meeting the following year on October 30, 2007, plans for a Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Museum in Oyster Bay were presented. Over 18 months of deliberations followed on the appropriateness of this facility for the Hamlet. Main Street and partners including the Oyster Bay Chamber of Commerce and Oyster Bay Civic Association contributed to the dialogue, by hosting Dan Burden for a return visit on March 15, 2008. During a THEODORE ROOSEVELT MUSEUM COMMUNITY MEETING (RIGHT) and through a report that followed, the idea of a museum was explored. A decision was made around this time to put the Carousel project on hold to allow the community to fully explore the Presidential Museum concept.

Recognizing the importance of completing small projects while also planning for larger ones, another joint initiative with the Chamber, Civic, and Rotary resulted in THE HANGING OF 40 FLOWER BASKETS ALONG AUDREY AVENUE IN 2008 (FAR RIGHT). A fundraiser held in April raised the funds needed, and one month later Audrey Avenue was lined by flower baskets for the first time. Banners honoring TR were designed and installed to honor the 150th anniversary of his birth.



Theodore Roosevelt Museum walk-through at Fireman's Field, March 15, 2008

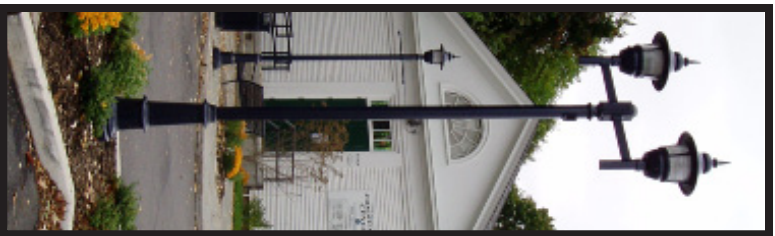
Efforts to fill vacant space downtown gained momentum in 2008 and early 2009 when ten businesses opened in the downtown area. These include Friends of the Bay, Tex Mex Restaurant, FootPrinz, Blue Water Spa, L'Industrie, The Chocolate Lady, What's Cooking, Shangri La Spa, Superstar Beverage of Oyster Bay and Teaching Studios of Art.



Leaders from Main Street and Chamber of Commerce install flower baskets along Audrey Avenue, May 2008



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