



# OYSTER BAY

## MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION NEWS

Volume 5

Winter 2017/2018

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## 49 Audrey Avenue: From Vacant to Vibrant

Few projects so completely encapsulate the work that we do in this downtown quite like the successful renovation of 49 Audrey Avenue.

The renovation of this early twentieth century building helped further our mission in the downtown on several fronts. Beyond the more obvious accomplishment of improving a long-neglected deteriorating building and restoring its original historic character, the renovation also brought back much needed residential space to the downtown. We were also able to secure a much sought after coffee shop to fill the vacant first floor commercial space.

Until 2014 the mixed-use building had sat vacant on the main thoroughfare of downtown Oyster Bay for years. At that time, the new owner reached out to OBMSA and through our Design Technical Assistance programs, we were able to secure a grant through the **John E. Streb Fund for New York** to pay for the services of a historic architect to put together historically appropriate designs. At the owner's request, we also recommended the services of local historic architect, John Collins, whom they hired to complete the designs and oversee the renovation.

While designs were being finalized, OBMSA learned that Mark Bocard, the owner of Huntington-based Southdown Coffee, was considering opening a second location. As part of our Economic Vitality Technical Assistance programs, we spoke with Bocard about available spaces and after learning of his interest in 49 Audrey Avenue, we were able to provide him with an introduction to the new owner.

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## OBMSA Board Retreat

At the start of our 2018 fiscal year, the Board of Directors met for a retreat to clarify the association's goals and focus the organization's efforts. Through a series of exercises over the course of the retreat, the board reviewed the effectiveness of the organization's existing mission, structure, and programming in addressing the current issues facing the downtown of Oyster Bay.

Major outcomes from the retreat include the outline of a three to five year plan for the organization along with a new, straightforward mission statement:



## Mission Statement

The Oyster Bay Main Street Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating a healthy economy in an attractive hamlet, while maintaining the downtown's historic integrity. We engage the public and private sectors to revitalize the heart of Oyster Bay through responsible preservation, beautification, community events, educational outreach, and business development.

## Fundraising

In moving forward with our plans for the organization our most important resource continues to be the dedicated residents, business owners and building owners who make up our membership. We organized two major fundraising initiatives in 2017, and, thanks to the generous response from our community, we were able to exceed our initial budget numbers, which will help us continue to expand our initiatives and programming.



## Flower Basket Campaign

This past Spring, the Oyster Bay Main Street Association kicked off our first annual Flower Basket Campaign to support the costs of our seasonal decorations in the downtown (More on this initiative on p.5).

Starting with a generous donation from the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Chamber of Commerce, OBMSA was able to offer discounted sponsorship rates to help cover the cost of purchasing, installing, and maintaining 168 flower baskets. 110 sponsors from the community stepped up, fully funding us for the 2017 season! **Look for your invitation to get involved for the 2018 season this May!**

## End of the Season Benefit

Our fifth annual End of the Season Benefit on September 27, 2017 was held once again at the beautiful Creek Beach Club overlooking the Long Island Sound. A perfect setting to bring the summer to a close, attendees enjoyed cocktails, sushi and other passed hors d'oeuvres, while enjoying live music and perusing the silent auction items.

Over 130 people attended the event and, with our most successful silent auction yet, the organization brought in over \$30,000 to support our initiatives and programs in the coming year. We hope you all will consider joining us again in September - keep an eye out for our save the date!





## 7th Season of Dancing in the Street

For the seventh year in a row, OBMSA brought music and dancing to the streets of Oyster Bay! Every Friday in July, from 7-9 pm, we shut down the street in front of Town Hall and hired DJs to entertain the crowd with music and dance lessons!

We are excited to announce that due to the hard work of our Promotion Chair, Diane Meltzer, and thanks to the continued generous support of our sponsor - **BMW of Oyster Bay** - we will be extending the 2018 season with two Fridays in August (weather permitting)!

**2018 Dancing in the Street Dates: July 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th  
August 3rd & 10th**



## New York AutoFest Car Show

OBMSA partnered with New York AutoFest to bring a car show to the downtown on Sunday, July 9, 2017. The show was well attended with about 60 cars taking part.

The event wound up being a great way for us to get our name out to a new group of people, and we were extremely excited that we got to choose our own "pick of the show."



## Halloween Parade with Raynham Hall

For the second year, Raynham Hall organized a halloween parade in the downtown. The parade, which was open to participants of all ages, once again attracted a large crowd as ghostly puppets led the revelers through the downtown, ending in a small gathering outside the Oyster Bay Railroad Museum Depot.

OBMSA joined in the fun again this year handing out glow-in-the-dark necklaces, bracelets and temporary tattoos to all participants.

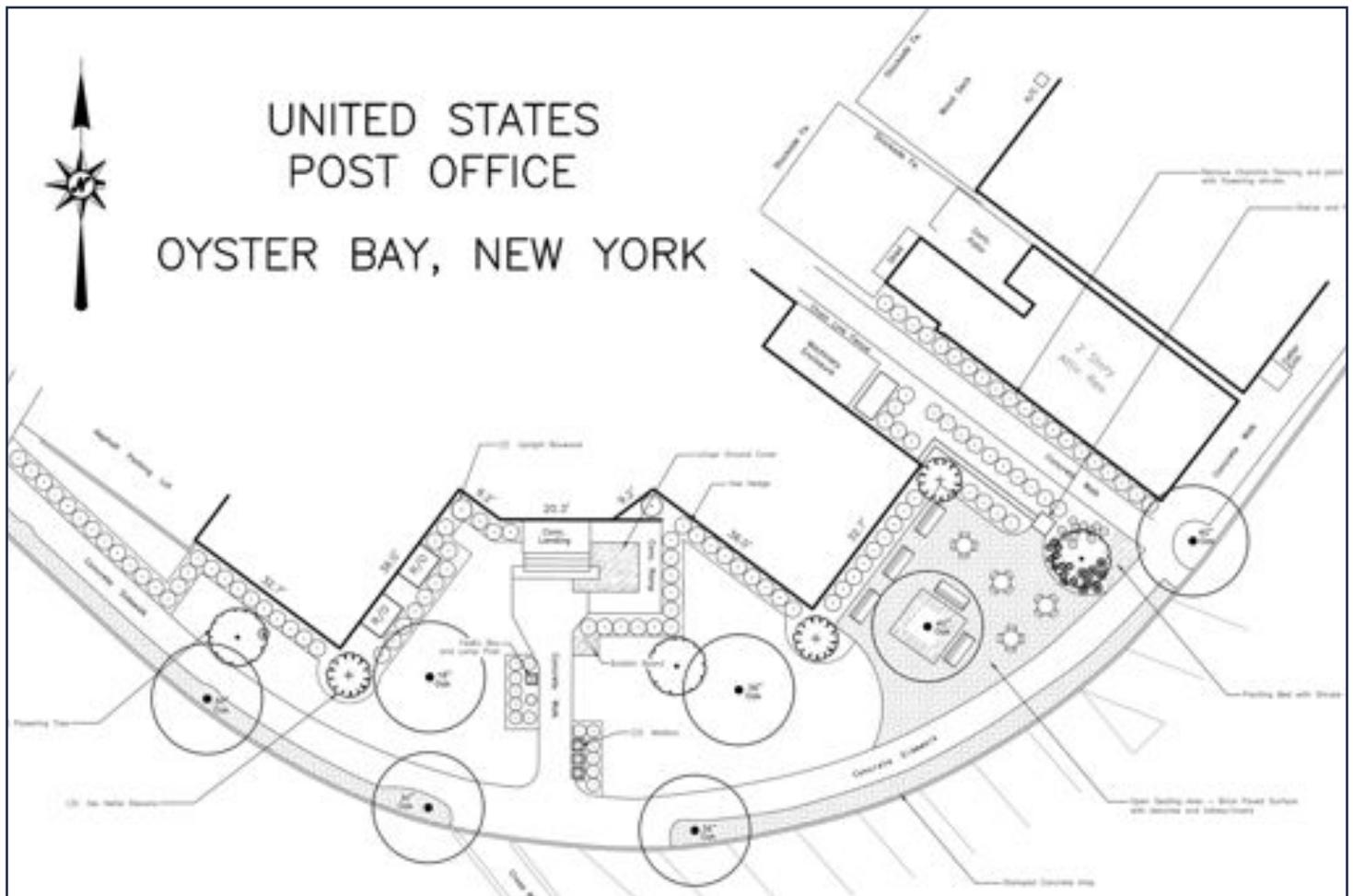


## Holiday Ice Rink

For the second year, OBMSA hosted a skating rink for two days in coordination with the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Chamber of Commerce's Christmas Tree Lighting & Holiday Market.

Despite the snow, large crowds of residents and visitors came out to enjoy the rink. Plans are already underway for next year's holiday weekend, and we look forward to continuing this tradition in the downtown!

## Town Center Revitalization Plan: Phase II



Alongside our annual programming, OBMSA has also taken a new approach to our design projects – focused on interconnected, smaller-scale renovations beginning in the epicenter of the downtown and working outwards.

We began the first part of our Town Center Revitalization Plan in 2015 with a full-scale renovation of Townsend Park. We replaced the existing trees with vegetation that is more attractive, appropriately scaled and spaced for the location, and also installed period lighting, benches, and repaired the brick walkway. The renovation completely transformed the park and reestablished viable green space in the heart of the downtown.

Now we are starting the next phase of our plan, which will further expand green space and improve the aesthetic of the downtown by opening up the grounds of the Oyster Bay Post Office for public use. Based off of an initial survey completed by Bladykas & Panetta, a landscape design was created, pro-bono, by our board member and the owner of Main Street Nursery of Huntington, Rich McKean, who will help oversee the project. The final design, pictured above, calls for:

- The removal of the existing hedges, clean up of the existing plantings, and removal of the chain link fence along the walkway between the post office and Sweet Tomato;
- The creation of a welcoming lawn that is open to the street, decorated with flowering trees and planted beds as well as a new irrigation system to assist with maintenance;
- The installation of new decorative post lights and uplights to highlight the architecture of the building and to create a bright, safe, and inviting atmosphere; and
- The creation of a brick-paved seating area for residents and patrons to use for quiet relaxation and enjoyment.

We are scheduled to break ground on the project in the spring. Once completed, this renovation will breathe new life into the downtown, and provide the momentum we need to continue our efforts to make Oyster Bay a more beautiful place to live, work and conduct business. Continuing to radiate out, we are looking towards future projects that will focus on beautifying and improving connectivity between Fireman's Field, the waterfront, and the rest of the downtown.

## Seasonal Decorations Downtown

Thanks to the generous support of our members, OBMSA, once again, brought vibrant color and charm to the streets of Oyster Bay with our seasonal decorations. Eighty-four street lamps line the streets of the Hamlet and we make sure each one receives two hanging baskets in the spring and summer and two light-up wreaths during the holiday season. In conjunction with the holiday wreaths, for the past few years, OBMSA has also purchased the Christmas Tree and decorated the bandstand for the season in the downtown.

We hope that you all will, once again, consider sponsoring a hanging basket this May and help us bring decorations to the streets of downtown Oyster Bay all year 'round!



## Addressing Garbage Issues Downtown

In response to community concerns, OBMSA continues to advocate for appropriate solutions to the garbage problems that face the downtown.

As part of our immediate response, we have funded, with support from the OB-EN Chamber of Commerce, the third season of our Clean Sweep Initiative, in which we hire a part-time staffer to pick up the loose debris that litters our sidewalks during our peak visitor season - May through October.

This, however, is not a long-term fix to the problem. To get at the crux of the problem, OBMSA has been coordinating with our community partners at the Oyster Bay Civic Association and the Chamber to work with the Town of Oyster Bay to educate landlords and tenants on the Town Code and then to encourage adherence with summonses and fines as appropriate.

We are also advocating for the replacement of the old, beat up trash cans with new Big Belly Solar Compactors that have seen wild success in similar towns.

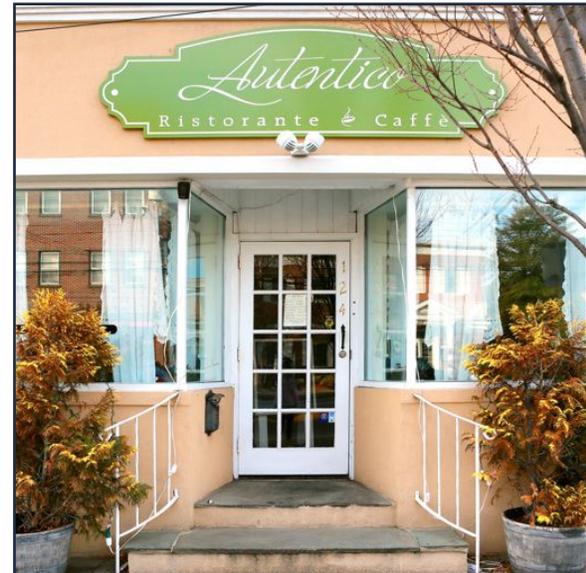
# OBMSA Facade & Sign Grant

In September, we started our sixth cycle of funding for our Facade and Sign Grant program. Open to all business members of OBMSA, the grant encourages appropriate signage and facade improvements throughout the downtown. All approved applicants are eligible for a 75% reimbursement on their costs up to \$2,000 for facade-or-sign projects and up to \$3,000 for facade-and-sign applicants.

Since first starting the grant in 2013, we have assisted over 30 businesses in the downtown, disbursing \$48,500 of grant funds and leveraging an additional private investment of over \$56,000 into the downtown. We are proud of the role this grant has played in not only encouraging building owners to invest in their properties, but also helping our new and existing businesses to invest in themselves. We currently have \$10,000 raised for our most recent cycle and, due to interest in the grant, we are hoping to raise an additional \$10,000 - we hope you will consider getting more involved and helping us reach this goal!



## A Selection of Our 2017 Grant Recipients



## We offer assistance in opening a Business...

### 1. Help Finding a Location

A major decision for any business, whether they are first opening or looking to expand, is choosing the right space. Size, price, and location are all important factors that must be taken into consideration.

In order to ease the search process, we keep a listing of available spaces including links and contact information on our website.

We are also able, in many circumstances, to provide businesses with personal introductions to local building owners and realtors.

### 2. Permitting Assistance

It is crucial for a small business to get up and running as quickly as possible once a lease is signed and rent becomes a factor. Prior to signing the lease or final deed we encourage all business and building owners to contact us.

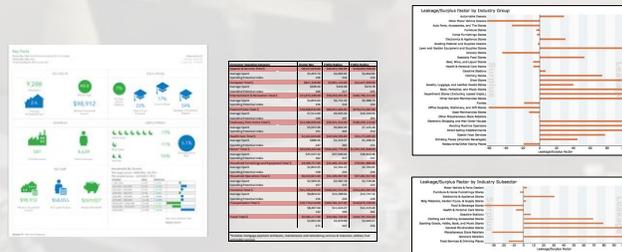
OBMSA leverages its positive relationship with the TOB Building Department to set up one-on-one consultations. Outcomes from these meetings include:

- Clarifying the permit process for the proposed use of the space
- Identifying possible variances needed, cutting down on hurdles and unexpected expenses
- Providing a timeline for the process

## ...as well as, operating a business.

### 3. Individualized Market Data

We provide essential market and demographic data to new and existing businesses to support development with reliable data that accurately portrays the market. Allowing people to make smart decisions for their business and encourage growth in the economy.



### 4. Business Workshops

Members of OBMSA also have the opportunity for one-on-one consultations with experts from the Small Business Administration, covering a range of topics specific to their individual businesses, such as financial planning, business plans, expansion plans, etc.

## 49 Audrey Avenue: From Vacant to Vibrant

(Continued from p. 1)

From there, the two parties were able to work out an agreement and Southdown Coffee was slated to open upon completion of construction.

As the project moved forward into the construction phase, OBMSA continued to offer support through the permitting process, helping to set up meetings with the Town of Oyster Bay Building Department to clarify the process and answer the owner's questions as they arose.

Finally, once construction was set to begin, an application was submitted through our privately funded Facade and Sign Grant program to assist in the cost of the exterior renovation. After being approved, the work began, including among other things: the extensive repair of the existing stucco; the cleaning and repointing of the existing brick veneer; and the replacement of broken and rotted out windows.

With the renovation complete, the building is completely transformed bringing much needed life back to the heart of the downtown!



# Thank you to our Fiscal Year 2017 Contributors!

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