



CELEBRATING
55 YEARS

nerej

Meriden's future high priority projects

October 18, 2011 - Connecticut

It's always a pleasure to talk or write about Meriden, a city for which our public officials and citizens have a deep feeling of pride. And, we are always working on ways to make it even better.

A few examples of Meriden's future planning include the Meriden HUB Redevelopment. This 14.4-acre city-owned site is located in the center of our downtown. The project plan includes creating perimeter development pads for multilevel commercial buildings that could include residential apartments, offices and ground-floor retail. Most of the land, however, will be kept as open park space with such amenities as an amphitheater, exhibit space for artists and public gathering places.

A Meriden Intermodal Transit Center is in its planning and design stage and will include a parking area adjacent to the HUB site. The project will take advantage of planned improvements to the New Haven-Springfield high speed rail corridor and the Springfield to New Haven commuter rail projects. The intermodal center will serve Meriden's existing Amtrak service and 52 commuter trains daily. It also will offer linkages to local bus, taxi and corporate van services. The intermodal center will provide increased access into and out of the downtown while allowing the city to attract new businesses, commuters and residents to the city's center.

Factory H Demolition and Site Remediation on Cooper St. is in its demolition and remediation stage. This site was formerly used as a silver plating manufacturing plant. It is directly across from a former hospital and is attached to a vacant 70,000 s/f medical office structure that the city also owns. The city hopes to secure a developer who will develop the medical office structure into residential apartments. The project will result in economic development opportunities, and neighborhood green and open space.

The West Main Street Streetscape Improvement Project is moving forward with design, engineering and implementation of streetscape improvements along West Main St., one of the city's active commercial corridors. Improvements will include a signalization, sidewalk repair, roadway improvements, and streetscape amenities. West Main St. is home to the expanding Middlesex Community College and new artist housing.

Last year the city council approved a new zoning district that could pave the way for a mixed-use commercial center on a 71-acre parcel on Preston Ave. The zone will allow a "lifestyle center" development, which would incorporate a broad mix of commercial uses arranged in a pedestrian friendly way with strict design criteria. Attached residential units will also be permitted in the zone.

Not all Meriden's development is "in the future". On the social side, downtown will again provide an ice skating rink by the time winter's first freeze sets in. In July, the Cole Bros. Circus of the Stars set up a 25,000 s/f tent on the city-owned HUB site with elephants, tigers, camels, llamas and zebras and various trapezes, rings of fire, human-size cannons and other circus paraphernalia. Three performances captivated audiences from all over the state over a period of three days. We hope to get them back again next year. The annual Festival of Lights in Hubbard Park displays over a half million miniature lights in spectacular displays in trees, on the pond and nestled in the natural habitat of this magnificent park. It's free and open to the public beginning November 22nd.

There's something for everyone in Meriden, now and in the future. Come visit us, you won't want to leave.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540