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## **A recap of the Middle Atlantic region BOMA conference**

April 18, 2013 - Connecticut

During the month of March I attended the Middle Atlantic (MAC) Region Building Owners and Managers (BOMA) conference which was held in Baltimore, Maryland. It is always interesting attending our conferences and the Middle Atlantic region conferences are very enlightening and provide great information and ideas to bring back to our local in Southern Connecticut.

The MAC board meeting is always a highlight as representatives from all sectors of the Middle Atlantic region provide real estate information about their local markets. Finding out how the real estate market is performing in other regions as compared to Southern Connecticut is quite interesting. In some areas of the region the Central Business District has really taken off while in others the Suburban market is the place to get real estate at a discounted rate. While the market in the Southern Connecticut region has basically remained flat over the past year other regions have seen some drastic changes especially New Jersey and New York in areas hit by Hurricane Sandy. Some new real estate restrictions and requirements are making this a very challenging market to be in and many businesses will never recover from this Hurricane. As real estate professionals these changes to the market and the need to find business new locations has (in some cases) created a resurgence of real estate activity in areas that had been stagnant and has provided some businesses the ability to re-create their image.

During our conference at the Inner Harbor in Baltimore it was interesting to see how many "green" initiatives and historical elements have been used hand in hand not only in office buildings but also at the Camden Yards baseball park (Home of the Orioles) as well as at Fort McHenry (the birthplace of the National Anthem). While they kept the history alive at both of these locations it was great to see that many LEED initiatives have been included during recent upgrades and renovations. The Inner Harbor boasts many great venues for families including the National Aquarium (located here as well as in Washington, D.C.), the USS Constitution and the Maryland Science Center all of which provide great history and educational sessions for everyone to enjoy. We were lucky enough to have one of our events at the Aquarium which too was constructed using many LEED elements.

The real estate field is requiring much more diversified thinking and space planning due to ever changing requirements of business owners. Having the ability to review a variety of venues (other than office buildings) has really opened up my eyes to new ways of building development. Incorporating a variety design features as seen in venues you would never expect such as dining area space allocation which have dividers made of recycled tires to incorporating colored concrete for corridor floors to utilization of water elements to otherwise sterile environments are ideas that will set a building apart from others. By keeping our mind open to new design ideas and techniques (which can be found in all types of environments) we will be able to provide our customers with new visions for their space and allow us to utilize real estate in ways we have never thought of in the past.

Debbie Korf, president of Southern Connecticut BOMA, is with Cartus, Danbury, Conn.

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