



CELEBRATING  
55 YEARS

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## **Central Sq. Business Assn. Carl Barron**

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The Central Sq. Business Association was founded in 1933, in the midst of the Great Depression, to enable the local merchants to better combat the adverse effects of financial conditions at the time. The small group of founders soon grew into a fairly large organization with the hope that as a unified group, they would be able to overcome many challenges growing from the Great Depression. To a very substantial degree they were successful.

By the early 1960s, some of the enthusiasm and life of the original group had diminished, and, although the association still existed, it was not as active as previously. A move to locate a major expressway through Central Sq. at that time unified residents and the local business community against it, as it would have largely destroyed both entities. The measure was defeated, largely by joint cooperation.

In 1963, Putnam Furniture Leasing Co., Inc. moved from Putnam Sq. to Central Sq. The president, Carl Barron, soon became extremely interested in Central Sq., partially because it was a challenge, and partially because he owned his place of business there. He was elected president of the business association in 1965 and has continued as president to the present day, a total of 43 years. During that time, the square has changed from its run-down appearance, 53% of all storefronts being devoted to liquor establishments, to a vibrant retail/office usage. New parking facilities have been built by the city. A joint committee, consisting of 9 community members and 9 business people worked with the city and was granted approximately \$4.5 million for street improvements with absolutely no delay upon the request being made.

The Central Sq. Business Assn. is one of the most active business associations in the city. It has established excellent relationships with city officials, neighborhood residents, and even to other cities and state officials.

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