



## City of Middletown OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

---

October 20, 2021

For Immediate Release

Contact: Mayor Benjamin D. Florsheim, (860) 638-4801

### **RETURN TO THE RIVERBEND STOREFRONT IS OPEN IN MAIN STREET MARKET**

**Residents have the opportunity to participate in the City's riverfront development planning process**

Middletown, CT – The City of Middletown is pleased to announce the opening of the RETURN TO THE RIVERBEND storefront in Main Street Market, located at 386 Main Street in Middletown. This interactive storefront will allow visitors the ability to participate in the City's riverfront planning initiative through a number of interactive displays for residents of all ages. These include taking a detailed survey of residents' values and ideas about how they would like to see the riverfront developed, those which ask what is best about Middletown, and suggestions of what they think Middletown needs. The storefront is open Monday through Friday from 8:30am until 4:30pm.

Earlier this year, the City hired international architecture and urban design firm Cooper Robertson out of New York City to help Middletown reconnect to its riverfront. The firm was selected from 21 different firms that put forth proposals through a public bidding process this past spring. On October 12, the City of Middletown held a virtual workshop with residents and consultants to gain feedback about the community's vision for the waterfront. The Riverbend storefront is an opportunity to continue the conversation and provides a space where residents can participate in the planning process. The goal of the planning initiative is to ensure that the public has an opportunity to help develop the future vision of the waterfront as well as ensure that ordinances and regulations are put into place to make that vision a reality.

The storefront will become the main repository of information that people can visit while downtown to get up-to-date information on the planning process as well as give input to the City's consulting firm. City staff will be onsite during most of the day to help residents give their input and answer questions. The display is designed so people can offer their ideas on their own. Every suggestion, thought, or proposal is welcome.

Middletown Mayor Benjamin D. Florsheim commented, "we are looking to create a thriving, sustainable riverfront that has something for everyone. From the initial selection of the architecture and design firm through the final stages of development, we intend this project to be an inclusive endeavor that is steered by the vision

Municipal Building; 245 deKoven Drive, Middletown, Connecticut 06457  
Phone: 860-638-4801 Fax: 860-638-1901 E-mail: Mayor@MiddletownCT.gov



## City of Middletown

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

---

of connecting the community to our beautiful waterfront. We hope to honor the natural beauty of the landscape, promote environmental sustainability, and listen to and include the diverse voices of our community. The Riverbend storefront provides a place for continued community engagement so we can ensure this is a people-driven process with a positive outcome.”

Councilwoman Jeanette Blackwell commented, “as a member of the Riverfront Master Plan Steering Committee, I feel so blessed to be intimately involved in this historic endeavor. To all City residents, I would like to encourage you to engage in community workshops, visit the new Riverbend store or log on to the Website. It is essential that your voices are integrated into this process, we are planning our future together!”

“The opening of the Riverbend store is a must see visit for all of our residents!” said Middlesex Chamber of Commerce President Larry McHugh. “The development of the Riverfront is one of the most important developments for the future of Middletown and this gives everyone an opportunity to participate in the planning.”

Planning and Zoning Chairman Stephen Devoto noted, “the riverfront will be an open space with water views, connected not only with downtown but also with nearby residential neighborhoods. I hope it will be a place that invites all residents, providing opportunities for work, culture, recreation, housing, and refreshments, overlooking the magnificent bend in the river. Riverbend development will help our city become even more thriving, vibrant, connected, and sustainable.”

Riverfront Master Plan Steering Committee Member and longtime riverfront advocate Elaine Bank noted, “I have served on three riverfront development initiatives. As I near 80 years I have learned two things: first, that time cannot be rushed, and second, to listen to other people’s ideas. Taking the time to hear what the community wants and dreams for the riverfront is a splendid idea. I was elated by last Tuesday night’s community workshop. I felt enlightened to listen to so many people express their ideas for the riverfront. I am hoping more people will come to the Riverbend store in the Main Street Market to learn about the project and add their thoughts. We must all help to make this Masterplan one that honors the river’s nod to us at the Riverbend.”

Additional Information can be found at the following website: <https://www.middletownct.gov/1279/RETURN-TO-THE-RIVERBEND> Questions and comments can also be submitted to the following email [Riverbend@Middletownct.gov](mailto:Riverbend@Middletownct.gov) .

###