



Revitalizing Springfield's Downtown!

OUR MISSION – Springfield on the Move (SOM) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to work with property owners, businesses, citizens and town government to enhance Springfield's downtown as an attractive, desirable and economically viable destination for residents and visitors. Its members include local business owners, community leaders, local government and residents who want to help revitalize Springfield's downtown and the surrounding areas.

Report to the Town - November 2015 - SOM is a 501c3 and one of the state's twenty-four designated downtown organizations. This designation means that projects within Springfield's Designated Downtown District can benefit from tax credits, grants, technical assistance from Springfield on the Move and other development related advantages. Please visit the state's website for a complete listing of the program benefits

http://accd.vermont.gov/strong_communities/opportunities/revitalization/downtown This designation is an important tool for attracting needed investment for projects like the Springfield Movie Theatre, 100 River Street Redevelopment, and the Masonic Building redevelopment completed within the last few years. Tax credits for Downtown projects have amounted to almost \$1 Million dollars, since year 2000 when SOM was enrolled in the State Downtown Program.

Springfield Farmers Market – The Springfield Farmers Market completed its sixth season with tremendous growth in vendor participation, sales and market offerings. Increased marketing efforts more than doubled this year's vendor numbers and grew foot traffic resulting in sales growth of more than 30%. The market enjoyed expanded product offerings of fresh produce, local meats, eggs, honey, baked goods, wood crafts, hand sewn items, art and handmade jewelry. We were serenaded by local music talent and offered both Jamaican and international culinary treats, together with pies and lots of other baked items. The market continues as a central partner for Downtown's signature event "Market Madness Street Fair" Event on Labor Day weekend, joined the Apple Festival in October and hosts downtown Holiday Markets in November and December. This season, the farmer's market helped to successfully incubate and launch Dark Mountain Games, a board game company, now with a store of its own on Valley Street. SOM formed a Market Steering committee to oversee the Downtown Farmer's Market, guided by representation of market vendors and SOM Board members and the promotion and set-up coordinators.



Downtown Economic Development – Regular technical assistance continues to downtown businesses, property owners and prospects. Areas of assistance include business recruitment, location assistance, financing, permitting, planning, parking, building improvements and tax credits. Much of this work is in answering questions and needs, and making referrals to other programs and partners as appropriate. We regularly work with established downtown businesses, and highly prioritize full occupancy for storefront and downtown vacancies. As such, we have worked to support new ownership plans for the Odd Fellows building, tenant recruitment for One Main Street, and ongoing redevelopment potential at the Woolson Block building. The downtown economic development committee meets monthly to guide strategy, projects and priorities to encourage business growth, business retention and new business recruitment. SOM has worked with partners to offer a financing forum, Efficiency Vermont workshops and property owner visits, together with visits from the state tax credit manager. We also canvassed Downtown businesses with the counselor from the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC), and invited a loan officer from Community Capital of Vermont to meet with farmer's market vendors to assist with any financing need. Leadership from SOM, SRDC and the Chamber of Commerce meet monthly to "compare notes" and collaborate on the economic development work we are involved in.

The update of the Downtown Master Plan began in October of last year and ended last month. The effort sought to understand the needs and desires of the community, downtown businesses and visitors. The master plan steering committee was made up with representatives from town government, town planning, SOM, Chamber of Commerce, SMCS with regional planning guided the effort. Three separate surveys were included, together with a public engagement event attended by more than 70 community

members. Emergent themes included river visibility and access, specialized retail, creative economy pursuits, the arts, and Downtown as a central location for “food and things to do”. Grants are being reviewed to fund action items from the master plan. SOM has agreed to move ahead with a feasibility study for a Main Street co-working space and downtown maker space.

The town and SOM collaborated and was awarded a grant through ACCD and ANR to establish an electric car charging station (dual port) located next to town hall. The project was completed and ribbon cutting ceremony done in early October.

Heritage Bakery opened successfully in late Spring, but closed (unfortunately) after a few months due to a number of challenges and set-backs. New plans are now being developed to assist Heritage Bakery in reopening.



Downtown Design Committee – SOM’s Design Committee facilitated a façade improvement project for the Good Buy Store (SEVCA). The project included changing the façade colors to a light gray and steel blue, and updated the store sign to include the new SEVCA logo. SOM also coordinated the repair and repainting of downtown light poles. SOM Board member Alan Woodbury and volunteers from a men’s church group, repaired downtown street poles and primed the poles for repainting next year. The design committee is working with the post office on changes to be made through the Winter and into next year. It is expected that these changes to the post office and planned work for the community center will improve the “gateway” effect as visitors come to Main Street. The committee is now considering projects for next year’s season and fundraiser to fund that work, more to follow.



Downtown Promotions – The SOM Promotion’s Committee continues two promotional initiatives: The Holiday Program is a collaboration with the chamber of commerce. SOM’s role includes storefront holiday displays, wreaths for downtown businesses, and the Santa’s Workshop “sticker map”. Each year, almost 200 children and 20 businesses participate making a very happy start to the holiday program. The Market Madness Street Fair completed its “forth annual” event on Labor Day Weekend. The street fair aims to leverage the downtown farmer’s market and connect downtown businesses. The event pays homage to the Moonlight Madness event from years past. The street fair continues to grow each year, in participation, foot traffic and offerings to the event visitor. Live music at five locations, classic cars and antique tractors, an expanded kid’s corner with clown, face-painting, and youth vendors were all included this year.



Committee Volunteers: Promotions, Organization, Economic Development and Design - These are SOM’s four main committees (all required for a designated downtown program). Volunteers are how our mission gets carried out! Please consider joining as a member and/or becoming a volunteer. Thank you for supporting Springfield on the Move and Downtown Springfield!