

Borough Newsletter June, 2021

What's Happening with the Former Rees Property



All the above ground demolition has been finished on the former Rees Engineering property on W. Third Ave. W.B. Homes expects to start constructing the first model townhome home by July 15. The model home will be located at the corner of Walnut St. and Third Avenue. Forty townhomes are planned for the development.

Ursinus College's Berman Museum of Art Reopens to Residents June 10

Starting June 10, the museum opens with a new textile exhibit, "Mapping Climate Change: The Knitting Map and Tempestry Project." Read all about it here:

<https://www.ursinus.edu/live/profiles/4975-the-knitting-map/ingredients/templates/berman-2018/exhibition>

The museum is free and open to the public. Hours are from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. Please socially distance and wear a mask to keep everyone safe!



Ursinus Campus, Café and Bookstore Open to Area Residents

Have you visited Ursinus College's new Schellhase Commons yet with their new café and bookstore <https://www.ursinus.edu/about/schellhase-commons/>? The café, bookstore, and entire campus are now open for the summer and area residents are encouraged to stop by!

Enjoy breakfast, lunch, and Starbucks coffee in the café! Then check out college bookstore which is stocked with an interesting and well curated collection of adult and children's fiction and non-fiction books. If you can't find a book to your liking in their collection, they are happy to obtain it for you. Feel free to call ahead and check on a title you are itching to read! Orders generally only take a day or two to fulfill. You can call the bookstore at 610 409 3584 or e-mail Manager Su Phillips at sphillips2@ursinus.edu.

"We also have curated a selection of books for PV School District families for summer reading "Opening Doors to New Worlds," says Su. We are offering a 10% discount for summer reading books. Just ask for your discount at the register."

The bookstore is open Monday through Fridays 11 am to 7 pm and Saturdays 10 am to 4 pm. Su looks forward to meeting you!

Upcoming Collegeville Events

Collegeville's 2021 Movies on the Lawn

Area residents and their families are invited to spend two Friday evenings during the summer on Ursinus College's front lawn for free family movies appealing to all ages.

Families can bring chairs and blankets and begin arriving at 7 p.m. to enjoy music and food from food trucks. Dates of the movies are Friday, July 16, with a rain date of July 23; and Friday, Aug. 6 with a rain date of Aug. 13.

Parking is available in the College's Ninth Ave. Parking lot adjacent to 179 East Ninth Ave., with some limited parking off Fifth Ave. on campus near the dorms.

For more information, contact Cathy Kernen at manager@collegevilledevelopment.org or 610 409 0370.

The Collegeville Fire Company to Return their Annual Car Show to Collegeville's Main Street Aug. 15!

Mark your calendars for the Collegeville Fire Company's Car show Aug. 15, 2021 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Collegeville's Main Street, rain or shine. The awards ceremony is scheduled for 2 p.m.

The classic cars and other vehicles which are parked from Third to Ninth Ave. are always greatly enjoyed by the entire family and will evoke fond memories for those of a certain age. Each year's show takes on a festival atmosphere, with music, vendors, and food.

All CDC protocols will be followed for this event.

For more information or to enter your vehicle, visit the Collegeville Fire Company website <https://www.collegevillefire.org/content/carshow/>

Collegeville Borough's Concerts in the Park

Thursday, Aug. 19. No rain date. Collegeville Borough Concerts in the Park Trout Fishing in America <https://www.troutmusic.com/>. Bring a blanket or some lawn chairs, or just sit on the ball field bleachers. During the **concert**, the playground is available for kids. Come and join the fun!

Borough Business Development Committee Update

How UConn Built Their College Town



At the April 26th Borough Business Development Committee meeting, Cynthia van Zelm, the Executive Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, and Lou Marquet, Executive Vice President of LaylandAlliance, walked the committee through the major steps in the process they used to create their college town.

For many years the University of Connecticut operated a large, successful academic campus in rural Mansfield, CT. There was just one major problem: it was located literally in the middle of nowhere. Dining, shopping and entertainment options were non-existent.

In order to attract and keep top faculty and students, the University realized they needed to create a college town. And the Township knew that their residents would greatly benefit from a commercial district. So in 1999, the Mansfield Town Council formed the “Town Green Committee” to research options for increasing the town’s tax base and revitalizing its downtown area.

A Public-Private Partnership was the Key to Their Success

Based on recommendations from that Committee, in 2001, the Township and UConn created the non-profit Mansfield Downtown Partnership, which acted as the town’s municipal planning partner. The Partnership also staffs an Economic Development Commission (EDC). The Partnership acts on behalf of the town to fundraise, and its 501c3 status allows them to receive grants. The 13-member board of the organization is comprised of representatives from the community, business owners, the Town of Mansfield and the University of Connecticut. Other major partners in the development of the new town include their lead developer, the LeylandAlliance, and EdR, which owns the rental spaces.

The University owned about 12 acres of land adjacent to the campus. That land was combined with the acquisition of private land to eventually create “The Storrs Center,” named for its location within the Village of Storrs--one of 19 villages that comprise Mansfield.

Over the course of several years, the Partnership and LeylandAlliance developed comprehensive design guidelines—which doubled as zoning regulations—and sustainability guidelines for the new downtown. The design guidelines were unanimously approved by Mansfield’s Planning and Zoning Commission.

Acquiring Funding

Public Funding--Over time, the township procured \$25 million in federal and state grants for expanded infrastructure, including new roads, streetscape improvements, and an Intermodal Transit Center. The town offered tax abatements to Rental Space Owner EdR to reimburse for public infrastructure costs related to the first two phases of development, with a seven-year schedule for each abatement period.

Private Funding—Co-developers LeylandAlliance (owner of the commercial space) and EdR (owner of the rental residential space) raised over \$200 million through investors and financing.

Business Recruitment and Retention

Once the Storrs Center buildings were nearing completion, the Partnership worked to attract a mix of retail, restaurants, offices, and services to cover the daily necessities for the faculty, staff, students and residents (grocery stores, pharmacies, auto repair, hair salons) and provide food and entertainment. They first worked to attract top “destination” businesses to their new town. These desirable tenants would act as catalysts to spur other businesses to relocate. They were offered a 35 percent discount and reduced rent for the first five years.

This college town has now been over 10 years in the making, and despite years of delays, represents one of the largest, most ambitious public-private partnerships in CT state history. Today, downtown Storrs is a vibrant, walkable downtown district that is home to over 60 businesses, the Town Hall, the Mansfield Community Center, the regional high school, residential apartments and townhomes, public open spaces, and the Betsy Paterson Square.

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