



Mayor Anita Dugatto
City of Derby, Connecticut

PRESS RELEASE

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Downtown Now! Community Choices Workshop to Be Held October 26

The City of Derby is inviting residents to the second public workshop of *Downtown Now! Derby's Blueprint for Progress*. The workshop, called *Community Choices*, will be held on Wednesday, October 26, at 6:00 p.m. at The Ballroom at 33 Elizabeth Street in downtown Derby.

The *Community Choices Workshop* follows the successful *Community Voices Workshop* that was held on September 22. Over 100 residents, business owners, and other stakeholders attended the September event to voice their opinions about downtown Derby as it exists now and how they would like to see it in the future.

"*Community Choices* is a critical meeting," said Derby Mayor Anita Dugatto. "It's where we begin the process of reconciling the ideas we collected at the *Community Voices Workshop* with the realities of the redevelopment site."

The redevelopment site encompasses nearly 14 acres of publically and privately held land on the south side of Main Street in downtown Derby.

The community's ideas will be measured against land use, economic, and infrastructure conditions with the help of the consulting firm DPZ Partners and its project team.

DPZ Partners was selected to lead *Downtown Now!* through a Request for Proposal process. The project is fully funded by a grant from Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development.

"The activities that will be conducted at the *Community Choices Workshop* will enable us to create an implementable development plan that is in sync with the vision of Derby's residents," Dugatto said.

The October 26 workshop will consist of several segments. It will start with a summary of

the ideas collected at the *Community Voices Workshop*. At the September workshop, participants mapped places downtown they liked and disliked; then they brainstormed on different development opportunities that could improve downtown and ultimately the entire city.

The *Community Choices Workshop* will then continue with three presentations by the DPZ team: 1.) challenges posed by the redevelopment site; 2.) demographic and economic forces at play; and 3.) infrastructure conditions.

“One the most important tasks we have is to help Derby residents refine their vision so that it is implementable,” said Marina Khoury, DPZ’s team leader. “To do this, we will ask participants to address any discrepancies between their vision and the realities. From there, we will have them establish preferences and set priorities.”

Each of the presentations will be followed by a question and answer session that will use electronic keypads to record responses. The electronic keypads provide instant feedback - the results of each question will be projected on to a screen within seconds.

“By the end of the evening, we will have a good idea of where we are going from here. That will set the stage for the next step of the process: design,” Khoury said.

Following the *Community Choices Workshop*, public engagement for *Downtown Now!* will continue with the *Derby Charrette*. The charrette is an intensive design activity involving all members of the DPZ team. As planners design and develop alternatives, the public will have several opportunities, through drop-in sessions and formal presentations, to weigh-in and help shape the redevelopment plan.

The City of Derby has appointed a citizen Advisory Committee to guide the development of the plan. Advisory Committee members include: Shane Mangado, Jack Walsh, Christian Meagher, Jim Gildea, Christina DiMartino, Natasha Kelly, Virginia Russo, Willetta Capelle, Beth Colette, and Sarah Widomski.

With offices in Miami and Washington, D.C., DPZ Partners is one of the country’s preeminent urban design and planning firms, having designed over 400 new and existing communities in the U.S. and abroad.

For Downtown Now! DPZ Partners has joined forces with CDM Smith who will provide infrastructure and environmental engineering support; The Williams Group who will conduct market analysis to determine what the market can support, develop, and finance; Urban 3 who will analyze the tax revenue implication of proposed alternatives; Gianni Longo and Associates who will lead public engagement; New Haven-based Robert Orr Associates who will focus on the unique character of Derby’s urbanism and architecture; and Good Earth Advisors (GEA), also based in Connecticut, who will assist with community outreach and act as a local liaison.

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