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DOWNTOWN BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS START

Riverhead, NY – After months of planning, a collaborative Main Street beautification effort aimed at enhancing the visitor experience to Downtown Riverhead is in progress. The BIDMA, downtown property owners and local businesses and organizations have joined together to create a brighter and more welcoming experience for those enjoying our great restaurants, visiting our businesses and enjoying our fairs.

“We have a great committee that has been working together to find creative ways to dress up Main Street,” stated BIDMA Executive Director Diane Tucci, “It started with a look at successful initiatives in other downtown revitalization projects. The committee formed naturally by several of us identifying our mutual interests and collaborating on what we could do to immediately improve our Main Street. We decided it was time to take action and make our Downtown better ourselves and we got all the parts in motion.” she concluded.

To date, the committee has been able to get donations from Home Depot, Fisher Signs & T-Shirts and Jim Lennon photography. Other participants that provided services and assistance include Riverhead Townscape, BIDMA board members, Crystal Clear Window Cleaning and RDZ Contracting. “ We are very happy these businesses and individuals recognize the strides and investments that are being made downtown Riverhead. We are grateful for their participation and hope this encourages future donations.” said Georgia Malone, principal of 20 and 30 West Main Street.

The enhancements that have been made to date include:

- Buildings and sidewalks being power washed.
- New planters with flowers being installed.
- A series of artwork in storefronts.
- Monitoring sidewalks and alleys for cleanliness, in particular prior to an event downtown

Enhancing how downtown looks and taking on capital projects is something the Board of Directors of the Business Improvement District Management Association decided while developing their 2017 budget “We are experiencing a more vibrant Main Street and with the help of this Beautification Initiative we are making it easier for people to focus on improvements that have been made and how far we have come.” stated BIDMA President Steve Shauger, “We are lucky to have a group of passionate people willing to volunteer their time in order to provide a welcoming experience that will attract not only visitors, but additional investors to our downtown.”

The Town Board of the Town of Riverhead has also proposed legislation that will require property owners of vacant buildings to maintain their property in a way that does not provide evidence of vacancy. "The Town Board is very happy to work with the BIDMA by requiring downtown property owners to maintain their buildings in an aesthetically pleasing manner," said Riverhead Town Supervisor Sean Walter. "We are encouraged by everyone's enthusiasm and look forward to continue this private/public partnership into the future." A public hearing on the proposed resolution will be held at Riverhead Town Hall on Sept 6 at 2:15 PM.

One of the key features of this project is the utilization of storefronts for artwork and imagery. The Beautification Committee is currently seeking partnerships and donations to fund the costs of the materials needed for the windows, as well as manpower for the project. Volunteers are welcome. This project qualifies for Community Services hours. The long term goal of this project is to monitor and upkeep the area, repurpose vacant spaces to attract more foot traffic and potential investors, continue to work with Downtown business owners to add curb appeal to their establishments and to ultimately engage the community in creative projects in the Downtown area.

A press conference is scheduled for Thursday, Aug 24 at 2PM in front of 49 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901. Please note that Main Street will be closed to traffic in preparation of Alive on 25 later that day.

Further information on how you can participate through donations, time or suggestions, please contact Diane Tucci at riverheadbidma@gmail.com or (631) 591-0722.

Beautification Project Committee: Ike Israel, Georgia Malone, Steve Shauger, Diane Tucci and Cheri Wirth.