



TOWN OF RIVERHEAD NEWS

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TOWN OF RIVERHEAD AWARDED \$250,000 NEW YORK MAIN STREET GRANT

Riverhead, NY – The New York State Office of Community Renewal awarded the Town of Riverhead a \$250,000 New York Main Street grant to continue the town’s downtown revitalization efforts. The grant will focus on provided housing above existing retail, as well as other commercial building improvements within the downtown Business Improvement District (BID).

The New York Main Street funding assists communities in their Main Street or downtown revitalization efforts by providing funds to carry out local projects that stimulate reinvestment in deteriorating, outdated and vacant properties located within mixed-use commercial districts, neighborhoods and on New York’s historic Main Streets. Main Street grants revitalize downtowns through targeted commercial/residential improvements, such as façade renovations, as well as interior commercial and residential building upgrades.

Supervisor Sean Walter said it is anticipated that the grant will fund up to 45 residential units and at least six commercial renovations. “This New York Main Street grant will address a dire need for quality housing in and around the Riverhead area, specifically the central business district,” he said. “By creating desirable housing above existing business we will breathe new life into the downtown economy and create a walkable community.”

“The Town of Riverhead strongly believes that this holistic approach, specifically combining commercial and residential revitalization components, is necessary to provide a much needed spark to existing economic redevelopment efforts,” said Walter.

Community Development Department Director, Chris Kempner, said she believes “that this round of Main Street Program funding and the resulting influx of residential units and commercial redevelopment within the central business district will prove to be a pivotal step in the revitalization of downtown Riverhead. It will transform currently blighted, vacant or underdeveloped buildings into focal points in the central business district.”

The grant will be administered by the Community Development Department, who wrote the application. The Community Development Department administered three previous awards. The New York State Main Street Program has provided funding to approximately 30 businesses within the downtown BID since 2004. With the most recent award, the Town of Riverhead has received \$1,150,000 in Main Street funding, including: \$200,000 in 2004, \$200,000 in 2009, \$500,000 in 2010 and \$250,000 in 2012. All awards were for the maximum eligible funding amount in their respective years.

Several recent notable projects benefited greatly from Main Street funds, including the Suffolk Theatre (\$250,000—2010 anchor), the Dark Horse Restaurant (\$150,000—2009 anchor), The Riverhead Project (\$50,000) and Jerry & the Mermaid (\$50,000).

BID President, Ray Pickersgill, expressed his appreciation to the Community Development Department for writing this grant and for undertaking the extensive administrative responsibility. “The previous awards were extremely beneficial to BID members and have proved to be a key component of the recent Main Street resurgence,” he said.