SEMIFINALISTS ANNOUNCED
for the 2017 Great American Main Street Award | P2
Great American Main Street Awards

WEST CHESTER IS 2017 SEMI-FINALIST

from www.preservationnation.org

“The Great American Main Street Award is the highest recognition given out by the National Main Street Center. Each year, we celebrate exceptional Main Street America organizations for their work in creating more economically, socially, and culturally vibrant commercial districts,” said Patrice Frey, the Center’s President and CEO.
“This year’s winners are truly at the forefront of commercial district revitalization. They are a testament to the power of the Main Street Approach, and the great potential of downtown districts in cities and towns across the country.”

And the praise is well deserved. Together, this year’s semi-finalists have generated almost a billion dollars in public and private reinvestment, while creating 5,679 new jobs, opening 1,085 new businesses, rehabbing 1,359 buildings and clocking over 133,000 volunteer hours.

We look forward to announcing the winners this May at the Main Street Now Conference in Pittsburgh. Thank you to PNC Bank for their generous sponsorship of the 2017 Great American Main Street Awards.

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Our 10th and final semi-finalist, West Chester BID comes from the host state of our 2017 Main Street Now Conference—Pennsylvania! In their 16-year history, West Chester BID has generated over $270 million in public and private investment, while creating 241 new businesses. Accolades over the years include being named the Best New Shopping District by Philadelphia Magazine and winning a Distinctive Destination award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
Meet our outstanding business partners: Derck & Edson, Eastwick Solutions and Pirhl, LLC. These are the people you want to know when seeking the goods and services you need for your local revitalization efforts!

Derck & Edson provides quality planning and design services to shape the natural and built environment in innovative and functional ways. We specialize in enhancing campuses, downtowns, and athletics. Our staff of dedicated landscape architects, civil engineers, and land planners provides the full range of design and technical capabilities necessary to carry a project through the entire design and construction process. Since the establishment of the firm in 1940, our dedication to satisfying clients’ needs for function, responsiveness, economy, and creativity has produced innovative and enduring design solutions.

In all our projects, we advocate an inclusive client-centered approach that engages the community and its stakeholders. This includes project meetings that are engaging and interactive, yet pointed and consensus-based, resulting in efficient, on-target feedback that generates enthusiasm and a high degree of support for the results. In this way, our projects are more readily embraced and implemented and final deliverables are truly your product, facilitated and developed by our team, acting as agents for you.

Learn more at www.derckandedson.com
PIRHL is committed to developing thoughtful, sustainable communities. Our process is built on thorough analysis, transparency, and strong public-private partnerships. PIRHL builds communities where people want to live.

PIRHL’s mission is to address the acute need and growing demand for affordable housing in America through the development, construction and ownership of high quality single-family and multifamily homes. Whether this means fostering new growth or driving revitalization, PIRHL is committed to the sustainability of today’s communities.

PIRHL is a full-service developer, general contractor and owner of high quality single-family and multi-family housing. PIRHL’s approach is predicated on leveraging the unique skills and perspectives of locally based community partners who deeply understand the dynamics and specific needs within their market. By collaborating with some of the most highly accomplished non-profit housing developers in the business, PIRHL’s developments are invariably more exceptional.

PIRHL has been recognized as one of the Top 50 Affordable Housing Developers in the industry by Affordable Housing Finance Magazine for 2014!

Learn more at www.pirhl.com

Eastwick Solutions is a woman-owned company that combines marketing, planning and community revitalization. Our focus is on helping communities, destinations and related organizations improve quality of life and experience for visitors and residents.

Eastwick takes the time to understand the challenges or problems to provide the most effective solution to facilitate growth; to be a catalyst to success. We balance big-picture strategy with ground-level expertise and have the creative depth to help an organization, company, or initiative leverage its assets; enhance its brands, and grow revenue.

Economic development translates into job creation, new businesses, real estate investment and growth of existing enterprises. By encouraging entrepreneurs, providing technical assistance to government, non-profits and businesses, and developing strategies, Eastwick Solutions can help create an effective message and convey it to stabilize local businesses and attract new interest to your Main Street or region.

Learn more at www.eastwicksolutions.com
My August began with an assessment visit to Scranton where I was hosted by Scranton Tomorrow (scrantontomorrow.org). Downtown Scranton is so much more than the home to the fictional Dunder-Mifflin Paper Company from The Office; it is at the heart of the fastest growing urban region in the state, a university downtown, a center of government and commerce, and a place with great pride and heritage. Scranton is positioning itself to be the next great renaissance city in the same way that we all saw Allentown telling its story at the PDC Conference a few months ago. Through civic engagement and the collaborative leadership of Scranton Tomorrow, one can easily see the potential that everyone I met with during my visit was talking about. Embracing new opportunities for partnerships, programming, and projects, Scranton Tomorrow is a group of stakeholders that is ready to lead the continued resurgence of the Electric City.

As I have mentioned before, we are seeing increased interest in the designation process from communities throughout the City of Philadelphia. In August I visited in two very different neighborhoods in the course of one day. In the morning, I visited the South Street-Headhouse District (southstreet.com). South Street has a special history and a unique contemporary reputation; it represents some of the best elements of an ever-evolving urban landscape that embraces history, diversity, and place. There are very few locations wherein at one end of the neighborhood you can look across a river to see a World War II-era battleship and at the other end of the neighborhood experience an

Moving from Summer into Autumn is an exciting time in Pennsylvania. We just visited Clarion for the Western Manager’s Meeting days before their renowned Autumn Leaf Festival and I know so many of our Main Street and Elm Street programs are getting ready for similar Fall-themed events (one tends to hear the word “Oktoberfest” often when talking with Main Street folks this time of year). As for myself, I’m trying to schedule as many visits to see everyone I can before the holiday season arrives and Winter is upon us. That being said, let me share with you some of my recent stops from the latter half of a very hectic Summer travel schedule:

1. Ridge Avenue Mural in Roxborough
unrivaled display of modern public art. Leaving South Street, I headed to the northwest section of Philadelphia and spent the afternoon in Roxborough (roxborough.us). At the western edge of the city, Roxborough is uniquely situated between the Schuylkill River and beautiful Wissahickon Park. These recreational assets along with close proximity to centers of commerce and industry both within and just beyond the city limits are making Roxborough an attractive place for families and building on a proud community spirit.

I am always intrigued to visit communities like Quakertown because they play such a vital role anchoring regional economies and bridging the divide between larger regional concentrations. I made an assessment visit to Quakertown Alive! (quakertownalive.com) in early September. So much attention is paid to county seats and university/college towns, we must not forget strong core communities that have historic & economic assets that continue to play an important role as the “Main Street” for subsets of municipalities within a larger regional context. As such, downtown Quakertown is bustling with energy and activity. A new public art project modeled after the well-known Philadelphia Mural Arts program will soon be completed. A developer worked with a tech company to renovate an industrial space into a modern and highly-desirable office space that brings an educated workforce into the downtown area daily. Quakertown Alive! continues to work on a myriad of goals, from addressing a downtown food desert, to improving the walkability of the community, to increasing outreach efforts with minority business owners and providing creative ways to offer financial and technical assistance to those looking to make business and property improvements. Their ambitious and outcomes focused agenda is the kind of work scope that serves as a great example to other community revitalization efforts in Pennsylvania.

For this edition’s good meals out, the best meal recognition community is the first two-time winner. I visited West Chester on the day that it was announced that our friends at the West Chester Business Improvement District were named semi-finalist for the Great American Main Street Award. The prosciutto, roasted pepper, and mozzarella panini I had was just the right amount of spicy for lunch, but more so it was a perfect late-Summer day for outdoor dining. West Chester was participating in Park(ing) Day (parkingday.org) on the day I visited. Seeing the transformation of a parking space into a park was really an enjoyable and eye opening experience and something I encourage all communities to try. The pop-up park created a social space, provided for an economic vitality and marketing opportunity, and generated the kind of positive “word on the street” buzz that is such an important part of community revitalization success.
Honorable mention for my good meals out comes from a great end of the work day visit I made to Philadelphia’s Rittenhouse Square while in the area. I shared a clambake for two and it was absolutely incredible. The clambake might very well be the best expression of Summer in meal form.

Lastly, I want to take a moment to remember a great Pennsylvanian, Mr. Arnold Palmer. Whether you’re a golfer (as I am) or just someone who enjoys mixing their ice tea and lemonade (which I also enjoy), Arnold Palmer’s impact on popular culture, the sport of golf, and his hometown of Latrobe cannot be understated. I was in Latrobe just a few days before Mr. Palmer passed away and there were reminders and recognition of him all over town (as well as for fellow Latrobe native Mr. Fred Rogers). Every community in the Commonwealth has great citizen leaders (nationally known or not) who are indelible parts in the story of community revitalization. I encourage all of the community revitalization programs to take time to recognize and celebrate the contributions of outstanding citizens and make that an active part of the positive efforts in your community. And as for Mr. Palmer, we should all be so lucky to have such a long and truly great American life as he did.

As always, be sure to follow Pennsylvania Downtown Center on Twitter (@Pa_Downtown) and on Facebook. As staff is out and about we will do our best to share photos and stories about what we’re seeing and learning from the communities we visit. That is all for now, see you out there on the road.
JOIN US IN CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF HELPING YOU MAKE YOUR TOWN A BETTER PLACE

Pennsylvania Downtown Center's

JUNE 13, 2017

Hilton Harrisburg

30th Anniversary Gala