

### Dear Collaborative Partner,

Summer vacations help us see our own towns in perspective. My trip took me up Rt. 22 from Salisbury, CT to Shelburne, VT- on the way I passed countless village centers with boarded up storefronts, downtowns turned ghost towns. We can't let this happen to our village centers – we have to support our local businesses, we have to work to find realistic ways to create jobs for the young people who live in our towns and housing options they can afford. We can do this, together. The best thing about vacations is realizing how happy you are to return home.

This newsletter brings you updates on our efforts to create housing options and preserve our village centers. For more information on any of these visit our [website](#) or [contact us](#).

### WHAT WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON:

#### Understanding Our Villages' Economic Strengths & Weaknesses- Report Released!

We have just released a "Current Conditions" report as part of our Village Center Vitality initiative. This report summarizes an [online survey](#) that was conducted (May-July 2010), [focus group sessions](#) for business and town leaders (April 19th & 20th, 2010), demographics and retail mix in our village centers, and perceived "[Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats](#)" in each of the eight village centers. This report will be used as a basis for the next step in the study – developing Action Strategies to preserve our village centers.

Highlights from this PowerPoint report:

- ▶ Limited number of full time residents results in lack of critical mass necessary to support wider diversity of stores.
- ▶ Increasing number of seasonal homes limits year-round customer base.
- ▶ \$122 million that could be spent here is being spent outside of the region. The mix of stores and coordinated marketing is key.

*A town-specific summary* of the economic strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the village centers of Canaan, Cornwall, Goshen, Kent, Norfolk, North Canaan, Salisbury, and Sharon is also included here. To see a copy of this report, visit our [website](#).

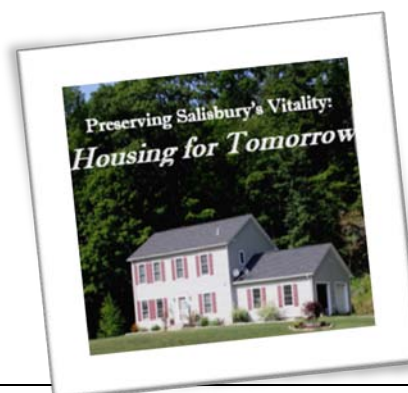


#### Accessory Apartment Program Expands

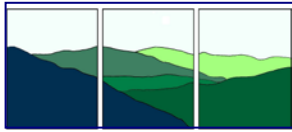
Collaborative staff in partnership with *housing us*, an initiative of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, has completed Homeowner Guides to Creating Accessory Apartments for Salisbury, Sharon, & Kent and has begun providing direct homeowner assistance. An additional \$17,500 has been raised for the accessory apartment program and we plan to expand to Cornwall, Falls Village, and Sheffield, MA. To see a copy of those guides visit [www.housingus.org](http://www.housingus.org), for more information on how your town can participate [contact us](#).

### SPOTLIGHT ON OUR TOWNS:

#### SALISBURY- "Housing for Tomorrow" Report Contains Valuable Lessons for All



Salisbury has the 8<sup>th</sup> least affordable housing prices in the state, school enrollments are declining, young families and young adults are leaving, and



emergency service volunteers are aging. Sound familiar? This report, developed by a committee of 16 Salisbury residents, documents the need for affordable housing and outlines strategies to get there. It contains valuable information for all of our towns that are dealing with this challenging issue. A copy of the report can be found on our [website](#) under "Planners Picks- Hot topics".

### **CANAAN- Tax Incentives for Village Vitality**

We have learned so much through the interviews we have conducted as part of our Village Center Vitality Study. Doug Humes, 1<sup>st</sup> selectmen of Canaan gave us valuable information on how the Town of Canaan provided tax incentives to businesses in their village center to spur reinvestment and facade improvement in 1992 and 1997.

*"We found this to be a good tool which we may take out of the shed again,"* said Humes. For more information on how Canaan did this, [contact us](#).

**SHARON-** was the first town to send in their check to become a contributing member of the Collaborative- thanks Sharon!

### **NEWS FROM OUR PARTNER AGENCIES:**

**NORTHWEST CONSERVATION DISTRICT-**  
Holds Energy Saving and Sustainable Living Expos  
Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> from 1-5 @ NWCT Community College  
Nov. 6<sup>th</sup> from 1-5 at Litchfield HS  
For more information visit [www.conservect.org](http://www.conservect.org)

**HOUSATONIC VALLEY ASSOCIATION-**  
has hired Sam Dziekan as their new GIS Manager. Sam is a graduate of Hunter College (MA Geography) and most recently worked for the NYC Dept. of Health on its World Trade Center Health Registry using GIS to track exposure to 9/11.

**NWCT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP.-**is planning to kick-off new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies planning soon which will include strategies for keeping village centers vital.

### **HOUSATONIC HERITAGE-**

The 2010 Heritage Walks Are Coming!

***More than forty free, guided walks and tours, on September 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> and October 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>***

All people of all ages are invited. To learn more about the Heritage Walks visit [www.Heritage-Hikes.org](http://www.Heritage-Hikes.org). Heritage Walks are a program of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, with a mission to preserve and celebrate the rich heritage of the region. Explore this, and other heritage programs at [www.HousatonicHeritage.org](http://www.HousatonicHeritage.org).

**The Collaborative welcomes Don Stein, Barkhamsted's 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman to our Oversight Committee.**

New businesses fill vacant storefronts in Falls Village & Norfolk.

