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A VISION FOR STORRS CENTER

VOLUME I • 2006

Sharing a Vision for a New Storrs Center



Rendering: James S. Wassell

Surrounded by retail, restaurants, offices and residences, the town square will provide a center for public activity and a strong civic orientation for the main street area.

By Macon C. Toledano

The town of Mansfield and the University of Connecticut have agreed. They are neighbors, they are partners, and they both play a vital role in the future of the Mansfield community. Together with the citizens of Mansfield, they have envisioned the creation of a place that will reflect, strengthen and solidify that sense of community—a crossroads, a main street, a meeting place, a civic center—a town center. LeylandAlliance is proud to be part of the public/private partnership dedicated to bringing that vision for Storrs Center to life. Of course, the town of Mansfield has been around for over 300 years and already includes a major state university with almost 20,000 students. So, just how do you create a new town center and main street with this as your context? If this sounds like you like a monumental undertaking, I certainly agree!



Fortunately, we have some unique assets on our side. The most important of these is the consortium of civic, business and university representatives that has come together in the form of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership. With its guidance, together with input from the town, the University and local residents, we can better understand the unique environment in which we are working and determine what kind of vision for a town center makes sense for the town of Mansfield. The new downtown must stem from a shared vision among the members of the partnership and the community. It must be a vision that is specific to Storrs and the town of Mansfield. The challenge before us is to fill in the details of that vision so that we can take it from concept to reality.

Traditionally, town centers grew organically to accommodate the changing needs of their community over a long period of time. In Connecticut, this was often a process that lasted hundreds of years. Condensing this process into a matter of a few years means making sure that we clearly understand the vision, aspirations and needs of the town of Mansfield and how they are

grounded within this particular place. To ensure an integral and lasting connection to its context, Storrs Center must recognize the specific qualities and history that give this town its character and make sure that they continue to be part of its future.

A great town center must begin with a town plan that can support growth and change over the years in the same way that successful, historical town centers have done so. The plan must have the capacity to define and accommodate the architecture and public spaces that will evolve into the fabric of daily life. Storrs Center offers a great opportunity to implement the tenets of traditional neighborhood design (“TND”), an approach to planning and development that draws upon a tradition of town planning that emphasizes people, includes a variety of dwellings, architectural styles, and commercial establishments, and features a network of carefully designed, interconnected streets and public spaces—the public realm. This network of streets and spaces weaves together a series of neighborhoods, the traditional building blocks of towns, each characterized by its particular buildings, uses, scale and collective

character. These are aspects of traditional town planning that have withstood the test of time. These are the same aspects of traditional town planning we must employ to imbue our plan for a town center with the enduring quality and characteristics that will make it last the test of time.

The tenets of traditional town planning will also allow us to preserve the rural character of the town of Mansfield by concentrating development in a central area within easy walking distance of the major civic and public functions of Mansfield. Many of the components for a downtown main street environment are already in place, including the town hall, the community center, the high school, and the post office as well as the University of Connecticut campus with its plans for the new fine arts center. We must develop a plan that weaves these components together with new commercial and residential uses and with existing neighborhoods to create a discernible and vital center for the town. In this way, Storrs Center will be not only an addition to the town of Mansfield but also a way of

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SHARING A VISION

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introducing a coherent identity to existing civic and community functions.

Traditional neighborhood design offers another significant advantage. It affords an opportunity to better protect the natural environment. While there are actually over 45 acres available for development, we have chosen to limit the development area for Storrs Center to about a third of that area on land adjacent to Storrs Road that was largely previously developed. Traditional town planning enables us to use land intelligently and efficiently by concentrating a variety of uses, including residential, commercial and civic within close proximity and reasonable walking distance. The natural environment of the remaining 30 acres will actually be improved through careful and restorative development practices. Ultimately, this natural area with its wetlands and upland forests will become the backdrop for the town center and a constant reminder of this town's historical and literal connection to its natural setting.

The next step in establishing a vision for Storrs Center is a study in the science of place making. We know that Storrs Center should share certain basic qualities with towns that have actually evolved over time and that it should be able to continuously evolve in the future. It should offer a diversity of housing types and a range of commercial opportunities. It should entail recognition of its Connecticut and New England heritage. It should appeal to all ages and all members of this community, from students to empty nesters, from children and their families to visiting

parents. And like other university towns such as Princeton, N.J., Cambridge, Mass., Athens, Ga., and Oxford, England, it should represent a vision for a community to which both the University and town can feel a vital and mutually supportive connection.

But how do you make a place from the ground up? What should it look like? How wide will the sidewalks be? Where will the roads lead? What should buildings look like? What kinds of retailers and restaurants should be in this new place?

To answer these questions, a world-class team of professionals has been assembled with experience doing just this type of work. Looney Ricks Kiss ("LRK") was engaged by the Mansfield Downtown Partnership in 2003 to create a broad framework for the design of Storrs Center. This firm is setting the criteria for the character and nature of Storrs Center through a set of design guidelines for the development of the public realm and the surrounding architecture. Herbert S. Newman and Partners, master planner and chief architect for Storrs Center, is producing the conceptual plan for the underlying network of streets and public spaces that will eventually make up the public realm—the shared network of outdoor spaces—of Storrs Center. Live Work Learn Play ("LWLP"), the retail consultant for Storrs Center, combines extensive local research with its own specialized knowledge of how stores, businesses, restaurants and people work together to create vibrant, well integrated and successful retail environments. An active design process focuses on the business program that will make up the different neighborhoods—each with its own local character and each a part of a larger vision for Storrs Center. LWLP

then takes a proactive role in identifying businesses to fill the various positions in the program, placing particular emphasis on the need to identify local and regional businesses that will help to root the identity of Storrs Center in its own environment and distinguish it by its regional character. The

process one of open communication. As we move closer to the creation of a real place, we will continue to gather information from all sides in order to further solidify a clear vision for Storrs Center that can guide us through the design and approval process to the completion of construction.

"Whether you're a Mansfield resident, past or present UConn student, or faculty member, all will take pride in the identity Storrs Center will give the area through a unique mix of retail, restaurants, residential offerings and authentic culture."

goal is an authentic, vital and sustainable environment for business that is a lasting and integral part of the local community and the broader region.

Our vision as a company and a builder of neighborhoods is centered in the creation of wonderful places that derive a sense of civic identity from the strength and coherence of the shared public realm and its relationship to the surrounding architecture. It is particularly exciting to work in a town and in a partnership that shares with us an appreciation for the key role that the built environment plays in the definition of a community and the shared daily experience of its many diverse citizens. We are proud that we have been selected to help implement this vision. In the pursuit of a true sense of partnership and of our mutual goals, we strive continuously to make this

We do not need to remind everyone that such an undertaking would not be possible without the vision and support of all who have participated actively in this process. Our task really is to create a place that is as wonderful as the vision shared by the town, the university and the citizens of Mansfield. ■

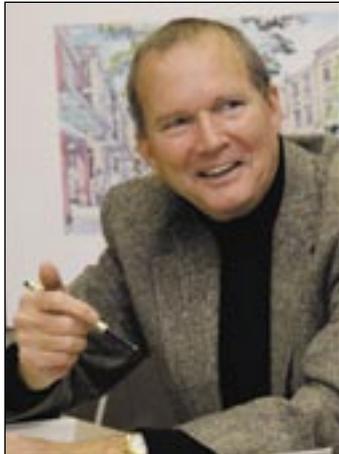
Macon Toledano, vice president of planning and development for LeylandAlliance, is project manager at Storrs Center. A licensed architect and general contractor, he has 20 years of experience in the building and real estate development industry and has worked on projects throughout the United States and Europe.



Residents and guests will enjoy dining, shopping, and strolling along the village streets while upper stories of the mixed-use buildings will be dedicated to residential and office spaces.

An Everyone Project: The Mansfield Downtown Partnership Unites University, Community, Business

By Philip Lodewick



This corner of Connecticut is about to get even better. What has long been an appealing place to live thanks to excellent schools, a world-class university, a rich history of civic and community engagement, and a pretty countryside is about to become a destination.

The new Storrs Center is what I call “an everyone project.”

Since its inception, the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc., has tried to engage all the area’s vital constituencies in the shaping of a successful plan for the development of a new town center.

The Partnership itself grew out of a series of meetings among people who wanted to see a stronger relationship between “town and gown” and the development of an economically, culturally and socially vital downtown. What has too long been a place of pass through could become a place of destination.

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership is now an independent, not for profit 501(c)3 organization charged with coordinating the enhancement and revitalization of three of Mansfield’s commercial areas: Storrs Center, King Hill Road and the Four Corners. A public-private partnership, the organization is composed of representatives from town government, the University of Connecticut, and business and community leaders. It has been named by the town as the municipal development agency for the initial works to be done on the town center and has in turn engaged Storrs Center Alliance, an affiliate of Tuxedo, N.Y.-based LeylandAlliance, as the master developer.

The initial focus for the Partnership has been on the Storrs Center site. Our goal is the development and redevelopment of a mixed-use retail, residential and commercial center. Within this context, we are addressing a broad range of issues from land use and the establishment of a community square to parking, improved signage and marketing and promotion of the area.

The Partnership has worked openly with the community to provide the opportunity for all interested parties to



It takes a team to build a Main Street. Pictured are Lou Marquet, Executive Vice President of LeylandAlliance; Cynthia van Zelm, Executive Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership; and Storrs Center Project Director Macon Toledano at the Storrs Center booth during September’s Festival on the Green.



The Mansfield Downtown Partnership Board of Directors voted favorably to accept the Municipal Development Plan for Storrs Center in October 2005.

give valuable input to the development plans. The process has resulted in over 280 paid individual, business and organizational memberships in the Partnership. Partnership Executive Director Cynthia van Zelm meets regularly with residents, government officials, University personnel, and students to encourage ideas, comments and suggestions. She is in the Partnership office daily, visits and speaks with a range of civic and professional organizations, maintains a regularly updated website [www.mansfieldct.org] and always answers email.

The Partnership has six standing committees—Advertising and Promotion, Business Development and Retention, Finance and Administration, Membership Development, Planning and Design, and Nominating—comprised of members of the Partnership, which meet on a regularly scheduled basis to conduct the work of the Partnership. Under van Zelm’s supervision, the Partnership also produces a biannual newsletter to inform all of our constituen-

cies of development progress. Our goal has always been one of communication and inclusion for a project we feel is most compelling.

This process of creating a new town center where none existed before is without much precedent in this area. However this is a region of the state going through a great transformation. With a world-class university helping to fuel the economic, intellectual and cultural engine of the state and beyond, and an engaged citizenry focused on wise and sustainable growth, a vibrant Mansfield town center will be a vital component of a wonderful place to live. ■

Philip Lodewick holds a bachelor’s (1966) and master’s (1967) degree in business from the University of Connecticut. He is president and CEO of The Tradewell Corp., Ridgefield, Conn., and president of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership’s Board of Directors.

Traditional neighborhood development (TND) is a comprehensive planning system inspired by the many great towns and neighborhoods developed before World War II. These communities were developed prior to the suburban sprawl engendered by the expanding highway systems of our increasingly auto-dependent society.

The result is an innovative development approach that creates compact, walkable communities – like Storrs Center. TND emphasizes a return to the way we used to build neighborhoods, with their human scale and lively mix of uses. With many services located a short walk away, the need for car travel is lessened and a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere results.

- 1 The neighborhood has a discernible center. This is often a square or a green and sometimes a busy or memorable street corner.
- 2 Most of the dwellings are within a five-minute walk of the center.

10 BASICS OF A TND

- 3 There are a variety of dwelling types — usually houses, rowhouses and apartments — so that younger and older people, singles and families, and people of different economic means may find places to live.
- 4 The neighborhood includes shops and offices of sufficiently varied types to supply the weekly needs of a household.
- 5 Prominent sites are reserved for civic buildings.
- 6 There are small playgrounds accessible to every dwelling – not more than a tenth of a mile away.
- 7 Streets within the neighborhood form a connected network, which disperses traffic by providing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination.
- 8 The streets are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees. This slows traffic, creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicycles.
- 9 Buildings in the neighborhood center are placed close to the street, creating a well-defined public realm.
- 10 Parking lots and garage doors rarely front the street. Parking is relegated to the rear of buildings, usually accessed by alleys.

Photo: John DeSanto Photography

Photo: LeylandAlliance

The Evolution of a New Town Center

By Mayor Betsy Paterson

Storrs Center has been a long time coming. Some of the first rumblings of interest were heard as far back as the early 1940s. In 1999, a collection of individuals and businesses from the town of Mansfield came together with representatives from the University of Connecticut to discuss a common need. What they've created out of that need is a vision for a new town center, a place where an exciting mix of people—students, residents, professionals and professors—can meet, exchange ideas, shop and live.

The town of Mansfield has been largely rural since its incorporation in 1702. Its first settlers were farmers. Later, rivers powered saw mills and gristmills, and during the 19th century textiles, steel products, bronze cannons, and even organ pipes were manufactured here. But Mansfield remained rural.

The Storrs Agricultural School was established in 1881 and later became the University of Connecticut, one of the largest employers in eastern Connecticut. *U.S. News and World Report* named the university one of the top public research universities in the nation. Still, this town has a population of only 25,200—which includes the student dorm population of 10,850.

Since I moved to this area in the 1960s, there has been talk of how the town needed a core, a place where people can come together and enjoy certain amenities. I enjoy a unique perspective: I was employed by the university for a long time and even served as the bursar for three years. I also have more than eight years of experience in Mansfield government. As a result, I have the privi-



The idea of a new town center was born decades ago. Now, the reality of Storrs Center is upon us. Project Manager Macon Toledano, Mayor Betsy Paterson, Mansfield Downtown Partnership Director Cynthia van Zelm and Martin Berliner, Mansfield Town Manager, are just four of the dozens of people who are working together to create this vibrant new Main Street.

lege of seeing both the town and the gown viewpoints. And both sides contributed immensely to the progress toward a new Storrs Center.

In 1995, the University of Connecticut embarked on an ambitious 10-year rebuilding program called UConn 2000. This \$1 billion program transformed the university, resulting in new buildings, an improved infrastructure, and higher enrollment.

In the meantime, the town of Mansfield paid for a 1999 report by HyettPalma, a national consulting firm specializing in the economic enhancement of downtowns. The outcome was the Mansfield Downtown Partnership Action Agenda, which outlined the steps necessary to create a new town center from the ground up. The creation and mandate of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership

was a result of this report, and the town of Mansfield authorized the partnership to serve as its municipal development agency for Storrs Center in 2002.

Work then began on a Municipal Development Plan for Storrs Center, a broad framework detailing the size and nature of the development. The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) was approved by the Windham Region Council of Governments Regional Planning Commission, the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission, the Partnership Board of Directors, the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees, and the Mansfield Town Council in the fall of 2005. In January 2006, the MDP received its final approval from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). After the necessary

permits and designations are achieved, construction begins.

The building process is expected to commence in 2006 and should be completed within five to seven years. In 2005, Senator Joseph Lieberman, in recognition of the broad vision to define a center of civic life in Mansfield, came to Storrs to announce a \$2.5 million grant for improvements to Storrs Road.

Looking to the future, the need for this town center is likely to grow. Last year, the university embarked on a new program entitled 21st Century UConn. This \$1.3 billion initiative calls for further improvements to the Storrs campus.

And the new Fine Arts Center, designed by architect Frank O. Gehry, will be a regional architectural treasure that will generate visitors, jobs and income while giving the university a well-deserved center for its impressive arts program.

The development of Storrs Center has been a slow and careful process. This approach is paying off now with a world-class design team and a carefully crafted development strategy with an eye to the environment. The new town center will provide very real tax advantages for the town, as well as jobs. It is an idea whose time has come. ■

Betsy Paterson is in her fourth term as mayor of the town of Mansfield. She has been involved in Mansfield government for more than eight years and is a former bursar of the University of Connecticut. Paterson is also a member of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership. She lives in Mansfield Center.

UConn: Academics, Arts and Athletics

The University of Connecticut is the state's flagship institution of higher learning. Founded in 1881, the University of Connecticut has grown to include 13 Schools and Colleges at its main campus in Storrs, separate Schools of Law and Social Work in Hartford, five regional campuses throughout the state and Schools of Medicine and Dentistry at the UConn Health Center in Farmington.

The University of Connecticut is a school of choice for academically talented students. UConn has stood as the top public university in New England for the seventh consecutive year. Since 1995, freshman applications have increased 88 percent and the University recently welcomed 107 high school valedictorians and salutatorians to UConn's Class of 2009.

Designated a Carnegie Foundation Research University-Extensive, a distinction shared by fewer than four percent of America's higher education institutions, UConn has more than 70 focused research



The University of Connecticut is the state's flagship institution of higher learning.

centers where faculty, graduate students and undergraduates explore everything from improving human health to enhancing public education and protecting the

country's natural resources.

UConn's strides in higher education stretch throughout the state of Connecticut and beyond. The Storrs campus serves as

the area's educational, cultural and athletic center with its many academic, theater, music and sports events.

David Woods, dean of the School of Fine Arts, says, "The area needs places for people to go before or after cultural events. Outdoor cafés, restaurants and shops would be appealing to our patrons." The Jorgenson Center for the Performing Arts seats 3,000 and hosts 65 events per year. The new Nafe Katter Theater seats 239 and hosts at least four performances per semester by the Connecticut Repertory Theater.

The School's William Benton Museum of Art \$30 million collection features works by such renowned artists as Mary Cassatt, Thomas Hart Benton and Gustav Klimt. The Ballard Institute and Museum of Puppetry has 4,500 puppets, including originals from Howdy Doody and The Muppets. The avant garde Contemporary

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The Importance of a New Main Street

By Philip E. Austin, President,
University of Connecticut

Every community needs a center—metaphorical as well as physical. For our own Mansfield community, for many decades the “center” has been more a state of mind than a physical presence.



The university’s vast physical presence and myriad cultural and athletic activities certainly gave definition to the Storrs area, and continues to do so today. But even those of us who enjoy living here have long known that something is missing: a visible, vibrant, exciting central area in which students, faculty, staff, town residents and visitors can congregate and share the benefits that come with being in a university town. There are reasons that most communities in the United States have a “main street,” and the absence of one in Mansfield reminds us of what they are.

Five years ago, when representatives of the University, the town government, the business community and the citizenry at large first got together to talk about this issue, there was quick agreement that something needed to be done. The idea that to live in this town meant driving miles to find a real commercial center was, and is, simply unacceptable. On top of everything else, those of us responsible for the university’s

“Our goals are to attract and keep well qualified students and faculty and also to attract alumni and others to the area — to hear a concert, see an art exhibit, or go to a basketball game.”



Photo: University of Connecticut

undergraduate recruitment were tired of having to persuade some prospective students that there is, indeed, “something to do in Storrs.” So coming together around the common goal of a true downtown was the easy part.

The harder part came as we tried to answer the question of how you create a center that meets the needs of almost 20,000 students (ranging in age from about 18 years into the early 30s), 4,200 faculty and staff, and 12,000 Mansfield citizens. Years of discussion ensued and, to the immense gratification of all involved, a general consensus emerged about what should be established, and where. In the not-too-distant future it will become a reality.

The Storrs Center now in development is located on 15 acres across from what is now the University’s primary entrance on Route 195. It will offer a mix of housing, retail and business services—all needed, and all, individually and in combination, creating a genuine “main street” atmosphere. Nearby, the University’s planned fine arts center will offer cultural activities and sights that only a university town or a major metropolis can provide—art and art history, drama, music, and all the rest, most of it oriented to the needs of students but much of it at a high professional level. Many of these activities already take place at the University, but concentrating them in an area adjacent to the downtown community enhances the

town and strengthens their appeal to a wide audience.

The downtown area will also be a “center of commerce,” in the true sense of the term. There will be multiple sites for local merchants, and a small portion will be reserved for national retailers who will help serve as a draw for visitors from the wider region—and who will then be likely to patronize the independent shops as well. The combination of locally-based and national establishments will appeal to students eager to see familiar names as well as to explore new possibilities. The housing constructed at Storrs Center will reach out to a mix of occupants—middle-aged and older empty nesters, young faculty, graduate students, and others. The hope and expectation is not just that they will represent a critical mass that enlivens the area, but that they will interact in ways that are, again, unique to a college town.

The University of Connecticut has just entered its 125th anniversary year. As a center of learning, we have come a long way from the days when this was the Storrs Agricultural School. We still adhere to values of excellence and inclusion. But we have adapted those values to 21st century needs.

Similarly, the community of which we are a part has come a long way in the past 300 years. Now the time has come for us to move one giant step ahead. In creating the new Storrs Center we are not just erecting a set of buildings, however attractive they may be. We are creating, in physical reality as well as metaphor, a center appropriate to the heart of a great American college town. ■

ACADEMICS, ARTS AND ATHLETICS

Continued from page 4

Art Galleries include architecture, design, photography, performance, music, film, video, and digital media, as well as talks by artists, critics and historians. Von der Mehden Recital Hall hosts 80 events per semester, including a student and faculty recital series.

“One of the goals of Storrs Center is to provide a place to celebrate the Huskies or to congregate after taking in a concert or art opening,” says Max Reim, founder of Live Work Learn Play, the retail consultants who are providing commercial opportunities for unique, regional entrepreneurs who represent local vision and flavor. On event and game days, Storrs Center will become “Huskies Hub,” and on performance days friends will have a place to gather for a perfect ending to their UConn experience.

UConn’s arts events draw thousands of people from Connecticut, Massachusetts,

Rhode Island and New York. And the number will increase once the new School of Fine Arts is completed.

“The new building’s facilities will allow us to extend our summer programs, as well,” Dean Woods says. A collaboration with the Metropolitan Opera is in the works, as is a Shakespeare festival, a music festival and multiple summer camps. These events will have an economic impact during the summer.

The new Storrs Center will provide services and entertainment to visitors and arts patrons alike. It provides a place to eat before a show, to have coffee while discussing a lecture, to order an ice cream cone for a young aficionado, or to sit outside on a warm evening, digesting the beauty of a work of art.

Athletics at UConn are an important part of the college experience, too. Just ask women’s basketball student-athlete Charde Houston. Or men’s soccer student-athlete Karl Schilling. Or field hockey student-athlete Meagan Hoffmann. These are just a few of the outstanding student-athletes who draw crowds to the Huskies’ 10,167-seat Gampel Pavilion, and other

UConn athletic venues located at the center of the Storrs campus.

Since 1995, UConn has captured 8 national championships—five in women’s basketball, two in men’s basketball and one in men’s soccer. In that same time period, the Huskies have won 66 Big East conference championships.

“Husky sports have national visibility and they unify the state of Connecticut,” says Tom Callahan, special assistant to the president of the university. Many of the games are televised. Students and town of Mansfield residents alike will gather around the television to watch an exciting game.

With dozens of soccer, field hockey, softball, baseball, golf, lacrosse, ice hockey, basketball, rowing, tennis, football, swimming, diving, and track and field events each year, UConn sports fans are busy. Not all the events are held on campus, but many are. And, it’s always the same dilemma: Where can you go before a game, to gather to watch an event, and to celebrate when the Huskies score another victory? The game plan is that Storrs Center will provide some options. ■



Photo: University of Connecticut

The UConn women’s and men’s basketball teams were national champions in 2004.



Behind the Master Plan of Storrs Center

By Richard Munday

Right now, the Storrs Center area consists of a town hall, a post office, a community center, a school, a major university, and a loose collection of houses and malls—all threaded together by a busy state thoroughfare, Storrs Road. When the new Storrs Center is complete, Mansfield will be transformed into a vibrant university town. Like other New England towns, Mansfield will have a center that will accommodate the needs of a busy community, all within an easy walk of a new central town square.

Storrs Center—a place with a Main Street, a town square, new streets and lanes supporting mixed uses, and a residential enclave with row houses and apartments — will be bordered by a civic and educational precinct, the University of Connecticut, and pristine woodlands.

Traffic will be slowed on Storrs Road; trees will be planted along the sides and convenient parking will be available on both sides. This road will become the village’s Main Street.



Storrs Center will be comprised of a network of pedestrian-oriented streets and public spaces that includes the town square, the main street frontage along Storrs Road, a street, and smaller lanes, alleys, and neighborhood parks.



Storrs Center adheres to the basic Principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design by expanding the variety of residences, shopping areas, workplaces, and mix of uses in close proximity to existing town institutions, helping to foster an identifiable, shared center of civic activity for Mansfield.

Rendering: James S. Wassell

Rendering: Herbert S. Newman and Partners P.C.



STORRS

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CENTER

LEGEND

- 1 • TOWN SQUARE
- 2 • UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
- 3 • E.O. SMITH HIGH SCHOOL
- 4 • BUCKLEY HALL
- 5 • EXISTING COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS
- 6 • POST OFFICE
- 7 • TOWN HALL
- 8 • COMMUNITY CENTER
- 9 • PROTECTED WETLANDS
- 10 • GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
- 11 • PROPOSED SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS
- 12 • COURTYARD CONDOMINIUMS
- 13 • DAILY CAMPUS BUILDING

THIS PLAN REPRESENTS A CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FOR STORRS CENTER. STREET CONFIGURATIONS, DIMENSIONS AND BUILDING SHAPES AND LOCATIONS ARE PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN IS PROVIDED IN ORDER TO DESCRIBE THE INTENDED NATURE AND CHARACTER OF THE PROJECT.

At the heart of the Storrs Center will be the town square, a place where the community, the university and visitors will find common ground. Around this square will be stores, offices, housing, and cultural resources. All these will ensure that the square becomes a primary destination in the region.

The overall concept for Storrs Center is based on the principle of the street as the organizer and collector of community life—bringing people together and providing them with opportunities to gain access to one another. A Main Street needs secondary streets that lead to and from it. The street design for Storrs Center emphasizes connectivity and combines straight and curvilinear elements that respond to topographical, environmental and construction contingencies. The various forms and spaces in the street system produced by these responses become special places—the centers of neighborhoods, the entrances to neighborhoods, small greenswards. The street plan consists of two-way streets and one-way lanes. Street parking is encouraged, contributing to the availability of convenient parking spaces and calming traffic in pedestrian areas with street-front commercial activity.

A new street, parallel to Storrs Road, will create a neighborhood for retail and commercial activity. Linking the streets will be a grid of narrow connectors that may either be one-way streets or pedestrian paths. In addition, the street will be a common connector linking all the new neighborhoods of the downtown. This street will also provide another point of connection between the street system of the new downtown and the existing Mansfield street network, improving circulation in the town as a whole.

Neighborhoods are the building blocks of all villages, towns and cities. This project, a collection of neighborhoods, will include places that are clearly distinct from one another yet linked. Small commercial and residential neighborhoods create variety within the fabric of the whole. Mansfield is a New England town that, with the addition of the new Storrs Center, will be human-scaled, self-governing but forward-looking, and innovative. As home to the University of Connecticut, Mansfield also becomes a key participant to life in the information age.



Rendering: James S. Wassell



Rendering: James S. Wassell

Storrs Center will be a year-round destination with the character of a college town and strong sense of place. It will include a range of small neighborhoods knit together by common architecture, intimate streets and public spaces, sidewalks, and the shared interests and activities of the occupants.

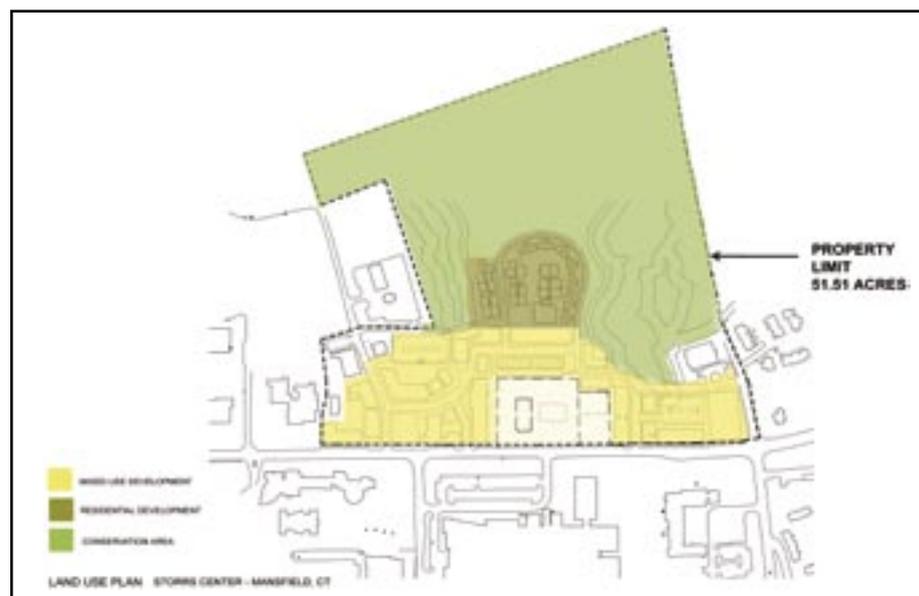
Various building types, landscapes, public spaces, and building uses will define the character of the individual neighborhoods that work together in the master plan to create a vibrant university town – a wonderful place to live, work, play, and learn.

Preserving the Connecticut Landscape



By Michael W. Klemens, Ph.D.

Environmentally, the primary advantages of Storrs Center are the compactness of the development and the remediation of untreated stormwater runoff that is affecting the headwaters of the Fenton River. Instead of sprawling across the full 45 acres that are available for development, the town center is concentrated on 15 acres. Most of that development area overlies previously or currently developed property. State of the art stormwater renovation techniques will remove pollutants, resulting in much higher water quality levels in the Fenton River headwaters. In addition, the remaining acres will be restored to a protected natural state and become ecologically connected to bordering open space and downstream areas. This conservation zone balances develop-



The main street village will occupy about 15 acres of the overall 45-acre property, combining retail, restaurant, and office space with a variety of residence types, civic spaces, and parking. The remaining portion of the site will be preserved as a wooded, conservation area.

ment with the protection of woods, wetlands, streams and vernal pools.

The Storrs Center site presently includes shopping centers, parking lots and roads. While the development practices were the best available at the time, we've since learned many better ways to handle storm water runoff in a more environmentally sensitive manner.

LeylandAlliance will utilize environmental best practices in the new town center that will actually treat the storm water and remove the silt, sediment, salts, oil and other pollutants washing into the Fenton River. The result will be a significant ecological improvement. Once these storm water prob-

lems are stabilized, the area will restore itself and nurture the native animals and plant life which, in some pockets, have disappeared.

The best practices for preserving the area include limiting development located within 750 feet of the vernal pools, and eliminating it altogether within 100 feet. Sedimentation and pollutants will be removed with a series of holding and settling tanks. Once the water has stepped through a multiple filtration system, it will be released gradually.

Botanical studies have confirmed that three plant communities occur on the site: old field, mixed hardwood-coniferous forest and wooded swamp. The majority of the site is forested. This is the most plentiful

and characteristic type of vegetation in Connecticut. Predominant trees include a variety of oaks, white and red pine, sugar maple, black birch, hickory, and American beech. The fields include hay-scented and cinnamon ferns, as well as a mixture of grasses, sedges, brambles and wild roses. There are two particularly beautiful "specimen trees" including a large white pine and a mature Japanese chestnut.

Herpetological and ornithological studies have determined that there are no threatened or endangered animal species on the site. However, two bird species, the worm-eating warbler and the wood thrush, are included on the Audubon Society's WatchList. There are wood frogs in the vernal pools; the wood frog is a declining species in Connecticut, and the presence of a large breeding population on the site is significant.

The conservation area is an asset to Storrs Center and a constant reminder of the landscape that is characteristic of this area of Connecticut. The quiet, low-impact walking paths planned for the upland areas will offer local residents and visitors an opportunity to enjoy this natural preserve and catch sight of birds and other wildlife. ■

Dr. Michael Klemens, environmental specialist for Storrs Center, received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Connecticut. As senior conservationist and director of the Wildlife Conservation Society's Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, he is a leader in bridging the gulf between land use practices and the conservation of wildlife and wetlands.

A Glimpse into the Future at Storrs Center: Classic New England Village Meets Hip College Town



By Max Reim

Picture a sunny day on the beautifully landscaped town square, the heart of the new Storrs Center where undergraduates are stretched out on the grass, textbooks in hand, and enjoying each other's company. Nearby, children eat ice cream cones while their parents rest on benches set amidst

flowers and trees. The brick pathways that crisscross the square are filled with people rushing to work or to classes, while others relax on a nearby café terrace.

Storrs Center represents an approach to town planning that is inspired by the old-fashioned notion that the most successful villages revolve around a central square, small residential neighborhoods for all types of people and intimate retail areas. The master plan for Storrs Center, which is based on traditional neighborhood design, will

result in a pedestrian-friendly town center with wonderful neighborhoods, parks and public spaces for residents and visitors of Mansfield to enjoy. Storrs Center is commercially master-planned as a vibrant university town, which is also a wonderful place to live, work, learn and play.

Storrs Center will be a year-round town center with a strong character and sense of place. It will include about nine small neighborhoods with several commercial uses in each, ranging from mom-and-pop businesses to a few carefully selected and well-placed national retailers. The latter provide brand recognition, a consistent level of fulfillment, product quality and customer service, and innovative store design—without sacrificing the unique character of the town center. Storrs Center will also provide small business opportunities for regional entrepreneurs to take part in this growing economy.

On a beautiful evening, you might pass a bustling outdoor restaurant, a small 24-hour grocer crowded with students, a creamery where families line up for ice cream, and a sports café where you can watch the UConn Huskies win another game on a giant television screen.

Storrs Center seeks to capture the energy and pride of those who live in this area. Its commercial offerings will provide people with what they want and need to make Storrs Center "their place"—where people reconnect,



Photo: University of Connecticut

Storrs Center will boast a variety of neighborhoods — each designed for different purposes, ranging from hip spots for friends to quiet restaurants for a special occasion.

spend time, and enjoy the center of their community. ■

Max Reim is cofounder of Live Work Learn Play, a commercial casting and consulting company in Montreal, Canada.

Designing Town Guidelines in Broad Strokes

In March 2003, Looney Ricks Kiss, an architecture and planning firm that has won hundreds of awards for their work, was hired by the Mansfield Downtown Partnership to conduct workshops and prepare a community survey of the character of the streets, architecture, and open space for the new Storrs Center.

Mark Evans, project manager, and his associate, Jim Constantine, began the process with surveys of what Evans calls “the three communities of Storrs Center: the local citizens, businesses and the university.” This initial research engaged the public in the idea process and gave the planners a better understanding of the type of town center they needed to create. This resulted in a booklet that summarizes the preferences for creating a dynamic and positive sense of place rooted in local traditions and desires.

In collaboration with the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, the firm has prepared design guidelines for the town center. These guidelines address:

- The relative positions and heights of buildings. It was determined that a mix of architectural styles is necessary to create a sense of a town that evolved over time.
- The width and direction of streets and a corresponding emphasis on pedestrians, according to the principles of traditional neighborhood development.
- The importance of a central, organizing town square. This square is not only the physical center of the area; it is also the cultural, civic and public center.
- The types of materials used should be varied but reflective of New England architecture.

“The design guidelines will provide design parameters that will assist architects and planners in the design and articulation of the neighborhoods and buildings,” Evans says. “Throughout our research it was clear that there was great interest in creating high quality, coherent standards for every aspect of the project.” ■



Photo: LeylandAlliance

This North Carolina main street is a good example of mixing uses. The three-story building is pulled close to the street and features ground floor shopping, with office and apartment spaces above. The buildings, combined with a civic monument and garden, are proportioned correctly and create a comfortable public space.



Photo: LeylandAlliance

Attractive town home buildings are an easy walk from Main Street. This neighborhood is part of a mixed-use plan in Charlotte, North Carolina.



Photo: LeylandAlliance

The architecture for Storrs Center will be governed by the Storrs Center Design Guidelines, prepared by Looney Ricks Kiss. In this photo condominiums above main street shops create “eyes on the street” and enliven the neighborhood.

THE STORRS CENTER ALLIANCE TEAM

**Philip Lodewick****Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.**

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership is an independent, nonprofit, membership organization charged with coordinating the enhancement and revitalization of three of Mansfield's commercial areas: Storrs Center, King Hill Road and the Four Corners. As a public-private partnership, the organization is composed of representatives from the community, business, town of Mansfield and the University of Connecticut.

**Cynthia van Zelm**

The group is charged with developing a community green space, improving traffic flow and parking, business retention and attraction, real estate development and improvements, marketing and promotion, and such public improvements as landscaping and signage.

The partnership is working to enhance downtown Mansfield as a great place to work, live and visit. Its current focus is on developing a mixed-use town center in the commercial area known as Storrs Center.

**Steve Maun****LeylandAlliance LLC**

Storrs Center Alliance, an affiliate of LeylandAlliance, is the master developer for Storrs Center. Leyland is a developer of mixed-use and residential communities based on the principles of New Urbanism, also known as Traditional Neighborhood Design. New communities and urban infill projects built upon these principles represent the most innovative and exciting design trend in real estate today, and Leyland is proud to be at the forefront of this movement.

Leyland's projects emphasize a range of housing types for different income and age groups as well as retail, office and commercial opportunities. LeylandAlliance is distinguished by its record of working together with municipalities in public-private partnerships to achieve shared development goals.

Current LeylandAlliance projects in various stages of approval or development include over 3,500 residential units, including single-family, multi-family, townhomes, live-work and apartments; more than 350,000 square feet of mixed-use, neighborhood, and main street-oriented retail and commercial space; and a variety of civic buildings, parks, trails and other public amenities.

Leyland's principals have worked together for more than 20 years and are dedicated to the goal of developing innovative residential and commercial projects that encompass new construction,

renovation, and adaptive re-use. They are active in the National Town Builders Association, Congress for the New Urbanism, and Seaside Foundation. Principals include Steve J. Maun, president; Louis G. Marquet, executive vice president with primary responsibility for planning and construction; and Howard Kaufman, executive vice president and general counsel. Macon Toledano is Leyland's vice president of planning and design and serves as project manager for Storrs Center.

**Bob Landino****BL Companies**

BL Companies, project engineer for Storrs Center, is an architecture, engineering and environmental sciences consulting firm founded in 1986. The firm has grown over the years to a national practice with nearly 200 professionals and support staff located in five regional offices throughout the eastern United States, including Meriden, Conn.; Baltimore, Md.; Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; New York, N.Y.; and Harrisburg, Pa.

Consistently ranked as one of the top 500 design firms in the United States by *Engineering News-Record*, BL Companies provides developers, towns and communities with the services needed to shape future growth. From mixed-use developments,

**Geoff Fitzgerald**

to downtown revitalization projects, to traditional neighborhood residential communities, the firm helps clients responsibly meet development goals through planning and design methods that both foster economic growth and enhance local character.

BL Companies' commitment to client success begins with a highly experienced staff, innovative design and quality service. The firm's collaborative project approach reduces time and expense, provides a higher-quality final product, and ensures that clients receive the level of specialized attention they deserve.

Herbert S. Newman and Partners P.C.

Herbert S. Newman and Partners (HSNP), master planner and chief architect for Storrs Center, is a 50-person architectural practice based in New Haven, Conn. Founded in 1964, HSNP is a collaborative partnership led by Herbert S. Newman, Robert Godshall, Joseph Schiffer, Richard Munday, Peter Newman and Mavis Terry. They have established a national reputation for the design of new buildings and the renovation and restoration of existing buildings of many architectural types. These include projects for academic, corporate, institutional, religious uses and urban design.

Herbert S. Newman and Partners incorporates a humanistic approach to architectural design,

**Herbert S. Newman****Richard Munday**

having developed an understanding and appreciation of the significance of human psychology, behavior patterns, and community building, in creating architecture of enduring value. The firm has received more than 60 awards for

design excellence, including five national AIA awards and 23 AIA/Connecticut Honor Awards.

Herbert S. Newman and Partners is also working with Los Angeles architect Frank Gehry on the design of the new School of Fine Arts building that will become a centerpiece for Storrs Center.

**Max Reim****Bill Green****Live Work Learn Play**

Live Work Learn Play is a new development and consulting firm with a mission of creating sustainable and memorable places—places with identifiable personalities and character, where people can live, work, learn, and play to the fullest for years to come. Max Reim and Bill Green are the managing partners for the firm.

The principals and employees have extensive experience in planning, building and operating large-scale resorts and university towns, several of which have grown into small towns and cities. They also have experience in the planning, redevelopment, and revitalization

of several urban cores and suburbs. The people of Live Work Learn Play are experts in master planning and developing village-centered lifestyle developments and destination resorts. They have experience in developments ranging from warm weather to cold weather, from mountaintops to championship golf courses and pristine beaches, from urban landscapes to rural oases, and from university campuses to intergenerational communities.

**James Constantine****Mark Evans****Looney Ricks Kiss**

Looney Ricks Kiss, founded in 1983, is a 130-person architecture, planning, interiors and research firm headquartered in Memphis, with offices in Nashville, Tenn.; Princeton, N.J.; and Celebration and Rosemary Beach, Fla.

LRK provides expertise on every component of community design, including mixed-use developments, consumer/market research, land planning, office/commercial, town centers, and interior architecture and design. LRK seeks opportunities for design influence—whether on individual buildings or entire neighborhoods and urban districts—that present an aesthetic challenge, are uniquely complex or difficult, or are the “first of a kind” for the firm.

The firm is focused on “place making” and creating financially successful projects for its clients and the communities in which it works. To date, the firm has received 350 awards of recognition for design at local, state, regional and national levels, including awards of excellence from the Congress for the New Urbanism, the Urban Land Institute, and the American Planning Association.

Michael W. Klemens, Ph.D.

Dr. Michael Klemens, environmental specialist for Storrs Center, received his bachelor's in education and

**Louis Marquet****Howard Kaufman****Macon Toledano**

COMMENTARY

Being close to the university is wonderful. We're season ticket holders for Huskies basketball and enjoy the theater events. We're even planning to take some courses.

We've lived in Mansfield since 1972. These days, it is just the two of us, and our house is too big. We're looking to downsize, but want well-built housing. Storrs Center may provide the right housing option for us. With a nice café, restaurant, and a few places to shop, Storrs Center seems like a good solution—both for our needs and for those of the town and the university. We applaud the effort and look forward to our new town center.”



*Karin and Ken Randolph
Mansfield residents*

I don't see how Storrs Center will be anything but successful. It will mean more customers for local merchants, more employment for local residents, and more places for all of us to dine, visit and do business. That's good news for everyone. And it will get even better when the Fine Arts Center is built.

The new town center will keep the area lively all year. Right now, things die down when the students are out of school. It's important for business owners to have a steady, 12-month clientele.

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership will work closely with local businesses to keep them going during construction, to help relocate them if needed, and to let them continue to prosper. I know there will be some bumps along the way; growth always brings a little pain. But the results will be worthwhile. Of that, I am positive.”



*Betsy Treiber
local resident since 1968
regional manager for NewAlliance Bank
and vice president of the
Mansfield Downtown Partnership*

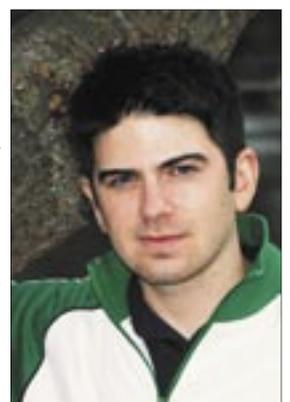
In my sophomore year, I took a girl on a date to the dining hall. I felt kind of stupid but there was no place else I could take her. Without a car, you're sunk.

I love UConn, but there is one main drawback: there

is no downtown. The University of Vermont has Burlington. The University of Delaware has Newark. But when my friends and I need to buy a gift or a pair of socks, or if we want a new place to eat or go for a date, there is no destination. You have to drive everywhere. Not only is that inconvenient, it can also be dangerous.

Working with the [Mansfield Downtown] Partnership, I've gotten to know a lot of the people in this town and understand why they like it the way it is. This kind of development is a long, long process; it has been going on for a long, long time already. But there is such a strong need for Storrs Center. I think everyone realizes that.

I want to see this great new town.”



*Zack Walter
2005 graduate of the
University of Connecticut
and former member of the
Mansfield Downtown Partnership's
Advertising and Promotion Committee*

THE STORRS CENTER ALLIANCE TEAM

Continued from page 10



Michael W. Klemens

master's in zoology from the University of Connecticut at Storrs and his doctorate in conservation biology and ecology from the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK. As senior conservationist and director of the Wildlife Conservation Society's Metropolitan Conservation Alliance, he is a national leader in bridging the gulf between land use practices and the conservation of wildlife and wetlands.

Klemens heads a program in partnership with the Connecticut DEP to deliver conservation land-use training workshops to municipal land-use decision makers around the state. Klemens was the former chairman of the Planning Commission in the city of Rye, N.Y. As a resident of Ridgefield, Conn., and a UConn alumnus, he has a special interest in Storrs Center.

Klemens receives support from a wide variety of sources in his efforts to promote stewardship of natural resources in a world adversely impacted by sprawl. These include the MacArthur Foundation, the Dodge Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Trust. He holds academic appointments at Columbia University and University of Maine and is the author of numerous scientific papers and books including *Amphibians and Reptiles of Connecticut* and *Adjacent Regions* (Connecticut Geological and Natural History Survey). His recently released book is *Nature in Fragments: The Legacy of Sprawl* (Columbia University Press).

Robinson & Cole LLP

Robinson & Cole, Legal Counsel, is one of New England's oldest and most venerated law firms. The firm has been prominent in the Hartford legal community for



Thomas Cody

nearly 160 years. It is also one of the state's largest law firms, with 350 employees at four Connecticut locations and more than 450 employees throughout six offices in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York.

Robinson & Cole takes pride in being part of cohesive project development teams where the scope of the project and the client's needs

dictate the nature and extent of the firm's involvement. The firm places great emphasis on providing fully integrated services across the spectrum of real estate development matters. Robinson & Cole works regularly with regional, national and international real estate consultants across a variety of disciplines, and has partnered with architects, planners, engineers, scientists, facilities management consultants, and interior space planners on multiple sites and diverse projects, delivering coordinated transactions.

Steven Winter Associates, Inc.

Founded in 1972, Steven Winter Associates, Inc. (SWA) has a long-standing commitment to achieving energy-, cost- and resource-efficient buildings that meet the needs of a demanding and diverse client base.



Steven Winter

As building systems consultants, SWA works closely with project architects, building owners, developers, and other industry representatives to apply sustainable, "whole building" strategies in a wide variety of building types: commercial, residential, educational and institutional.

Material selection, systems engineering and specification, environmental performance, affordability, reduced

construction and operating costs, HVAC control strategies, durability and affordability, gaining mainstream exposure for proven (yet underutilized) building technologies—all of these aspects of architecture and building are supported in various ways by SWA.

The firm also has offices in Washington, D.C., which pursues consulting work in the realm of government policy development, research, information dissemination, workshops, association management, and whole-building design, and New York City, where the emphasis is on multifamily housing, green consulting, and training.



Norm Goldman

Desman Associates

Desman has performed all types of parking studies for municipal, educational, medical, retail, hotel, residential, entertainment, event and mixed-use developments. Each of these client groups have distinct parking characteristics and needs that can be satisfied by a variety of parking improvements. The ultimate objective of Desman's

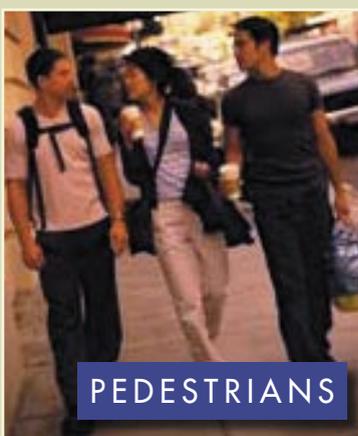
parking studies and planning efforts is to assist the owner in designing a seamless parking solution that effectively complements, rather than confounds, the user experience of getting to and from their primary destination.

Desman has developed a pragmatic approach to understanding and quantifying parking demand characteristics necessary to create such a system. Desman prides itself on working with clients to develop systems, improvements and programs to satisfy these demand characteristics to a level of service appropriate for each user group. Its understanding of prevailing economic circumstances, market conditions, and operational and maintenance issues allows Desman to forecast the financial needs and viability of parking improvements.

STORRS CENTER — A GREAT PLACE FOR:



GATHERINGS



PEDESTRIANS



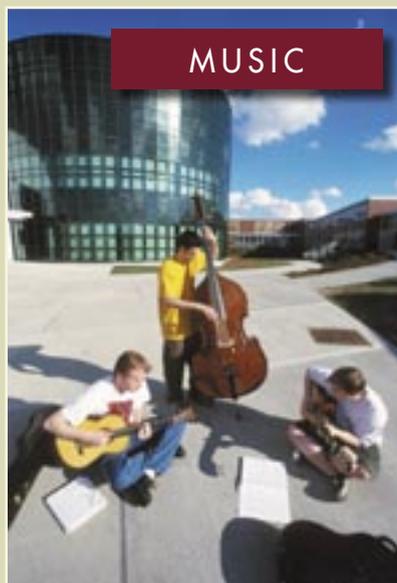
HOMES



CELEBRATIONS



SHOPPING



MUSIC



RECREATION



DINING



SHARING

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