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## **The Crocker House in New London Site of Connecticut Main Street Center Awards Presentation**

(Hartford, CT) – Connecticut Main Street Center has announced the selection of The Crocker House in Downtown New London as the site of the organization’s 2006 Annual Meeting & Awards Presentation. The event will be held on Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm. A “Welcome to Main Street” reception will be held in the Garden Courtyard followed by the program and Awards Presentation in the Grand Ballroom of The Crocker House.

Located on Union Street in historic downtown New London, The Crocker House was built in 1872 and was purchased in the spring of 2002 by AME Development Corporation in an effort to continue to revitalize downtown New London. AME Development Corporation is a 2006 winner of a Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation’s Award of Merit, in the category of the Built Environment for the renovation and restoration of The Crocker House. An example of downtown mixed-use development, the upper four floors of The Crocker House feature residential units and the ground floor houses the 3,650 square foot ballroom, a 4,000 square foot courtyard, and several store fronts. The Grand Ballroom features coffered ceilings, antique beveled-glass windows, tapered columns, and eight hand-blown Merano chandeliers. Additionally, the 540 square foot ballroom lobby offers a pre-function or reception space. Connecticut Main Street Center will utilize the lobby, the ballroom and (weather permitting) the outdoor courtyard for this event.

Connecticut Main Street Center selects outstanding examples of restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive re-use, as well as complementary new construction for its Annual Meeting & Awards Presentation. Previous venues include the East Hartford Community Cultural Center (the former Central High School), Aglow Auction House in Windsor Center (a former Esso Gas Station), the Vernon Senior Center in Rockville (a former Methodist Church), The Artists Collective in the Upper Albany Neighborhood of Hartford (new construction and a major anchor in the community), and The Palace Theater in Downtown Waterbury (restored in 2004).

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The Connecticut Main Street Center Awards Presentation has become the highlight of the year for both the state organization and award-winning Connecticut Main Street Communities selected through a competitive process. This year there are over 40 entries in several categories including: *Building Rehabilitation, New Construction, Preservation Success Story, Business Retention, Expansion or Attraction Project, Merchant Service Award, Special Event, Image Enhancement, Public Relations, Retail Promotion, and Main Street Executive Director of the Year*. Winners will be announced in early May as part of National Historic Preservation Month observances. Governor Rell also presents Citations from the State of Connecticut to award winning Main Street projects and individuals.

Part of a national network that has been in place for over 25 years, Connecticut Main Street Center brings together public officials, business owners, financial resources, community activists, and the economic development and historic preservation communities under one umbrella organization. CMSC helps communities analyze core issues and set attainable goals. The organization provides education and training, design and technical assistance, and advocacy.

Connecticut Main Street Center, a nonprofit corporation funded by the State of Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development and The Connecticut Light and Power Company/Yankee Gas, is committed to bringing Connecticut's commercial districts back to life socially and economically. To learn more about this event, call 860-280-2337.

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