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Connecticut Main Street Center to Hold Urban Design and Place-Making Workshop

(Hartford, CT) – Connecticut Main Street Center announces the next 2006 Downtown Revitalization Institute workshop, *“Using Design as a Tool for Downtown Revitalization”*, will take place on Friday, April 28th from 8:30am – 4:00pm at Northeast Utilities in Berlin, CT. The Downtown Revitalization Institute is the educational and training component of Connecticut Main Street Center, the leading statewide non-profit organization dedicated to restoring and maintaining Connecticut downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts.

Landscape Architect and Urban Planner, David V. Sousa, will lead a full-day workshop featuring various tools and techniques for creating more viable downtowns and main streets. The morning session will include graphic presentations and break-out discussion groups on the basic principles of urban place-making around such topics as density, zoning, streets as public spaces, walkability, community identity, and parking.

The afternoon session will find attendees engaged in a participatory process to “build” a new downtown district based on the principles identified in the morning session and utilizing state-of-the-art computer visualization techniques. Attendees will explore the “what-ifs” of redevelopment and community place-making by creating various development scenarios for a representative Connecticut downtown or main street district. The goals of this day-long workshop are to expand the ability to visualize change, to better understand the positive and negative aspects of density, and to examine the complex interrelationships of people, place, automobile and nature.

David Sousa, R.L.A., A.I.C.P., has 26 years of experience in landscape architecture and urban planning. He is a disciple of Smart Growth and Traditional Neighborhood Development and has focused his career on creating more livable, sustainable and attractive communities. Mr. Sousa has managed the design and construction administration of large-scale projects for corporate, institutional and

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governmental clients. He is responsible for urban design, land use planning, environmental permitting, and comprehensive master planning projects for Clough, Harbour & Associates, LLP.

The Downtown Revitalization Institute offers a full day each quarter with nationally known experts in capacity building, business and real estate development, promotion, and design as a revitalization tool. Participants learn to utilize historic and natural assets that already exist, and to build on them. Workshop topics include business restructuring, niche analysis, real estate development, urban design including public spaces, traffic patterns, pedestrians, parking, and branding and promoting the district, and special events.

All 2006 Downtown Revitalization Institute workshops take place from 8:30am – 4:00pm, at Northeast Utilities' Auditorium in Berlin, CT. Complete information about the Downtown Revitalization Institute workshops, including registration procedures and driving directions, can be found at www.ctmainstreet.org.

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 non-profit 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. For more information, visit www.ctmainstreet.org or call 860-280-2337.

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