

UPPER ALBANY



Looking Forward

Credits

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Coming Soon

Upper Albany Merchants First Annual Health Education Event
Thursday, May 22, 2008
8:30 am - 1:00 pm
The Artists Collective

The Future is Now

A Message from the Chairman

A Vision for Upper Albany

"To be the neighborhood of choice with growth of successful small businesses, which would provide increased employment opportunities for residents as well as a commercial district that would be pedestrian friendly, clean and crime free, and regionally recognized for the ethnic and cultural richness that is Upper Albany's heritage."

The transformation of that Vision into reality has been quietly taking effect over the past few years without much fanfare. But this year, as you will read in the articles that follow, there is an exciting burst of activity in our neighborhood that will rapidly launch us further towards that vision by leaps and bounds.

- The University of Hartford is now a concrete presence in our Neighborhood on our Western border at Homestead Avenue. The Mort and Irma Handel Performing Arts Center will open in the fall, bringing a new array of hundreds of students, faculty, parents and visitors into the community.
- The West Indian American Newspaper will soon complete the renovations to its building and expand its Training Center to accommodate many more clients.
- In December, the new State of the Art Upper Albany Library will become an attractive and imposing addition on the corner of Albany and Woodland Avenues, doubling the number of students and adults it serves and increasing the pedestrian traffic on the sidewalks of the center of our town.
- This month, the YMCA also broke ground next to the Community Health Center. The new building will allow new programs that will expand and enhance the social services available to our own residents and those of our neighboring towns.
- On our Southern perimeter, Chrysalis Center has opened the first division of its multifaceted Center, bringing life again to the once vibrant corridor of Homestead Avenue

Indeed, in Upper Albany, the Future is Now!

Bank of America



With ten banking centers throughout the City of Hartford, including four in the North End, Bank of America is committed to the economic vitality of our community. To that end, the company provides philanthropic and community support to numerous organizations in the city. One example of Bank of America's commitment to Albany Avenue is the \$300,000 grant awarded to the YMCA of Greater Hartford for the construction of the New North Hartford YMCA Family and Community Center, of which \$100,000 was granted to the Urban League of Greater Hartford and Community Health Services, Inc. (CHS) for collaborative programming. Bank of America is proud to support the YMCA in bringing a new facility to Albany Avenue and its collaboration with two other outstanding organizations, the Urban League of Hartford and Community Health Services. Albany Avenue will be a better place for having these three organizations working together in North Hartford to deliver services to the children, families and neighborhoods in this community. Bank of America values its partnership with these three outstanding organizations and Upper Albany Main Street as these groups are helping to revitalize and strengthen North Hartford.

Dear Friends,

Albany Avenue is the gateway to Hartford's future dreams and aspirations. For centuries, it has paved the way to progress and now this major artery is connecting our current accomplishments with our regional goals. For six years, the "City of Hope and Opportunity" has experienced an unprecedented renaissance and the stage is now set for new growth because "Hartford Is Open For Business" and the residents and business leaders along Route 44 are going to play a starring role.

In "Act One," so to speak, Hartford began to believe in itself again. In "Act Two," we showed a lot of progress with more vibrant streets, new businesses, and an enhanced streetscape. Now it is time for "Act Three." This is when we will follow through on that promise and progress of personal energy, proud entrepreneurship, and proactive environmental measures.

Later this year, the curtain will go up on the new Mort and Irma Handel Performing Arts Center at the University of Hartford. What a combination celebration of economics, education, community support and of course a new premiere theatre for arts and entertainment.

Albany Avenue is a proud showcase of diversity, which is our strength. It connects the energy of our region and state, as it is a vital transportation corridor. Hartford truly is a city as strong as its people and Albany Avenue is rising to its feet in both praise and to accept its deserving applause.

Sincerely,



Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

Rewarding Journey as Insert Editors



During our semester with Upper Albany Main Street we were presented with many opportunities. One of the many projects provided to us was to work on UAMS's annual Hartford Courant Insert. Fortunately, the four of us opted to work on the insert as a team and had great success in doing so. This assignment was very interesting and we would like to take a little time to share our thoughts and feelings on working on this insert.

At first we were very overwhelmed with some of the tasks we were asked to complete, especially asking various people to write articles and continuously contacting and reminding different businesses about placing an advertisement in the insert. Our favorite aspect of working on this Insert was the people that we had the pleasure of working with and the people we met at various businesses and organizations. We were able to observe the many changes along the Avenue that have taken place, that are happening as we speak, and that will happen in the years to come. This project has opened our eyes to the numerous goods, services, and opportunities the businesses along Albany Avenue have to offer. After many field trips up and down Albany Avenue we can now see that it is full of life and is growing rapidly. People rarely see the Avenue for its beauty and its many positive contributions to the city of Hartford. The process of obtaining the articles for the insert has helped us see the Avenue for its true beauty.

Overall this experience was like a rollercoaster, but every new experience has its ups and downs. When we take the time to stop and look back on it, it is an experience in which we were glad to become involved in. We were introduced to a lot of good people. We also learned a lot from working on this insert; we learned things that we wouldn't have learned in a classroom. For instance, persistence mixed with a little patience were the key ingredients when obtaining the articles and advertisements for this insert. This is a lesson we can apply to everyday life and more specifically when pursuing our desired careers. Working on this insert was very rewarding and an adventure we will never forget.

Excitement is Building



The University of Hartford's Mort and Irma Handel Performing Arts Center is taking shape at the corner of Albany Avenue and Westbourne Parkway in Hartford. This 55,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility, for collegiate and Community Division students at the University's Hartt School, will house five dance studios, four theatre rehearsal studios two black box theatres, faculty offices, a community meeting room, bank and café.

The Handel Center will be a vibrant setting for dance and theatre instruction and performances at one of the key gateways to the city of Hartford. And in conjunction with the Artists Collective, which is just a few blocks down the street, it will create a dynamic arts corridor on Albany Avenue.

The Handel Center will provide much-needed additional space for The Hartt School, while at the same time serving as an economic catalyst and cultural resource for Hartford's Upper Albany and Blue Hills neighborhoods. The project preserves the unique exterior character of the building, which was designed in 1929 by pioneering industrial architect Albert Kahn and most recently was the Thomas Cadillac distributorship.

Transformation of the Handel Center began in July 2007 and it is on schedule to open in fall 2008. A festive construction

kickoff ceremony attended by more than 200 people was held on June 18, 2007, at which time University of Hartford President Walter Harrison announced that the building would be named the Mort and Irma Handel Performing Arts Center.

"Mort and Irma Handel have shared our vision for this project from the beginning. Their \$1.5 million commitment - the largest gift from individual donors to the Performing Arts Center - is just the latest chapter in their long history of support for the University of Hartford, The Hartt School, and the Hartford arts community," Harrison said.

Mort Handel, chairman of the board of Marvel Entertainment, has been a trustee of The Hartt School and a regent of the University of Hartford since 1990. Irma Handel is a trustee of the Hartford Art School, Inc.

When the Fuller Music Center opened its doors in 1962 on the University of Hartford campus, The Hartt School enrolled 250 college students and 1,000 Community Division students. Today, these figures have risen to 700 and 2,500 respectively, with added faculty and greatly expanded academic offerings. Hartt also hosts a

schedule of more than 400 concerts, recitals, dance performances, plays, master classes, and musical theatre productions in the aging Fuller Center.

"With the new Performing Arts Center, The Hartt School will finally have a home that matches the exceptional quality of its programs," said Hartt School Dean Malcolm Morrison.

The nationally recognized firm of Smith Edwards Architects of Hartford is the lead architect for the project. Smith Edwards is collaborating with Howard Performance Architecture, L.L.C. of New Orleans, designers of some of America's top performing arts facilities.

The Downes Construction Company of New Britain is the lead construction management company, with experience in historic renovation and restoration markets, as well as new construction.

Capital Restoration in Hartford, a minority-owned construction company, is providing assistance to Downes in managing the project and supervising the subcontractors.

To take a virtual tour of the Handel Center, please visit <www.hartford.edu/handel>.

A Branch Grows Green!

Groundbreaking ceremony for the Albany Branch Library scheduled for June

Public libraries are often called the "people's university" - available and open to all.

Over the years, libraries have responded to the needs of their neighbors and have become community centers - places where a caring librarian introduces children to the joys of early reading and adults find resources and encouragement - helping them become life-long learners.

Soon, the Upper Albany neighborhood will be able to boast of a library that will be a point of civic pride for the surrounding community and beyond!

The more than 500 daily visitors will enter a transformed library on the corner of Albany and Blue Hills Avenue - a 7,500 square foot, one-story facility offering a state-of-the-art technology center, community meeting space and expanded parking.

However, the most exciting part of the community's new library is its milestone as the city's first "green" library.

What does that mean? It means that the library is designed to take advantage of natural light, rainwater, more efficient heating and cooling, and will be largely constructed of renewable, recyclable materials.

It means that the library will be more energy efficient, kinder to the environment and healthier for its staff and customers.

The Albany Branch of the Hartford Public Library is being constructed with the following environmental elements:

Green Roof - Rainwater run-off will be collected, no domestic water



SOUTH ELEVATION

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will be used for irrigation purposes. **Light Harvesting** - The building will have windows which will reduce the amount of electricity needed to light the building, thereby saving energy.

Heating and Cooling - Heating and cooling systems will be provided through the floor, and regulate the temperature, making the building more energy efficient.

Insulation - The building is sited to have a southern exposure, and the insulation will exceed building code - both of these elements will save and retain energy.

Materials - Renewable materials such as cork, glass and pre-cast cement will be used.

Bike Racks - Racks will be provided to encourage more earth-friendly transportation and assigned parking spaces will be provided for fuel efficient cars.

Landscaping - Natural plants and vegetation indigenous to Connecticut will be used when appropriate.

The library intends to achieve a Gold Standard Certified Building certification.

The Albany branch of the Hartford Public Library is thrilled to be part of the thriving civic and business life of the Upper Albany neighborhood. The library will be the "Pride of the Neighborhood", and Upper Albany's own people's university!

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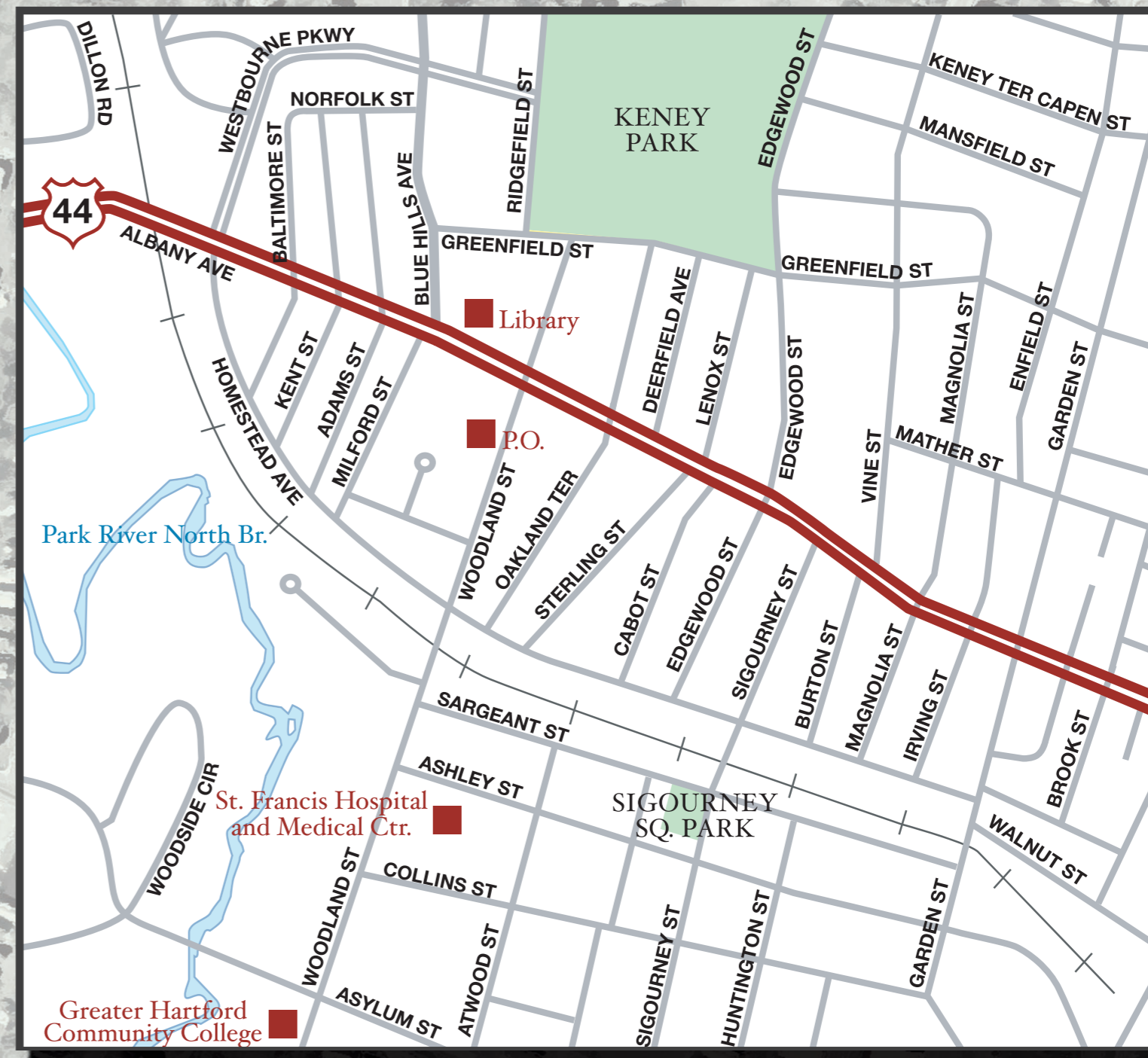
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Village Fatherhood Project Offers How-To's of Good Parenting

The "24 x 7 Dad"[™] In Your Neighborhood Now
Being a father can be filled with joy, laughter and satisfaction—especially when a dad is actively participating in the life of his child and is in touch with his own attitudes and feelings.



Tips That Can Go to Work Right Away
That is why the Village for Families and Children designed a program especially for young fathers. In a few informational workshops—based on a curriculum called 24 x 7 Dad[™]—our expert clinicians teach the how-to's of good parenting. Tips include handling and expressing emotions, how to promote healthy relationships and much more.

The Fatherhood Project is one of dozens of programs and services offered to people of all ages by the Village, a nonprofit social service provider located in the Upper Albany neighborhood and other sites around the Hartford area. Besides an emphasis on successful parenting for both fathers and mothers, the Village promotes financial literacy, school readiness and mental health counseling.

Who Can Join the Fatherhood Project?
The Village Fatherhood Project is open to fathers 17 to 25. "But we never say 'no' to anyone who wants to become the effective, loving father or father-figure he aspires to be," said Phillip Davis, program director. Information about the Village Fatherhood Project can be received from Davis at



(Photo: Ira Nozick)

Village Fatherhood Project participant Michael Vasquez, Hartford, enjoys a moment with his son at graduation ceremonies at the Village's Albany Avenue campus in February 2008.

860-236-4511, ext. 3724.

At the Village expert social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses and child development specialists are all partners in recovery with clients. In measures of success like academic achievement, ability to manage parenting duties, and improved mental health the Village performance against statewide statistics shows that kids in Village programs do better than the norm. Information about other services is available at the Village web site, www.villageforchildren.org.

Village programs are open to families of all races, religions, cultures and backgrounds.

New Upper Albany Neighborhood Town Green Emerges with a YMCA Youth and Family Center Groundbreaking



YMCA, Urban League of Greater Hartford and Community Health Services, Inc. will collaborate in neighborhood initiatives. The YMCA of Greater Hartford celebrated the new YMCA Youth and Family Center at the corner of Albany Avenue and Brook Street in Hartford with a groundbreaking ceremony Thursday (April 10). The 41,000 sq. ft. center will serve as a town green style community center for Hartford's Clay/Arsenal and Upper Albany Avenue neighborhoods, and all the neighborhoods of Hartford.

The new YMCA will be the centerpiece for a collaboration between three organizations that already provide services to the community. At the project's completion, the YMCA, the Urban League of Greater Hartford, and Community Health Services will together provide health and wellness programs, education, youth and family development, and recreation programs to neighborhood residents. The new facility's location is adjacent to Community Health Services' existing location, truly creating a safe, welcoming town green in North Hartford.

"The YMCAs dream of bringing services directly to North Hartford is now coming to fruition," says Kevin Washington, President and CEO, YMCA of Greater Hartford. "From large and small corporate, foundation and individual gifts, members of the community have stepped up to support our mission to deliver a state-of-the-art YMCA facility to North Hartford, allowing us to provide both traditional recreational benefits, and programs like child development, a teen center, and our 'Read to Succeed' adult literacy program directly to the youth, adults and families of Clay/Arsenal and Upper Albany."

Hartford-based JJC Architecture Incorporated is architect of record. Bartlett Brainard Ecatt, Inc. is construction manager. The project is scheduled for completion in summer 2009.

K&M Jewelers

"Art has always been a reality for me as long as I can remember, so when I got the opportunity to pursue jewelry I grasped it willingly."
-Audley McLean

The business partners of K&M Jewelry on Albany Avenue, Audley McLean and Maldwyn Kelly met at the Swiss Watch/Art Craft Jewelry in Kingston, Jamaica approximately thirty five years ago. They were co-workers until Maldwyn Kelley migrated to the United States where he eventually formed his own establishment, "Jamerican Jewelry" on Albany Avenue. In 1999, Audley McLean and Maldwyn Kelly worked for Becker's Diamond & Fine Jewelry where they served until 2007.

In 2007 they both thought that their experience and individual discipline relative to the jewelry trade made it the right time to join force as one company and it was then that K&M was born.

Through their association with the Upper Albany Merchant's Association, this new business was introduced to the community and the Micro Business Incubator Program. This program has been providing valuable assistance to this new business as they prepare for the grand opening.

Caribbean Resource Center Spruces Up The Avenue

The Center for Urban Research, Education and Training (CURET) Inc., at 1443 Albany Avenue spruces up the Upper Albany neighborhood with its new Caribbean Resource Center. For over 16 years, CURET has used data to drive the development and implementation of programs aimed at strengthening and improving the well-being of children and families, as well as the neighborhood as a whole.

Following the groundbreaking ceremony kicking off CURET's major renovation and expansion project, the new and improved facility is near completion and CURET with its Caribbean Resource Center is ready for the next level of development.

The expanded and renovated space will increase services, including hands-on workshops and seminars that are offered in collaboration with other agencies and institutions. Many adults, children and families prefer to access services and resources with culturally sensitive supports within their neighborhood. Many are seeking job coaching, citizenship education, basic computer skills training, and technical support, utilizing the Internet for job search, resume preparation, and employment referrals. Parents can come and improve their education and job skills, resulting in better-paying jobs, and can better help their children who are in school.

Since education is a key component of CURET's mission, the agency continues its commitment to addressing conditions that lead to poor educational outcomes and seeks to help children and parents enhance their reading, computing, and technology skills. Also, significant numbers of adults are desirous of enhancing their job and marketable skills. So among the services at CURET are: Adult Reading Skills Upgrade programs for individuals longing to improve their reading and comprehension skills; Year-Round After-School and Summer Tutoring and Mentoring Programs for children; Community-Wide Education Rally and Conference; Citizenship Education; Computer Literacy; Financial Literacy; and other hands-on classes and workshops, plus much more, including, conducting research-quantitative and qualitative inquiries and program evaluation.

To learn more about CURET's services, please call (860) 247-0123.



Building a Healthy Community

At Community Health Services, Inc. (CHS) when you walk through our doors, you become a part of the CHS family. Serving Hartford's North End community for over 35 years, CHS' mission is to provide quality healthcare to the medically underserved and the uninsured. The health center is Hartford's largest and the second oldest in the state.

Hartford's uninsured residents number approximately 27,000, with working families increasingly at risk of becoming uninsured. As many as 40% of the health center's 16,000 patients have no insurance. "It's what we do and CHS does it very well," states Michael Sherman, CHS' Chief Executive Officer. "We care for our patients' needs, regardless of their ability to pay, their immigration status, or insurance status."

Accredited by the Joint Commission, CHS offers a comprehensive array of services for the entire family in one location: Adult Medicine, Podiatry, Pediatrics, Adolescent Medicine, Women's Health, Dentistry, Behavioral Health, and social services. Reflecting the community it serves, CHS staff is diverse and speaks 10 languages.

Committed to increasing access to quality healthcare, CHS opened The Evans Daniels, MD Center for Family Medicine - a new, state-of-the-art clinical space - housing its expanded Women's Health and Pediatrics Departments and a newly established Adolescent Medicine Program. Through this expansion, CHS will serve over 4,000 new patients annually.

Dynamic clinical and social programs, dedicated professionals, and strong partnerships are at the heart of CHS' valued community presence. It is this presence that helps ensure that quality healthcare is available for all Hartford families.



Albany Avenue Safety and Streetscape Improvement Project

The City of Hartford (City) and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) have recently completed the preliminary design phase of a major reconstruction project planned for Albany Avenue (US Rte 44) from Homestead Avenue to Bedford Street. This phase represents a significant milestone in the design process and has involved several community meetings in which interested merchants, residents, and community leaders have provided valuable input. This input has in several instances been incorporated into the design features.

The project is focused on improving vehicular and pedestrian safety along the Avenue, which averages about 250 accidents each year, and includes an unusually high percentage of pedestrian accidents. The proposed improvements will help reduce the number of accidents, and will also achieve a number of other important community goals such as improving drainage, creating inset parallel parking and making the Avenue more attractive and pedestrian friendly.

The safety improvements include reconstructing the street with one travel lane in each direction, adding left-turn only lanes at each intersection and modifying the direction of some one-way streets that intersect the Avenue. Pedestrian safety will be improved by adding a traffic signal and crosswalk at Oakland Terrace, eliminating illegal parking on sidewalks and reducing the length of pedestrian crossings at some locations. The intersections of Blue Hills Avenue, Burton and Vine Streets (See photo right) will be re-aligned to improve safety and have traffic-calming devices introduced such as curb bump outs and raised crosswalks. New traffic signal equipment is also planned to replace the existing equipment.

Based upon the preliminary estimate, the entire project cost, including the MDC's work is expected to be approximately \$30,000,000. The federal government will provide the Safety and Streetscape portion of these costs. ConnDOT will provide oversight and administration of the project.

As the project moves forward, the final design will be prepared by the City of Hartford, through its engineering consultant, Urban Engineers, Inc. of Hartford. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2010 and is estimated to take about two years to complete. During the next stages of design, the City's design team will involve the community in the design process through periodic meetings and also through direct contact with key community organizations such as the NRZ, the Upper Albany Collaborative, and Upper Albany Main Street. For more information please contact Mr. John McGrane, PE, City Engineer, 860-543-8630.



North Campus - Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center

Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center operates many vital services on its North Campus (formerly Mount Sinai Hospital).

The services have included those of Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital, SurgiCare, an Ambulatory Surgery Center, and Behavioral Health programs for patients of all ages.

The North Campus is now the focal point for some specialty services that have recently been implemented. They include the Mandell Center for Comprehensive Multiple Sclerosis Care and Neuroscience Research and the Center for Advanced Wound Healing and Lymphedema Therapy.

The Mandell Center is located within Mount Sinai Rehabilitation Hospital and offers consultative services, symptom management, and specialized rehabilitation for gait and balance. The MS research component involves the use of the Lokomat, a robotic walking system.

The MS Center has an experienced clinical and research staff led by Robert Krug, MD, physical medicine and rehabilitation, Peter Wade, Neurology, Amy Neal, PA-C, Albert Lo, MD, Ph.D., neuroscience research, and Jennifer Fawcett, exercise physiologist.

The Center for Advanced Wound Healing and Lymphedema provides care for chronic, complex wounds and is lead by respected surgeons, Lori Loiacono, MD and Chandra Narayanan, MD. Nola Eddy, OTR, heads the Lymphedema program.

Another new service is the Long Term Acute Care (LTAC) unit, a specialized program primarily for patients with complex pulmonary problems. The LTAC is run by the Hospital for Special



Care in New Britain but is located on the North Campus.

The Alcohol and Drug Recovery Centers (ADRC) is also headquartered on the campus and conducts a variety of recovery oriented programs for its patient population.

Located in the Burgdorf/Bank of America Health Center, also on the campus, is the City of Hartford Health Department and the Community Outpatient Clinics run by Saint Francis and the University of Connecticut.

All in all the North Campus of Saint Francis is a valuable community asset not only for its rich mix of important services but it continues as a major employer in the Blue Hills neighborhood.

Bank of America is proud to support Upper Albany Main Street, Inc. for helping to make Albany Avenue a better place to live and work.

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We're Changing the Odds for At-Risk Kids.

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Our unique partnerships with schools, medical providers, courts and neighborhoods like Upper Albany are helping to transform our region. We know real change comes about when we can alter the course of young lives.

Learn how the Village is working to change the odds for at-risk kids.

Visit www.villageforchildren.org



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YMCA of Greater Hartford