

## *PHYSICAL RESOURCES*



*215 Collins Street.*

The romance of Asylum Hill is its brick Victorian era buildings and densely treed side streets. Our sidewalks and avenues provide for a potentially pleasant pedestrian neighborhood, where residents can exit their door and briefly walk to purchase milk and bread, or have a prescription filled, and where children can walk to school or go to the library to find a book.

Juxtaposed to many of these historic homes is the largest concentration of office buildings of any residential neighborhood in Hartford, as well as numerous large and mid-size apartments. For example, Asylum Hill's eastern border is dominated by massive regal structures that house the majority of Hartford's insurance industry, meanwhile a variety of offices, a hospital and community college, form its western border along Woodland Street. Two (2) large, vacant industrial complexes and underutilized rail lines are at the north and south borders of Asylum Hill, reflective of the changing economy of a northeast City. The overall "built" environment of Asylum Hill gives the feel of an urban area more than most Hartford neighborhoods. It also has more cultural institutions and old, established churches than other Hartford neighborhoods.

Three major insurance companies, Aetna, The Hartford, and MassMutual, dominate the eastern portion of Asylum Hill. The western portion is dominated by institutional uses such as schools (Hartford Public High School, Capital Community Technical College, Connecticut State University System Office), St. Francis Medical Center and related facilities. Two major arteries, Farmington and Asylum Avenues, are the major east - west corridors from downtown to the West End and West Hartford. Farmington Avenue is the only major retail strip in the neighborhood while Asylum Avenue is a mixture of apartment buildings, offices, and schools (West Middle, Cathedral). Long range planning for Farmington Avenue is beginning in partnership with the West End Civic Association (WECA). Two strengths of Farmington Avenue must be highlighted. The first is the array of eating establishments concentrated in a 1 1/2 block area. There are nine (9) restaurants ranging from fast foods, Chinese, Mexican, pizza, and family style. A second strength is the significant architecture along the Avenue, the apartment buildings, period homes such as the Mark Twain and Stowe-Day, the offices, and the Cathedral. There are two large vacant industrial buildings on the northern and southern boundaries of Asylum Hill, Veeder Root, to the north, and Hawthorn Center, to the south.

Finally, there is Sigourney Park, a major outdoor recreation area for Asylum Hill residents. The park has recently received \$350,000 which will go towards improvements. These improvements will include two basketball courts, a toddler area, teenage game court, shuffle board court, and park benches.



*Pictured above is Sigourney Square Park which will be receiving major renovations this Spring.*