

**Office of
the Mayor
Burlington,
Vermont**



Miro Weinberger
Mayor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Miro Weinberger Appoints Peter Owens as CEDO Director

Burlington, VT – Mayor Miro Weinberger today announced the appointment of Peter Owens as Director of the Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) for the City of Burlington. In recent years Owens, an entrepreneur, business person, and urban designer, has worked on three of the most innovative and exciting development projects in the Upper Connecticut River Valley as a principal and director of urban design at ORW, a White River Junction landscape architecture and planning firm. Weinberger has asked the City Council to approve the appointment at its June 25, 2012 meeting.

“I’m excited and grateful that Peter has agreed to return to Burlington as our new CEDO director,” said Weinberger. “Peter’s unique background as an urban designer, entrepreneur, and student of cities is exactly the experience Burlington needs right now.”

At the announcement, which took place outside on the upper deck of the Burlington Community Boathouse, Owens recalled his career origins in Burlington, stating: “I began my career in Burlington during a heady, innovative period in the City’s history. I am thrilled to return to Burlington at a similarly optimistic and promising moment and to have the opportunity to serve the City in a leadership role. A month ago, I could not have imagined having this opportunity – today I feel as if my entire far-ranging career has led me to this challenge.”

Please see attached documents, including:

- *Memorandum from Mayor Miro Weinberger to City Council Members requesting approval of the appointment of Peter Owens as CEDO Director*
- *Resume of Peter Owens*

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MEMORANDUM

To: City Council

From: Miro Weinberger
Mayor 

Date: June 13, 2012

Re: Appointment of CEDO Director

I respectfully submit for your consideration and approval Peter Owens as the next Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) Director for the City of Burlington. I am requesting City Council approval of this appointment at your June 25, 2012 meeting.

Peter began his professional career here in Burlington working on urban design projects in the City from 1984-1990. Since then he has had a dynamic, varied career that has involved innovative work in California and the Upper Connecticut River Valley. If approved, Peter intends to return to Burlington and start work on or about July 9.

CEDO has a proud history. The agency has been at the center of much of the waterfront and downtown development successes of the past 30 years and will be central to the community, economic development, housing and anti-poverty efforts I intend to pursue in the years ahead. Since being elected I have been focused on finding a leader for CEDO who has the vision, creativity, energy and persistence necessary to succeed on these numerous, critical fronts.

I am confident that Peter is that leader for the following reasons:

- **Peter is an experienced urban designer who has worked on inspiring projects in large cities and rural New England.** Peter worked for three years as a Senior Planner for the Presidio Trust – a groundbreaking federal agency charged with preserving the natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources of the historic San Francisco Presidio. There he was a leader in a joint planning and real estate office that worked to create new parkland and convert 700 historic former military buildings into civilian use. In recent years Peter has worked on three of the most innovative and exciting development projects in the Upper Valley as a principal and director of urban design at ORW, a White River Junction landscape architecture and planning firm.

This deep experience conceiving and implementing high-quality urban design projects will be enormously valuable as Peter works to complete the unfinished job of reclaiming the waterfront from its industrial past, making Burlington more affordable by encouraging the creation of more downtown housing, and planning the future of the Urban Reserve.

- **Peter is a collaborator and listener and committed to building community.** Colleagues of mine who have worked closely with Peter describe him consistently as someone who can bring people together to move diverse communities forward and get things done. During his time in Burlington during the 1980s, Peter served as an early board member of the pioneering Burlington Community Land Trust – an organization that has created affordable homeownership opportunities for hundreds of low and moderate-income Vermonters.

These character traits will help this Administration overcome some of the debates about growth and change that have divided the City in the past.

- **Peter will bring the perspective and prudence of an entrepreneur to the office.** For the past 15 years Peter has been actively involved in real estate and business development as both a principal and investor. Those activities have ranged from buying and restoring historic properties in Lebanon, NH to raising \$2.5 million of equity and investing in a \$50 million historic hotel project in Boston to planning and helping to create a new catering/special events company.

This background will serve the City well as Peter leads efforts to create jobs and craft the public-private partnerships necessary to move the city forward.

- **Peter is a man of ideas and student of cities.** Peter earned a Ph.D. in Environmental Planning/Urban Design from the University of California, Berkeley while studying neighborhood form in twelve Upper Valley neighborhoods. Later he served as a member of a Dartmouth Medical School research team doing important research on the relationship between the built environment and obesity.

Peter's study and understanding of the built environment and cities will be of great value in shaping ideas and policy regarding Burlington's future.

Peter's resume is attached.

Peter, who currently resides in Hanover, will establish residency in Burlington. We will be contacting you in the next couple days to invite you to meet Peter and discuss the future of CEDO in advance of the June 25 meeting.

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Peter Marshall Owens

7 Sargent Street, Hanover, NH 03755 • P 603.643.9053 • M 415.310.3692 • owensradisch@gmail.com

B A C K G R O U N D

Peter has over 25 years of experience in urban design, research, planning, and real estate development with a special interest in projects involving integration of transportation, infill development and community design on underutilized urban lands. He has a long history of building broad based support for innovative public-private partnerships. His academic research has focused on the relationship between urban form and vibrant, pedestrian-oriented cities and towns. His work has been widely published in both academic and professional journals and has received several awards.

P R O F E S S I O N A L E X P E R I E N C E

ORW, Principal/Director of Urban Design, 2009-Present, White River Junction, VT (orw.biz)

Principal in landscape architecture and planning firm. Three major projects include:

- *Altaria Mixed Use Development, Lebanon, NH.* Redevelopment project integrating hotel, retail, office, housing, and open space on seven parcels around a walkable urban framework adjacent to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and Centerra Business Park. Phase I construction summer 2012.
- *King Arthur Flour Campus, Norwich, VT.* Major expansion and redevelopment of existing facility. Re-oriented site plan features new retail store, café, commercial bakery and baking education center around a central courtyard. Construction to be completed summer 2012.
- *Prospect Place Mixed Use Infill, White River Junction, VT.* Redevelopment plan for a mixed use office, retail and housing project on underutilized industrial area fronting on Connecticut River in downtown WRJ. Project currently in pre-development.

Norwich Partners, Investor/LLC Partner, 2011-Present, Lebanon, NH (norwichpartners.com)

Real estate investor and partner in real estate development LLCs. Two major projects include:

- *368 Congress Street, Boston, MA.* \$55,000,000 rehabilitation of historic stone warehouse at 368 Congress Street in Boston's Ft. Point Historic District as a 120 room Marriott Residence Inn using National Park Service historic tax credits. Raised \$2.5 million in private equity for project during summer 2011.
- *Altaria, Lebanon, NH.* \$31,000,000 smart growth, mixed use (Westin/Element hotel, housing, office, retail and R&D) redevelopment of a former tire dealer site adjacent to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center and Centerra Business Park. Recently raised \$500,000 for project after being involved in permitting and project design for past 3 years.

Fire Truck Company 77 LLC, Founding Partner, 2010-present, Irvine, CA (company77.com)

- Founding minority partner in a rolling special events catering venture, featuring artisanal pizzas cooked and served from an ingeniously restored, bio-diesel, sun-powered fire truck with amazing entertainment features. Wrote business plan, raised start-up capital, designed Web-based booking, marketing, and invoicing system.

Residential Rehabilitation and Real Estate Development, 1987-present, VT, NH, MA, CT, CA

- Principal/partner/developer/builder in a wide variety of real estate development projects ranging from an in-fill accessory apartment in Berkeley, CA to a Class A office building in Glastonbury, CT to the historic Witherell General Store in South Strafford, VT to the rehabilitation of several multi-unit rental properties in downtown Lebanon NH.

Consultant in Planning & Urban Design, 2002-05, Hanover, NH

- *Vermont Neighborhoods Project.* Developed “smart growth” design guidelines for in-fill development projects in Shoreham, Vergennes and Middlebury. Vermont Forum on Sprawl. 2003-04.
- *East Haven Wind Farm.* Report and testify before the Vermont Public Service Board on the aesthetic impacts of a large wind farm proposed in the Northeast Kingdom region of Vermont. 2003-05.

Presidio National Park, Senior Planner, 1999-2002, San Francisco, CA

- Involved in all aspects of the conversion of 5,900,000 square feet of historic buildings at 1,500-acre historic Army Post at the Golden Gate into a sustainable, mixed-use, urban National Park.
- Led planning and design team for the Main Post and wrote major sections of the Presidio Trust Management Plan, the Presidio’s master plan adopted in August 2002.
- The Presidio Trust is charged with unique management goal of leveraging considerable real estate assets to generate \$1.2 billion dollars in needed infrastructure improvements, rehabilitation of historic structures and landscape, and create a self-sustaining revenue stream that covers 100% of park operating expenses in 15 years.

EDAW, Senior Urban Designer, 1999, San Francisco, CA

- *New London, CT Downtown Master Plan.* Planning public design workshops focusing re-use of key mixed-use sites to catalyze downtown reinvestment in struggling coastal city.

ROMA, Senior Urban Designer, 1996-99, San Francisco, CA (selected projects)

- *Carmel Town, Philippines.* New town plan for 30,000 with 90% transit commuters. Work focused on design of transit-oriented commercial districts & neighborhoods.
- *Central Petaluma, CA Specific Plan.* 280-acre infill redevelopment re-linking historic city to the river with a mixed-use marketplace, housing, and a new light rail station.

- *Santa Monica, CA Downtown Street and Urban Design Plan.* Proposed circulation and design changes for downtown streets to reduce traffic impacts on pedestrian oriented downtown.
- *Moitozo Ranch, San Jose, CA.* Urban design framework plan for a 2,400-unit, 60-acre mixed use residential district along the North 1st Street light rail corridor in San Jose.
- *Santa Monica, CA Open Space Plan.* Innovative open space plan expanding urban forest and interconnect a wide range of neighborhoods and recreational activities.

Consultant in Planning & Urban Design, 1986-90, Burlington, VT (selected projects)

- *Burlington Waterfront.* Public access and urban design framework plan for the downtown waterfront (with Kielman, Batten, Brooks, and Humstone). 1986-87.
- *South Burlington City Center.* Urban design concept plan and zoning recommendations for mixed use downtown within an existing suburban industrial area (with T.J. Boyle and Associates). 1985-86.
- *The Southern Connector/Champlain Parkway.* Redesign of an historically divisive urban highway as an integrated urban parkway (with Ryan/Chimelewski). NEA funded Burlington Urban Design Study. 1985.
- *Chittenden Greenways Project.* Regional planning process envisioning greenway network linking destinations within a 17 town county (with Julie Campoli). 1990.
- *Maple Tree Place.* Act 250 testimony for the City of Burlington assessing the aesthetic and environmental impacts of a large, controversial regional shopping mall. 1989.
- *Taft's Corner Urban Village.* Urban design framework plan, design guidelines & zoning amendments for suburban growth center (w/ Humstone/Squires Associates). 1988-89.
- *Mad River Valley Visual Resources.* Assessment of significant scenic and visual resources for the three towns that make up the Mad River Valley. 1988.
- *Dorset Street Park.* Master Plan for 350 acre city park three miles from downtown Burlington with active public/private partnership (with Ertel Associates). 1986-88.

T. J. Boyle and Associates, Landscape Architect, 1984-86, Burlington, VT

- Project manager for a landscape architecture and planning firm. Projects included transportation corridor planning, Act 250 analysis, town center revitalization, housing, and park design.

A C A D E M I C E X P E R I E N C E

Dartmouth College, Teen Obesity and the Built Environment, 2007-10, Hanover, NH

- Member of Dartmouth Medical School research team with Smart Mobility Inc. (smartmobility.com) looking at the influence of the built environment on adolescent obesity in about 30 Vermont and New Hampshire towns. Developed environment measures for food, recreation, and community form at the town-wide, school, and household scales for multi-year

survey of about 2,000 students and 48 schools to identify risk factors for overweight in the rural adolescent population. Funding by National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).

Ph.D. Research: *Measuring Neighborhood Form*, 2002-06, Hanover, NH

- Two-year research project developing and testing measures of neighborhood form in twelve case Upper Valley neighborhoods (www.uctc.net/research/diss119.pdf). Research findings published in book form in 2008 (amazon.com/Beyond-Density-Measuring-Neighborhood-Neighborhoods/dp/3836498359).

University of California, Berkeley, Research Associate, 1990-96, Berkeley, California

- *Neighborhood Design, Local Travel and Community Life* (with Professors Southworth, Deakin, and Duane). Research examining the impacts of urban design on local travel patterns at the neighborhood scale.
- *Evolving Patterns at the Urban Edge* (with Professor Michael Southworth). Study of changing patterns of community and neighborhood development at the urban fringe.
- *Coordinator: Mayors Institute on City Design* (with Professor Donlyn Lyndon). Research and preparation of urban design case studies with select Mayors of small Western U.S. cities from 1991-94.

College of the Atlantic, Faculty Member, 1987-90, Bar Harbor, ME

- Faculty member in Arts and Design at a small, liberal arts college of environmental studies teaching visual studies, urban design, town planning, and urban history. Chaired Campus Planning Committee overseeing major expansion of campus facilities.

E D U C A T I O N

- *University of California, Berkeley, CA, Ph.D. Environmental Planning/Urban Design, 2006.*
- *Conway School, Conway, MA, M.A. Landscape Design & Planning, 1983.*
- *Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT, B.A. Art and Geography, 1980.*
- *Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, NY, Urban Design Program, 1978 (while at Middlebury College).*

P U B L I C S E R V I C E

- *Town of Hanover, NH, Planning Board, 2003-present.*
- *Journal of Urban Design, London/Berkeley Reviewer, 2003-present.*
- *Lake Champlain Committee, Burlington, VT, Executive Council, 1987-90.*
- *Burlington Community Land Trust, Burlington, VT, Trustee, 1985-88.*

A W A R D S

- *Vermont Neighborhoods Project* (with ORW). 2006 CNU New England Award. Congress for the New Urbanism.
- *Vermont Neighborhoods Project* (with ORW). 2005 Project of the Year. Vermont Planners Association.
- *Presidio Trust Management Plan*. Analysis & Planning Merit Award. ASLA. 2003.
- *The Evolving Metropolis*. Best Article Award. APA National Planning Awards. 1994.
- *Sidewalk Stories & Barks and Bridges* 2nd Place (Site A) and 3rd Place (Site B) Awards. *Public Space for the New American City Design Competition*. 1996 Olympics, Atlanta. (with Brewster and Wingwall) 1994.
- *Chittenden Greenways (w/ Campoli)*. Design Award. Vermont ASLA Design Awards. 1992.
- *Dorset Street Park (w/ Ertel)*. Design Award. Vermont ASLA Design Awards. 1992.
- *Burlington Waterfront Plan*. Urban Design Award. Waterfront Center, Wash, D.C. 1989.
- *South Burlington City Center*. Project of the Year. NEC-APA Annual Awards. 1988.
- *Burlington Urban Design Study*. Merit Award. Progressive Architecture Awards. 1987.

P U B L I C A T I O N S

- *Smart Density: A More Accurate Method for Measuring Rural Density*, (with Dalton et al), International Journal of Health Geographics (9)8, 2010
- *Beyond Density: Measuring Neighborhood Form in New England Towns* (book version of dissertation). VDM Verlag: Saarbrücken, Germany, 2008
- *Beyond Density: Measuring Neighborhood Form in New England's Upper Connecticut River Valley*. Ph.D. Dissertation. University of California, Berkeley. Fall, 2005.
- *Prime: How to Design an Environmentally Friendly Town Center*, McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology. Winter 2005.
- *The End of Sprawl: Smart Growth and the Regional Landscape of the Upper Valley*. Two Part Op-Ed in the Valley News, Lebanon NH. April 2004.
- Book Review. *Ranches, Rowhouses, and Railroad Flats: American homes, how they shape landscapes and neighborhoods (1999)*, Journal of the American Planning Association (JAPA). Spring, 2000.
- *California Retrofit: Can forbidding downtown plazas be redesigned to be more people friendly?* Landscape Architecture. February 1999. (89)2: 22-29.
- *Silicon Valley Solution: Can a pedestrian-friendly downtown plan provide a center for a sprawling metropolitan area?* Landscape Architecture. June, 1999. (89)6: 52-58.
- *The Art of Accommodation: Designing Infill and Building Cities on the Ground: The Multimedia Journal of Community, Design and Environment*. (1)1: 10-12, Fall 1994.
- *The Evolving Metropolis: Community, Neighborhood, and Street Form at the Urban Edge* (with Southworth). Journal of the American Planning Association. (59)3: 271-287, 1993.
- *Neighborhood Form and Pedestrian Life: Taking a Closer Look* Landscape and Urban Planning. (26): 115-135, Fall 1993.
- *Design Vermont: A Primer for Design Education* (with David Raphael). National Endowment for the Arts/Vermont Council on the Arts, 1991.
- *City on the Eastern Shore: Searching for Future Choices in Two Centuries of Burlington's Development: Essays on Lake Champlain*. Lake Champlain Committee, 1987.

P R E S E N T A T I O N S (s e l e c t e d)

- *Environmental and Family Influences on Adolescent Overweight and the Problem of Measuring Density in Rural Communities.* 2nd Annual Grantee Meeting, *Obesity and the Built Environment*, National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. September 2007.
- *Planning for Design: The Role of Guidelines in City Building.* Speaker and panelist at the American Planning Association Region VI Conference. Long Beach, California. 2000.
- *Neighborhood Form and Pedestrian Life: Case Studies in Seattle.* Paper presented at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Conference. Phoenix, Arizona. 1994.
- *Assessing the Impacts of Neighborhood Form on Pedestrian Travel.* Paper presented at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning Conference. Columbus, Ohio. 1992.
- *The Experience of Place.* Vermont Design Institute. Coordinated three day workshop for local planners on community planning and urban design issues (with Tony Hiss, Mary Means and Turner Brooks). Grafton, Vermont. Vermont Council on the Arts. 1991.
- *Design of Growth Centers.* Governor's Conference on Growth Centers. Lecture and workshop related to state planning policy initiatives promoting compact urban growth centers. Vermont Agency of Development and Community Affairs. 1989.
- *Vermont Artist-in-Residence.* Visiting artist teaching environmental design in elementary and secondary schools. Vermont Council on the Arts. 1985-88.