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Stamford takes the lead in Corporate Sustainability Challenge

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By Carol King
Times Correspondent

STAMFORD -- "Green means good for the environment, but it also means green for dollars," commented Stamford Mayor Michael Pavia as he discussed the city's acceptance of the "Corporate Sustainability Challenge" issued by the Southern Connecticut Chapter of the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA).

The goal of the "Corporate Sustainability Challenge" is to help owners and managers of commercial properties of all sizes make their buildings more energy efficient, sustainable and environmentally healthy for its occupants. The City of Stamford is the first municipality to sign up for the Corporate Sustainability Challenge with Southern Connecticut BOMA.

Three owners of commercial properties in Stamford will take part in the pilot program which will be guided by members of Sustainable Stamford. Malkin Properties will implement the challenge at its buildings located at 100, 200 and 300 First Stamford Place, for a total of 800,000 square feet; Ashforth Properties will take the challenge at 777 Summer St., which is 74,000 square feet in total; and Greenwich Hospital will take on the challenge at its 2215 West Main Street location, which is a 30,000-square-foot facility, housing offices and an imaging center.

The mission of Sustainable Stamford is to promote energy efficiency, environmental education, waste reduction and recycling, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, green buildings and all efforts affecting sustainability in Stamford. The Sustainable Stamford Task Force includes members of Stamford's business, educational, environmental, and religious communities; municipal staff; and private citizens.

The Corporate Sustainability Challenge asks for a commitment from each property owner to benchmark their energy and water consumption for one year, and to adopt a series of sustainability policies that range from implementing a waste reduction policy, to the adoption of a sustainable purchasing policy, a low mercury-containing light bulb policy, a light pollution policy, an integrated pest management policy, a storm water quality management policy, a nonsmoking policy, a green cleaning program and promotion of car pooling and telecommuting.

During a luncheon meeting at Giovanni's II in Darien, Pavia was joined by Kristina D'Elisa, director of the Corporate Sustainability Challenge for Sustainable Stamford, and Steven Carbery, vice president of facilities, design and construction at Greenwich Hospital, in speaking about the challenge. Keith Crosby, chairman of the Southern Connecticut BOMA Sustainability Committee, moderated the discussion.

Stamford is a prime candidate for this initiative, noted Crosby. "Because of its size and large commercial development community, Stamford is the perfect municipality to help BOMA Southern Connecticut launch this



[Keith A. Crosby, LEED AP VP Construction/Property Manager of Merritt 7 Norwalk and Mike Pavia, Stamford Mayor speak on a panel at the Building Owners and Managers Association \(BOMA\) Launch of the . . .](#)

Corporate Sustainability Challenge in Fairfield County," he said. "Many of the efficiencies outlined in the challenge, combined with the sustainability policies that can be implemented, will return the investment in five years or less."

The money saved by the green initiatives is inarguable, noted Pavia, who made reference to the city's single stream recycling efforts. He noted that in single stream recycling -- which dictates that all paper fibers and containers are mixed together in a collection truck -- results in reduced carting costs, among other savings.

"We want to develop a comprehensive education and awareness programs that can explain what can be in a conscientious effort is put into place," Pavia said.

Educational programs may include working with building maintenance staffs to prevent leaves from being swept or blown into storm drains, supplying proper instruction on the storing snow piles, preparing a chemical spill strategy and reducing light pollution.

"The heart of Stamford is commercial property," noted D◆Elisa. "The benefits of participation in the corporate challenge include saving money on energy and water usage, a more attractive and cost-effective property to promote to the marketplace, and a healthy and pleasant work environment for their tenants and occupants. We commend the Stamford building owners who have agreed to commit themselves to this very worthy and beneficial challenge."

Upon completion of the program, Stamford's pilot participants will be eligible to receive a year's worth of free single stream recycling from the City of Stamford. They will also be recognized in the fall at BOMA's annual TOBY awards for achievements in the land development and building management industries. In early 2011, the challenge will be open to all building owners throughout Southern Connecticut and Sustainable Stamford will open the challenge to all Stamford building owners.

Crosby urged other municipalities to contact BOMA (www.boma.org) for information on addressing green issues. "People may often wonder 'How do I go green?'" he observed. "We want to help to create a road map to get on the green road. We are trying to make it easy."

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