



ROSLINDALE VILLAGE MAIN STREET Year in Review : 2009

In December 2007, the Roslindale Village Main Street Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan outlining the organization's priorities for the next 4 years: to promote Roslindale Village as a destination through distinctive events and comprehensive messaging; to enhance the Village streetscape by aggressively addressing neglected areas and implementing unique public signage and art; to facilitate economic development through advocacy for large-scale redevelopment efforts and assistance to small businesses; and to build organizational capacity by diversifying revenue streams and increasing volunteer energy.

In the midst of a nationwide economic downturn and a tough climate for small businesses, the good news is that our work in 2009 brought measurable progress toward each of these objectives. Our 24th year saw the completion or near-completion of some long-term projects after years of effort and investment, such as new holiday lighting in the district; gateway signage (a first phase of streetscape graphics to brand the neighborhood); and demolition of the old eyesore gas station next to the library. For the community, 2009 brought a bigger and better Farmers' Market to gather at on Saturday mornings; 11 new businesses to the district (and the lowest vacancy rate in years); and steady growth in membership and volunteer efforts. Many more collaborative efforts began in 2009 which will bear fruit in the months and years ahead.

With the support of a community working together, Roslindale Village Main Street remains committed to making Roslindale a stronger, better place to live, work and visit. Thanks to all who supported us this year.

Jody Burr
Executive Director

The mission of Roslindale Village Main Street is to promote Roslindale Village as an appealing destination and the dynamic center of our community. As a nonprofit organization, we bring together local volunteers, businesses and public agencies to strengthen Roslindale Village's vitality, appearance and unique local character.

DESIGN & STREETSCAPE

- Completed **five storefront renovations** (Ron's Automotive; Law Offices of Pofcher, DiSciullo & Petruzzello; Derna's; Jimmies Ice Cream & Sandwiches; Centre Cuts) in partnership with 4 business owners, leveraging over \$35,000 in public dollars and \$37,000 in private funds for façade improvements. Provided design consultation to 3 other privately funded storefront improvement projects.



The design assistance I received through RVMS allowed me to stretch my budget and take my business' look to a whole different level than I could have done alone. The storefront looks great, and there's no question that it's helped attract new customers. - Donna Cabral, owner, Jimmies Ice Cream & Sandwiches



- Installed **LED holiday lights** on 87 lampposts throughout the district, with funds raised through our Taste of Roslindale event. The up-front investment for holiday lighting totaled more than \$20,000, and yearly installation and storage costs will add up to about \$7,000 annually.
- Installed 8 graphic **gateway signs** at entry points into the Village, as part of an ongoing project to build a cohesive and unique visual identity for the business district through wayfinding signage and public art. An information kiosk with a neighborhood map, business directory and events board will be installed at Poplar and South Streets in 2010.
- Hosted a **networking breakfast** in January 2009, attended by more than 25 business owners and other community members, to update business and property owners on Roslindale's new signage guidelines and RVMS' storefront assistance program.
- Organized 31 volunteers for a Roslindale Village **neighborhood clean up** during Boston Shines 2009.
- Provided monthly landscaping and maintenance of **Adams Park**, which was funded through October 2009 by an annual \$10,000 grant from the Cooperative Bank of Roslindale.
- Secured a \$6,500 grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts to support a **public wind-driven sculpture** by artist George Greenamyre at the Belgrade-Corinth intersection. Funding for the \$100,000+ project is nearly complete, thanks to NEFA, the City of Boston's Browne Fund, and grassroots fundraising by the RVMS Public Art Council. The project is currently under review by the Boston Art Commission.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

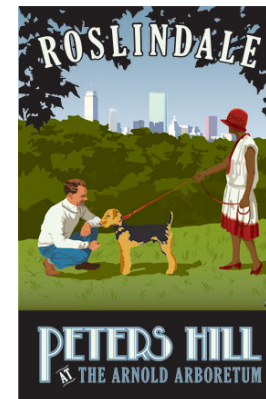
- Provided critical input and support on private redevelopment efforts for the long-vacant **gas station site** on Washington Street. Groundbreaking for the new building began in December 2009, with the 2-story retail/office development slated for completion in late summer 2010.



- Welcomed **11 new businesses** into the district in 2009, and provided direct assistance to 6 businesses during their first year. Roslindale Village currently has a rentable vacancy rate of less than 4% - among the lowest in the city.
- Provided over 50 referrals to business/property owners for outside **technical assistance resources**.
- Conducted outreach promoting Roslindale to potential anchor businesses, providing information and assistance to 9 **prospective businesses** considering Roslindale as a location
- Strengthened **online resources** for current and prospective businesses, including information on local small business assistance programs and local consumer demographics.

MARKETING & PROMOTION

- Released 2 new **Roslindale posters**, bringing the series to a total of six editions. The Roslindale poster project was conceived in 2008 by local resident, designer and RVMS volunteer Brad Harris as a way to build pride in Roslindale and brand the neighborhood as a destination. The posters are distributed to local businesses for display; they're also sold to raise funds for RVMS. Brad received RVMS' Volunteer of the Year award in 2009.
- Produced a reusable canvas "**Shop Local Roslindale Village**" tote bag, also designed by Brad Harris, to promote a local shopping campaign.
- Hosted a **business networking breakfast** in October 2009, attended by 35 local business owners, on marketing through social media.



- Orchestrated a regional feature on Roslindale Village on WBZ-TV's "**What's in the Community**" weekly segment in September 2009
- Organized Roslindale Village ad features in ***Edible Boston*** magazine, a quarterly publication on local food with a distribution of 35,000 readers in greater Boston.
- Published or leveraged 10 articles and columns in **local newspapers** promoting Roslindale Village, including the Roslindale/West Roxbury Transcript; Bulletin Newspapers; and Roslindale, West Roxbury and JP Shopper.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Increased resident membership by 30%** to 447 in 2009, with a **44% increase in overall giving**. Overall, resident and Board donations made up almost 15% of our operating funds in 2009.
- **108 local businesses and institutions partnered with RVMS** through member donations, sponsorships, in-kind donations, and event participation.
- **145 volunteers** donated over 2000 hours of work for Roslindale Village in 2009.
- Presented **2009 Volunteer and Business of the Year** awards to local resident Brad Harris, for his outstanding contribution of the iconic Roslindale poster series, and Boschetto Bakery, whose owner Joe Murphy conceived and brought to life the popular *Taste of Roslindale* benefit.

EVENTS

Roslindale Farmers' Market

The 2009 season was by all reports our best ever, bringing an average of 1500 customers to the business district weekly – four times the average attendance just 2 years ago. More farms, a broader and better quality vendor mix, and weekly kids' activities and live music helped to make the market a weekly community gathering spot and, increasingly, a word-of-mouth destination for surrounding communities. 88% of customers surveyed said they shop at other businesses in the district, and more than half said they come every week or every other week. Local merchants, some of whom participated in the market as vendors, reported increased foot traffic in their own establishments on market days. The market has also proved effective as a way of attracting potential businesses who can use the market as a testing ground to feel out the community.



Visiting the farmers market this year, I was encouraged to pursue my plans to open a children's clothing store in Roslindale. I know there's market research and data out there that I could have studied in detail. But the simple visual of the numbers of families and the vibrance of community that came out to the Farmers Market was more than enough confirmation to move forward and open Colorwheel Collection here. - Vernee Wilkinson, Roslindale resident and business owner

A Taste of Roslindale

The 3rd Annual Taste of Roslindale, now a well-known annual benefit featuring 22 local eateries, was held in the heart of the Village this year at St. Nectarios Church. 84 businesses supported the Taste through sponsorships and in-kind donations, and more than 500 people attended this sold-out event, which raised more than \$15,000 to support the Roslindale Food Pantry, the Roslindale Village Holiday Lighting fund, and Roslindale Village Main Street. Mayor Thomas Menino and Councilor Rob Consalvo entertained the crowd with a live auction and cook-off, and the crowd enjoyed live music, raffles, and a silent auction in addition to the outstanding food.

We felt both challenged and privileged to be a partner in the 2009 Taste of Roslindale. The funds raised on behalf of our Food Pantry help us feed the growing numbers of people who need help in these difficult economic times, and affirmed that the Food Pantry is supported and appreciated in the community. We had a great time -- to say nothing of wonderful food! - Branwen Cook, Pastor, Roslindale Congregational Church

First Class Pass In conjunction with the Bay State Model Railroad Museum's popular annual Spring Open House, RVMS partnered with 15 local businesses to create a "First Class Pass to Roslindale Village," a train ticket with "stops" around the Village that invited the Museum's hundreds of visitors to explore the business district. Over 700 passes were given out by RVMS volunteers and merchants reported fantastic foot traffic all weekend.





Tree Lighting in Adams Park

A community tradition, the 25th annual tree lighting ceremony brought hundreds of families to Adams Park to ring in the holiday season on Thanksgiving weekend. The crowds enjoyed treats donated from local bakeries; hot chocolate provided by the Lodge of Elks (who also arranged for Santa's annual visit by firetruck), and performances by the Sacred Heart School Choir, Blackstone Valley Brass Band, and the Urban Nutcracker. Children created ornaments for the community tree at a table sponsored by the Roslindale Arts Alliance. This year's event also honored the IBEW Local 103, who donated the labor to install outlets on lampposts for the district's new holiday decorations.

Storefront Scavenger Hunt

Sixteen business joined in a week-long scavenger hunt designed to encourage residents and visitors to explore new corners of the Village during the holiday season. Merchants placed vintage train cars, loaned by the Model Railroad Museum, in their shop window displays for hunt participants to match on a game card. Completed cards were entered into a drawing for a shopping spree in Roslindale Village. Over 800 cards were distributed at the Tree Lighting, the Railroad Museum's holiday event, and at participating businesses.

Holiday Wander through Roslindale Village 21 local merchants and restaurants collaborated with RVMS and the Home for Little Wanderers to organize the first annual *Holiday Wander through Roslindale Village*, a weekly Thursday evening stroll featuring special free events, discounts and extended hours at shops around the Village. Shopkeepers made and sold handmade ornaments to raise funds for kids at the Home for Little Wanderers. RVMS helped to organize and promote the Village-wide event.

I felt a burst of joy last Thursday evening, coming home late from work, to find so many of my new, favorite shops open and bustling with people. And the few times I was able to attend the farmers market, I always left with a big smile and bags overflowing with locally grown food. Thank you for making Roslindale such a warm and charming place to live. – Local resident, December 2009



SUPPORT

Thanks to the following businesses and institutions for supporting our work in 2009:

Major Sponsors (\$25,000+)

Citizens Bank
The City of Boston

RVMS Sponsors (\$1,000+)

Bank of America
The Cooperative Bank of Roslindale
Dunkin' Donuts
Roslyn Associates
Greater Roslindale Medical Center

Business Partners

1 on 1 Eye Care
Ace Auto & Plate Glass†
Bangkok Café†
Bay State Model Railroad Museum
Benefitness Gym*
Birch Flower Shop*
Birch St. House & Garden†
Birch Street Bistro*
Blue Star Restaurant*
Boschetto Bakery*
Boston Beer Company*
Boston Cheese Cellar*
Boston College*
Boston Lodge of Elks #10*
Boston Public Quartet*
Brickhouse Café (Dedham)*
Centre Cuts*†
Clay Auto Center†
Colorwheel Collection
Common Ground Grill*
Corrib Pub*
City Councilor John Connolly
City Councilor Rob Consalvo*†

Dandelions*
Davios Restaurant*
Delfino*
Diane's Bakery*
El Chavo Mexican Products*
F.J. Higgins Funeral Home†
Fenwick Smith/The Red Gable Corp.††
Fornax Bread Company*
Geoffrey's Café*
Gold's Gym*
Gormley Funeral Home†
Gypsy Boutique*
Halfway Café*
Halls of Tara Florist*
Hang 'em High Jewelry*
Harrison Refrigeration
Hebrew Senior Life††
Hercules Press*
Hilary Law Design*
Himalayan Bistro*
Historic Boston, Inc.
Hyde Park Savings Bank†
J.B. Edwards Uniforms
Jimmies Ice Cream & Sandwiches*
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Masona Grill*
Papa Gino's*
Patrice Monahan Quartet*
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Pleasant Café*
Prime Auto Group††
Quality Meats*
Restaurant Laura*
Roche Bros. Supermarkets††
Rogerson Communities†
Romano's Pizzeria and Taqueria*
Ron's Automotive
Roslindale Arts Alliance*
Roslindale Board of Trade†
Roslindale Branch Library
Roslindale Congregational Church
Roslindale Community Center Council
Roslindale Green & Clean
Roslindale Fish Market*
Roslindale House of Pizza
Roslindale Yoga*
Sebastian's Barber Shop*
Select Café*
Shaw's Supermarkets*
Solera: A Shrine to Wine*
Sophia's Grotto*
Spagnuolo Dentistry†
Springhouse*
Square Corner Café*
St. Nectarios Greek Orthodox Church*
Staples
State Rep. Michael Rush†
Stavros Socrates Frantzis††
Tables of Content*
The Home for Little Wanderers

The Pet Cabaret*
The Shopper
The Thrift Shop of Boston*†
The Urban Nutcracker*
Tony's Market*
Travel by Judie Leon
Tremont Credit Union†
Unique Hair Salon
Upper Crust Pizzeria*
Village Books*
Village Market
Village Sushi*
Vouros Pastry Shop*
Wallpaper City
Wapo Taco
West on Centre*
Yoga for You†

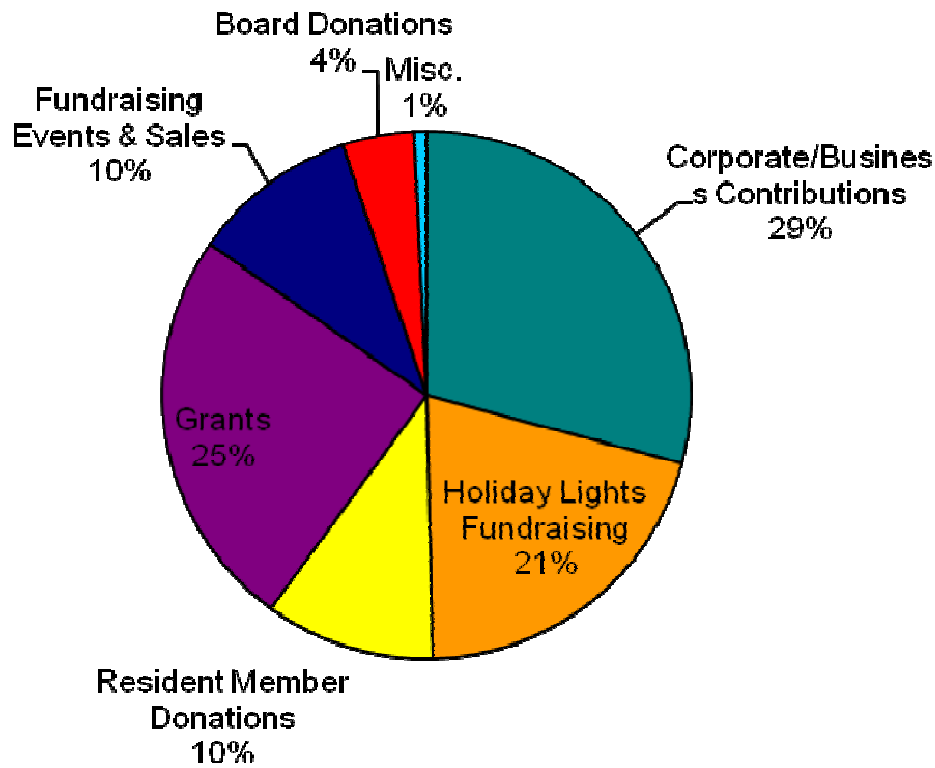
Bolded names

indicate 2009 RVMS Business Members
†† indicates Taste of Roslindale Gold Sponsor
† indicates Taste of Roslindale Sponsor
* indicates In-Kind Donor



FINANCIAL

2009: How We're Funded



2009: Where It Goes

