



Greater Capital Chapter of NYSCAR awarded Placemaking grant to help improve Central Avenue business district

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The Greater Capital Chapter of New York State Commercial Association of Realtors, the local representative group of real estate professionals, has received a \$2,200 Placemaking micro-grant from the National Association of Realtors to help make Townsend Park and the Central Business Improvement district community a better place to live and work by transforming unused public spaces into vibrant community places.

The grant is intended to help Realtor Associations partner with others to plan, organize, implement and maintain placemaking activities in their communities.

The Greater Capital Chapter of New York State Commercial Association of Realtors will use the funds to install lighting into Townsends Park's trees, transforming the park into an exciting urban space for the community and for newly formed thriving business. The idea is based on a strategic approach currently being used to improve the area in partnership with business and property owners, police and city government. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a major placemaking tool. This project would go a long way to economically enhance the city and, at the same time, preserve and restore and highlight a park that's been around for over one hundred years. Revitalizing Townsend Park would improve the appearance and image of the neighborhood. This would work to increase real estate opportunities in the area as well. Incorporating a lighting installation would be a cost-efficient and mutually beneficial way to enhance the image and value of the neighborhood and its properties by helping to improve safety and enhance the atmosphere for those who live and work in that area. They will partner with Central Business Improvement District on this project who will also be providing financial, technical assistance and maintenance.

"Realtors live, work and volunteer in their communities and take immense pride in working to improve them," said Nick DeMarte, president of the NYSCAR board. "Placemaking can help foster healthier, more socially economically viable communities. It creates places where people feel a strong stake in their neighborhoods and are committed to making things better. This grant will allow us to address areas in our community that are in need of improvement or redevelopment and create a place where friends and neighbors can come together."

Placemaking grants are awarded to local and state Realtor associations to help them and their members initiate placemaking projects in the community, like turning a parking lot into a farmer's market or a vacant lot into a playground. Realtor® associations and their Realtor® members are actively engaged in the community and know the neighborhoods and the properties that would benefit most from these improvement efforts.

"As the Townsend Park area becomes more attractive and welcoming, nearby properties may also increase in value," said Central BID executive director Anthony Capece. This is the first time a commercial board of realtors has ever been awarded a placemaking grant by the National

Association of Realtors.

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