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2019 Robert S. Bowditch Economic Development Award

Charles F. "Chip" Norton Jr., owner and Principal of Franklin Realty Advisors has been developing real estate in Worcester County since the 1980's. Franklin Realty's current investments in Central Massachusetts total in excess of \$220 million.

As of 2019 he is now the largest private developer in Worcester County.

In the 1980's, Chip handled multiple projects with then Fallon Health Clinic including a facility on Gold Star Boulevard. In the early 1990's, Chip had built his first office building totaling 250,000 SF. The Chestnut Place buildings formed the first new Class A office complex constructed in Worcester's Central Business District in twenty years. Franklin Realty Advisors acted as development manager and was a partner in the venture. He also did extensive work on various medical office buildings at 300 & 385 Grove Street. Chip took ownership of the former headquarters of the Thom McAn Shoe Corporation in 2008, and by 2010, he invested nearly \$10 million to create the Worcester Business Center which has become the suburban hub for business in Central MA.

Back in 2006, Chip purchased the 100+ acre, 1.2 million SF, mixed-use business park consisting of The Southbridge Hotel and Conference Center and 12 buildings for commercial use. It serves various industries in the Tri-community area, as well as the New England region. The site is served by its own power plant, which was recently converted to a cogeneration facility. The Southbridge Hotel & Conference Center has a 315,000 SF, 203-room world-class hotel and conference center, with a full-service restaurant, fitness center with racquetball courts, pool and spa, and a pub/lounge. Southbridge Innovation Center has 900,000 SF of commercial space. Chip recently transformed a traditional offline electric power plant into a state-of-the-art cogeneration facility on these grounds; he is also in the planning/permitting stage of developing solar and hydroelectricity on site.



Chip purchased the former Worcester Galleria Mall in the Fall of 2015, and beginning with a redevelopment period from 2016-2017, has transformed it into what is now Mercantile Center, which is part of CitySquare - a \$565 million multi-phased project in the heart of downtown Worcester and one of the largest public-private development projects in the Commonwealth outside of the Boston area. Mercantile Center represents the premier mixed-use property located in downtown Worcester consisting of two best-in-class office towers at 100 and 120 Front Street, commercial/retail space at 90/110 Front Street, 2 Mercantile Street, and a 1,647-space structured parking garage. Recently, Chip led the \$90 million recapitalization of Mercantile Center, representing one of the largest privately financed commercial projects in downtown Worcester. In the past year, Chip has leased over 100,000 SF of combined office and retail space. Chip is recognized as a tremendous landlord and community supporter in the Greater Worcester Area. He hosts a variety of free community and tenant-based events on his properties annually.

The WBDC is pleased and honored to present the 2019 Robert S. Bowditch Economic Development Award to Charles F. "Chip" Norton Jr.

Jill C. Dagilis
Chair, 2017-2019

The WBDC proudly recognizes Jill C. Dagilis, Chair of the Board of Directors for her leadership and commitment to the mission of the WBDC.

Since 2017, Jill has guided the WBDC on a number of successful endeavors. Her time and effort have been a great asset to the WBDC and all our projects, which in turn has benefited countless people in Worcester and the surrounding region.

The WBDC acknowledges Jill for her many contributions and thanks her for her service to our community.



Keynote Speaker

Chris Ronayne was named President of University Circle Inc (UCI) in 2005. UCI is the non-profit community service corporation responsible for the development, service, and advocacy of University Circle as a world-class center of innovation in health care, education, arts & culture and premier urban district. Since becoming UCI's seventh president, Chris has developed a dynamic and aggressive agenda to leverage the institutional assets of the Circle's anchor "Eds, Meds, and Arts" organizations and transform it into a vibrant mixed-use district.



Chris Ronayne and his staff partner with more than 40 member institutions to oversee the growth and direction of Ohio's fastest growing employment district, with UCI providing community planning, development, education, marketing, police, and other shared services.

Before joining UCI, he served the City of Cleveland as the City's Planning Director, Chief Development Officer, and Chief of Staff. He was the chief architect of the City's Waterfront District Plan, an ambitious effort to reconnect the people of Cleveland to Lake Erie.

In addition to his role with UCI, he serves on the Port of Cleveland Board of Trustees, is Chairman of the Holden Parks Trust, and is a member of CEOs for Cities, the American Planning Association, and numerous local boards and foundations. He is a frequent speaker and lecturer at urban development seminars and forums across the United States and internationally. Chris holds a Masters degree in Urban Planning, Design, and Development from Cleveland State University and a Bachelors degree in Business from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

Chris is married to Natalie Ronayne, Chief Development Officer at the Cleveland Metroparks. They live in the City of Cleveland with their two children.

SBA Highlight Award - Lundgren Honda



Serving the greater Worcester County auto market for over 50 years, Lundgren Honda was originally founded by Richard Lundgren. Today, it is owned and managed by his two sons, Barry and Patrick. As their business increased, so did their need for space, since the original 26,400 SF facility in Auburn, MA no longer met Honda franchise requirements. In 2008, Barry and Patrick purchased a 6-acre parcel of land just two miles down the road from their Washington Street location in anticipation of expansion.

In February 2012, the Lundgren brothers contacted the WBDC with Phil Goncalves of Country Bank to structure a \$14.04 million financing deal utilizing the SBA 504 Loan Program to finance real estate, build out and equipment purchases. Within 12 months, the new 58,000 SF state-of-the-art Sales and Service facility opened at 163 Washington Street.

The new facility houses Honda's Image Design Program which features a four lane service department, two express oil change lanes, two computerized alignment racks, a MA State Inspection bay, an automatic car wash, and a parts and accessory store. Technology upgrades include a four car delivering area, and a vehicle photo carousel for viewing inventory from the showroom floor. Amenities include a customer waiting lounge, children's play area and full cafe.

The WBDC is proud to recognize Lundgren Honda with the 2019 SBA Highlight Award for their dedicated efforts in expanding the tax base and creating new jobs in Worcester County.

Letter from the Chair & President/CEO

We are pleased to report in 2018 that our projects continue to progress and we remain on mission.



We continue to work with the City of Worcester by expanding our investment in 20 Franklin Street, the Theatre District, and completing a new housing and retail redevelopment of the Central Building at 332 Main Street. We are working block by block on connecting the successful CitySquare project to Main Street. We took a giant step in this area with the City and State's approval of a formal Business Improvement District (BID) and continued to assist in the repositioning of Mercantile Center. We are proud to spotlight the BID and honor its largest contributor Charles F. "Chip" Norton Jr. with the Robert S. Bowditch Economic Development Award.

We will continue to expand our Brownfields efforts working in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to identify and create "pad ready" industrial sites. This will continue to be important as we diversify our tax base.

Our largest project in 2018 continues to be the development of a new Biomanufacturing Park in Worcester. We continued to complete the permitting, infrastructure and demolition with the announcement of a major grant from the Baker/Polito Administration. Negotiations progressed in 2018 with WuXi as our first tenant in the park with a projected groundbreaking in 2019.

We thank our supporters in the federal, state and local governments. We continue to value our partnerships with Congressman McGovern, the Baker/Polito Administration and City Manager Augustus.

Finally, we will continue our successful SBA 504 Loan Program, lending critical capital to small businesses in Worcester County with our partners at BDC Capital. We will continue to work closely with our clients to advance their projects at Mercantile Center and the Southbridge Innovation Center, Fitchburg State University's Theater Block Program, as well as our dedicated involvement with the City, MBI, and the Chamber of Commerce with the very successful Economic Development Coordinating Council (EDCC). We look forward to another great year in 2019 by expanding the tax base and creating more jobs for the people of Central Massachusetts.

Jill C. Dagilis
Board Chair

Craig L. Blais
President & CEO

WBDC Board of Directors

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54TH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

MAY 16, 2019
MERCANTILE PLAZA
WORCESTER, MA

WBDC Annual Business Meeting

Mercantile Plaza
Thursday, May 16, 2019

Registration | 4:30PM
Program | 5:15PM

Reception immediately following

Call to Order & Welcome

Jill C. Dagilis, Board Chair
Robert J. Hennigan, Vice Chair

Invocation

Father Richard Reidy
Diocese of Worcester

Greetings from the City

Mayor Joseph M. Petty

Remarks from City Hall

City Manager Edward M. Augustus

Report of the Nominating Committee

Cheryl M. Lapriore, Chair,
Nominating Committee

SBA Highlight Award

Joyce A. Stewart, Executive Director of
SBA & Lending

Recognition of Outgoing Directors

Roberta L. Brien, Vice President of Projects

Bowditch Award Presentation

Craig L. Blais, President & CEO

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Craig L. Blais

Keynote Speaker

Chris Ronayne, President
University Circle

Closing Remarks

Craig L. Blais