

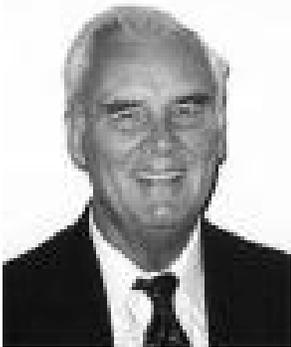
# About Town

*An MPOA Newsletter for the  
Property Owners of Madison, Connecticut*

*Spring 2005*



## Loss of a President



Bill Brooks -1929-2005  
MPOA President.  
He will be sorely missed.

When you talk about those very special people that give so much of themselves to Madison and its citizens Bill Brooks's name would be near the top of the list. His kindness and concern for people and our town are

well documented and yet most of us will never know all the people he affected with compassion. As a leading local real estate person he represented all that was good about the profession and was a paragon of integrity.

Knowing how strongly Bill felt about MPOA and its very important role of representing the property owners of Madison, the directors have expressed a desire to undertake a concerted effort to increase membership. While Bill's dream may have been idealistic he believed that every property owner should belong to MPOA, so they could feel that they had an organization to which they could turn for guidance, education and representation on vital

issues. He was convinced a strong membership could be heard better with its bigger voice. To that end MPOA has revised its mission statement to better reflect current events and the tenor of the times.

To persuade all property owners to come forward and become members, we have been and are undertaking projects and issues that can affect not only all property owners but all citizens.

Currently major MPOA projects are working toward: improved school funding from the state to lighten local property taxes, sponsoring open forums and political debates, and active participation in the new town charter revision. On the horizon are upcoming issues on which property owners will want representation and a voice. MPOA is that voice. To help the community be better heard and at the same time honor Bill Brooks's dream, we ask one and all to join MPOA. One of Bill's favorite comments was, "when you have a concern about property issues come to an MPOA meeting the third Monday every month and be heard."



### ***“First Selectman’s Comments”***

*There was a joint meeting of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance on March 30 to discuss the concept and details of the new Long Range Financial Plan (LRFP). The comments and concerns of the members were included in an update that will be discussed by the combined Steering Committee in May as a prelude to presentations to the town’s people in June and on. The actions taken by the BOF on the 2005/2006 Town and School budgets that will be voted upon May 24 have been included as the first year of the new plan and are consistent with the objectives and requirements set forth in the Plan as defined in the State-of-the-Town address presented in February.*

*In that address I stated that the Town “...needs to define and establish an allowable and realistic growth rate for taxes and make all our expenditure decisions, our debt decisions, and our capital projects decisions within the plan’s parameters and constraints.... ... A growth rate of 3% or less is unrealistic under the current economy and existing State legislation. On the other hand, the 7% average growth rate we have experienced over the past three years is intolerable as a long-term, continuing growth rate....”*

*The proposed Plan defines a realistic growth range for property taxes of 4% to 4.5% after careful consideration of all the parameters that impact it – interest rates, state grants, grand list, capital needs, union negotiations, etc. To hold to a 4.5% tax rate increase, given that the grand list normally grows about \$30M (1+%) per year and non-tax revenues remain flat at the \$5M level, we must hold the annual growth of total Town expenditures, including debt service, to a range of 5% to 5.5%.*

*To go forward, we must accept two fundamental requirements. First, that a 4.5% annual tax increase is both inevitable and acceptable. Second, those expenditures, including debt service, be contained to a 5.5% annual increase. Can we accept these essentials? Can that spending level, including debt service, be acceptable? There are still capital projects before us that will require serious consideration and some will be approved as the Town moves forward. How do we accommodate some or all of these activities and still maintain an affordable tax growth rate? Operational costs are and will always be the issue and the risk to tax growth. As long as departments, commissions, boards, and citizens believe that their particular issue, discipline and/or responsibility is all they should or must be concerned with and that they have no responsibility to the total or overall budget, there will always be upward spending pressure and annual contention.*

*This is our dilemma, our task, and our challenge - to find the middle ground, the right compromise that funds what must be funded, but holds the line when it must be held. I believe that the Plan is doable. I believe that the required spending level is achievable and adequate for both the Town and the Board of Education not only to maintain services, but to improve them when required. I believe that the annual tax rate increase is higher than we would prefer, but one we must come to accept as inevitable within our current economic and legislative circumstances and within the Town character we wish to maintain.*

*Tom Scarpati*



**Progress on School Funding**

The Education Committee of the Legislature held a public hearing in Hartford on Friday March 4, 2005 to discuss Educational Cost Sharing. The first hour was reserved for Legislators, State Agency Heads and Chief Elected Municipal Officials. Although Tom Scarpati was present, he did not have an opportunity to speak. Those of us representing MPOA (Art Criddle, George Greim, Bob Edmiston) submitted written testimony to the committee. Art Criddle was called upon to speak. His comments were well noted and respected by the committee and served to put Madison's case in a favorable light. It was also obvious that our Representative, Deborah Heinrich, had previously made the committee aware of Madison's concerns, which were reinforced by Art's comments.

**June Town Events**

**(Brought to you from the Chamber Calendar & Madison Civic Coordinators Collaboration)**

**June 2, Thursday 6pm** Memorial Town Hall  
Lecture/Demonstration by artist Cora Ogden - by Madison Art Society. Details: (860) 663-2202.

**June 18, Saturday** Madison Town Green  
Flea Market - Shoreline Universalist Society. Details: 203-245-8720

**June 21, Tuesday 6pm** The Wharf Restaurant  
Madison Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner Details 203-245-7394.

**June 25, Saturday** Surf Club  
Madison Mile - CT Open Water Swim Championships - Shoreline Foundation. Details: 203-458-6612

**June 25, Saturday 9-3** Town Green  
Flea Market - Sponsored by the Lions Club of Madison, Free admission. Details: 203-245-2667

**June 30, Thursday 6pm** Memorial Hall (upper level)  
Artists' Master Class by Thomas Torak - Madison Art Society. Details: (203) 453-5859.

MPOA. - Geraldine Bengtson, Treasurer  
PO Box 420  
Madison, CT 06443

Enclosed is my check for \$20.00 payable to "MPOA."

Please complete this form and mail it in so that we have your Email address on file.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_



Madison Property Owners Association  
PO Box 420  
Madison, CT 06443

PRESRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
MADISON, CT  
06443  
Permit # 115

**Rep. Deborah Heinrich & Sen. Edward Meyer to  
Update MPOA Board at June Meeting**

Thanks to Bill Brooks's foresight, an arrangement was made immediately after the election of our newly elected State Representative and Senator for them to MPOA and report back to MPOA the results of their first six-month session at the State Legislature in Hartford. A wonderful non-partisan relationship was developed between the candidates as the result of MPOA's sponsored debate and forum last fall just before the election. The MPOA Board is honored to make our membership aware of this opportunity to learn firsthand about progress in MPOA's major project to find additional state funding for education in Madison and other small towns.

MPOA members wishing to attend and listen to this special board meeting should first call Art Criddle at 245-0663 to make a reservation because attendance is very limited.

**MADISON PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION**

*Board of Directors*

Bengtson	Geraldine
Burns	Edward
Cerosky	Robert
Criddle	Arthur
Deephouse	Lucy
Edmiston	Robert
Gould	George
Greim	George
Hale	Mary-Jean (MJ)
Harris	James
Hearrell	June
Iorio	Louis
Lyon	David
Millane	Cornelius
Pardo	Peter
Poutot	Christine
Walz	Charles

