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**Friends of Midcoast Maine Gives 3 Smart Growth Awards**

**BRISTOL AND CAMDEN, MAINE:** Friends of Midcoast Maine gave three Smart Growth Awards for 2009 at its Annual Meeting on June 4 in Bristol. Awards were given to the Erickson Farm project in Rockport, Zoot Coffee in Camden, and to Pat Felton from Belfast.

The Erickson Farm award was given to the Friends of Rockport, the Maine Farmland Trust and Aldermere Farm for working jointly preserve and protect Erickson Farm and 90+ acres of farmland in the heart of Rockport, raising funds in a short period of time with a broad reaching public campaign, developing awareness of the community-school-farm connection, integrating the voices of dozens of stakeholder groups into the planning and fund-raising process including youth in the planning and use of the property, and preserving and actively farming portions of the property to create Erickson Farm for the citizens of the town, region and State of Maine.

Ron Howard and Sarah Post from Aldermere Farm and Cate Cronin from the Maine Farmland Trust accepted the award from FMM Executive Director Jane Lafleur. Mr. Howard noted that “this important effort involved hundreds of committed citizens and the help of many organizations who recognized its importance.”

Owner Sondra Hamilton accepted the award to Zoot Coffee in Camden. The award was given for locating in the heart of downtown Camden spurring revitalization to the area, providing a meeting place for locals and visitors from all walks of life, renovating existing downtown space into a creative, vibrant, appealing environment for customers, locating within walking & biking distance of most of Camden’s population, providing support to the community by offering display space for local artists, performance space for musicians and space to announce community events and free internet connections, providing an important “third place” for people beyond home and work to gather and socialize, providing affordable, healthy beverages and food in an unhurried, relaxed atmosphere, becoming the bedrock of downtown Camden community life, serving as an example to other downtowns as a way to provide a commercial enterprise and needed service while nourishing civic participation and dialogue, through collaborative means.

Pat Felton of Belfast was given the 2009 Award for serving as a constant advocate for smart growth principles and ideals, working to further the integration of transportation and land use decision making, working to support bicycle and pedestrian planning, supporting public involvement and public planning processes, tirelessly serving on local and regional committees that support these goals, and never giving up the goal of building a better community through

public involvement. Pat Felton accepted the award and modestly commented “I just thought I was doing what everyone should do.”

Friends of Midcoast Maine is an independent, regional, smart growth organization that helps Midcoast communities plan for a vibrant and sustainable future. For more information visit [www.friendsmidcoast.org](http://www.friendsmidcoast.org) or call (207) 236-1077.