

Goshen Pizza – A Real Hometown Story

This issue, Spotlight focuses on Goshen Village Marketplace’s favorite pizza chef, Resmi Rizvani. Since he and his wife, Mimoza, opened Goshen Pizza in 2020 in the former location of Torrington Savings Bank it has become a local favorite.

Resmi and his family have been Goshen residents in Woodridge Lake since 2014. Resmi came to the United States from Macedonia in the early 2000’s. He and his extended family members have a long history operating successful restaurants in the Litchfield County area. Before

opening Goshen Pizza, Resmi owned and operated Hometown Pizza in Litchfield, first at the Village Green (now Stop and Shop), and then at 250 West Street behind the Twin Stop gas station.

Resmi sold his interests in the Litchfield Hometown Pizza to an extended family member.



Resmi Rizvani and son, Erzan

“I have been making pizza ever since coming to the US”, said Resmi. “After I sold the Litchfield business, I wanted to do something in my family’s hometown of Goshen”.

We spoke to Resmi recently about his experience opening a restaurant just as the COVID-19 pandemic was accelerating. He told us that there has been tremendous support from the people of Goshen since Opening Day. In some ways, having a new take-out restaurant in town may have been a good thing as the ability of families to go out and to eat-in restaurants became limited. Offering delivery to families and events in Goshen made it all the more popular.

COVID-19 and its impact on the economy continue to be a challenge for Resmi. He says that it has become difficult to find workers. To deal with this, some of Resmi’s and Mimoza’s family have put in time helping to keep things running smoothly. If you have picked up an order, you probably have met them.

Resmi sees Goshen Pizza as a real “hometown pizza” restaurant, one he hopes the town of Goshen will continue to enjoy for many years to come.

And So it Goes ...

The work on Goshen Village Marketplace (GVM) continues. Our goal is to make GVM a location where businesses can thrive, and residents can enjoy safe, comfortable living. It is showing its age and needs updating to make it a community-oriented area in which all Goshen residents can take pride.

Goshen Housing Trust is busy working on renovations and updates at GVM. Like many trying to do construction work these days, we are facing issues with materials and labor availability that are slowing us down more than we would like and raising costs. However, work is well underway. Some of the work will be obvious to you as you may observe portions of the building taken apart so we can put them back together better than before. A great deal of the work will happen inside the buildings and won’t be as obvious.

The first building to be addressed was the large center building that is the home of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments offices. Major work continues to be done here that has included structural repairs that are not as visible externally, and the installing of a new roof over the flat section of the building. We have been waiting for several months now for the material needed to complete the roofing. Once this work has been done, the siding for the building

will be replaced, and other repairs completed.

Work is also underway on the first phase



of apartment renovations. The residential units will be upgraded in groups which will allow us to get the work done while minimizing the impact on the occupants. In general, this work will include:

- Re-doing bathrooms, replacing carpeting with vinyl plank floors, updating kitchen areas.
- Installing energy efficient heat pump HVAC systems, lighting, and kitchen appliances.
- Upgrading insulation.
- Replacing or reframing & insulating windows.

And So It Goes (continued from first page)

Currently, four of the apartments are being renovated and we will upgrade the remaining apartments in similar groups. As units are completed, we will offer them to existing and new residents. We expect it to take a year or more to complete all of the renovations.

We also want to improve the overall exterior appearance of the complex for our residents and the businesses located here. The “wish list” for this is long and includes repaving the parking areas, repair of building siding & trim, painting, improved lighting, and landscaping. These items will be our biggest challenge as

funding we have for residential renovations can't be used for this.

As a small first step, we plan



New Sign Planned for GVM

to install a new sign at the entrance to GVM. The new sign is being done by Lauretano Signs, a local firm who has worked with us to keep the cost down, which we appreciate. It is funded in part by a generous donation.

Community Dialog

We welcome a dialog with the community when the opportunity presents itself. Recently, Dawn Wicks, VP of GHT, had an opportunity to talk with some who were skeptical. We summarize some of the issues discussed here.

Who do you expect to live at Goshen Village Marketplace?
Our target includes the young—singles, couples, and small families— starting out and not yet ready for homeownership. It also includes older individuals looking for an option to the large, expensive, difficult to maintain homes that dominate in Goshen today.

How can seniors be accommodated there?
We will have four, ground-level apartments that utilize “Universal Design” standards making them easier and safer for seniors as well as those with physical disabilities.

You will have no say over who lives there and won't that be a problem for our town?

Remember that the 18 apartments at GVM are not new. They have been here and occupied for over 47 years. Now the GHT board consisting of Goshen residents runs GVM. We are committed to maintaining a quality residence and vetting applicants for the apartments. We are not required to rent to anyone who does not pass our fairly applied qualification criteria.

This is costing Goshen taxpayers a lot of money, isn't it?
Not at all. Not a dime of Goshen taxpayer money has gone to GHT or our project. To the contrary, GHT today is (proudly) one of the largest payers of Town of Goshen property taxes. In 2021/2022 we paid over \$20,000 in taxes to the Town.

What is GHT planning to develop next?
The simple truth is we have no plans at this time. GVM will consume every ounce of time & energy for the GHT Board for the next 2 or more years. There is a lot to be done and it is a project that is important to do well for the Town of Goshen.

We expect the sign to be installed as soon as approvals can be obtained and the weather improves.

There is a lot of work remaining to be done to the exterior and we hope that some in the Goshen community will consider helping with the costs of making Goshen Village Marketplace a community location in which we can all be proud.

Please Remember GiveLocal This Year

Consider Goshen Housing Trust this year during Give Local along with all of the Goshen non-profit organizations that serve our town so well. Your support will help us continue our work.

The Connecticut Community Foundation's (CCF) annual GiveLocal event is coming up April 26th and 27th. This event gives community members a chance to support the non-profit organizations that help our community. Donations made through GiveLocal are boosted by “bonus dollars” provided by the CCF as well as by “prizes” awarded for various reasons during the event.



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To participate in GiveLocal go to “tinyurl.com/5xm7jrpj” or “GoshenHousingTrust.org”. If you prefer to make a direct donation to GHT, mail your check payable to “Goshen Housing Trust, Inc.” and send to PO Box 511, Goshen, CT 06756. Thank you!

