

Fall 2016
Volume 5, Issue 3
A quarterly publication

MSF Gazette

MAIN STREET FIRST • LITTLE FALLS • NEW YORK



COMING TO TERMS: PLANNING, CHARETTES, LITTLE FALLS, AND YOU

What is planning?

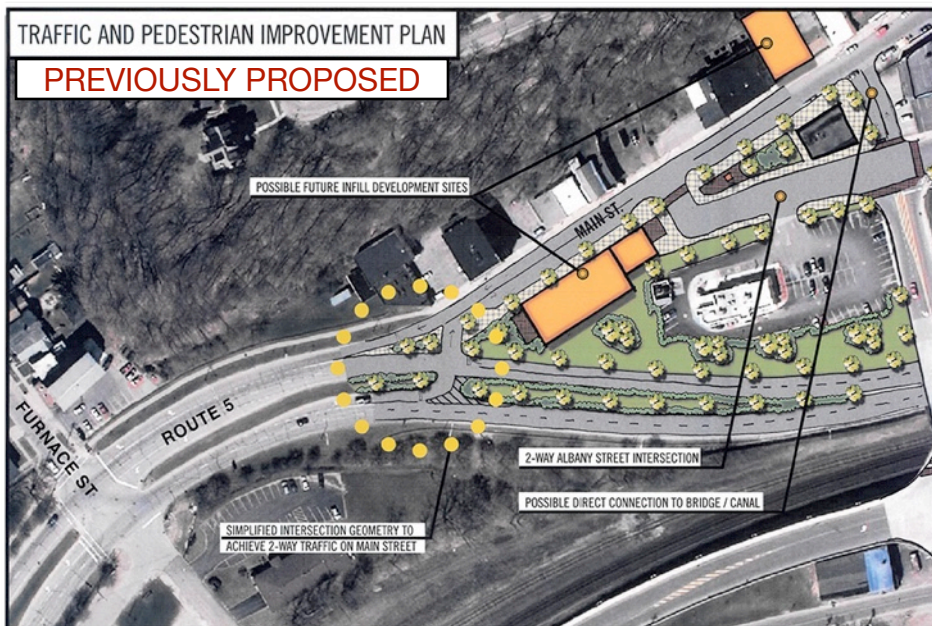
Why plan?

Everyone plans. Well-run organizations and businesses plan. And so should well-run communities.

Plans help us define goals and organize our time and efforts towards attaining them. Plans are what empower us to try to shape the surroundings and situations in which we live.

Disorganized people have a hard time

accomplishing much, and the same is true of disorganized communities. It is easy to act too late, or just respond to every situation as it arises, and attempt to address them with inappropriate ideas or outdated programs. It is much harder, but far more promising, to try to anticipate the future, to try to gather what we as citizens would like for our community in the future, and then to develop plans and processes that attempt to implement that community vision. *(continued on page 6)*



Curious? Have feedback or ideas for us? Want to help? PLEASE JOIN US!

Next scheduled meetings:

Monday, September 12
Monday, September 26
Monday, October 10
Monday, October 24
Monday, November 7
Monday, November 21
@ 6:30 pm
690 East Main Street,
Little Falls

(For more details about our group, please see the back cover/p. 8)

ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CITY HALL!

Between 1916 and 1918, City Hall was constructed. The process began in 1914 when Little Falls philanthropic industrialist David H. Burrell offered the city \$50,000 (a cool million in 2016 dollars!) to build a city hall if the city would match it. A public referendum of support passed by a 765-65 vote. The Common Council and Mayor Abram Zoller scaled down architect William Neil Smith's design plans in order to stay on budget; the final cost was \$104,706.

The October 7, 1916 Evening Times headline "CITY HALL CORNERSTONE LAID THIS AFTERNOON — Fine Program of Exercises" amounted to a community flexing its small-town industrial strength. Our 1915 census was 13,022.



The original design called for a stone exterior with a marble interior, all in the then-fashionable Beaux Arts style. Burrell added another \$10,000 in order to buy Atlantic gray terra cotta (clay) panel tiles, cheaper and more easily molded than stone into the sculptural forms common to the style. Note the American Indian faces above the front doors. The porous nature of terra cotta leaves the City with problems yet to be solved in 2016.

The building's most beautiful detail, the two interior matching curved marble staircases, was first intended to be the exterior entranceway. The staircase and the large stained glass window image of Profile Rock on Moss Island (donated by Mayor Zoller's family) provide an elegant approach to the second floor.

The headline of the May 18, 1918 Evening Times read: "STRONG VERDICT OF APPROVAL — Local People Highly Pleased With City Hall." 4,000 people took tours of the completed structure.

Through the years City Hall has been the site of a
(continued on page 3)



PO Box 65
Little Falls, NY 13365

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Editor
Teri Chace

Layout/Art Direction
David Dardzinski

Editorial Staff
Mike Evans
Pat Frezza-Gressler
Jeffrey Gressler
Adrienne Neff

Photography
David Dardzinski, Teri Chace

MSF Gazette is published quarterly and distributed throughout the City of Little Falls, Herkimer County, New York. This issue, and an archive of back issues, is also available online at www.mainstreetfirst.com.

Suggestions and contributions (articles and art) are always welcome; please contact someone on the staff or write to mainstreetfirst@yahoo.com.

ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CITY HALL!

(continued from page 2)


number of historic events, including a 1923 visit from Governor Al Smith, a 1936 visit from Republican presidential candidate Alf Landon and, on August 14, 1945, the fire whistle joined the chorus of bells, whistles, and horns announcing Japan's surrender ending WWII. Also, the "Kennedy mystique" touched down in Little Falls on October 20, 1964, when U.S. Senate candidate Robert F. Kennedy addressed an energy-charged crowd in front of City Hall.

In 2016 City Hall stands as a magnificent structure, the civic nerve center of our community. But the historic treasure is showing its age and structural repairs are needed if future generations are to enjoy its beauty.

2016-2018 marks the centennial of City Hall's construction. Its beautiful dome, along with Holy Family Church's steeple, defines our skyline. Happy 100th!

—*Nan Ressue and Gazette staff*

Nan Ressue is the current President of Preserve our Past (POP).



CENTURY CELEBRATION

Preserve Our Past is sponsoring a **Photo Contest** to celebrate the **100th Anniversary of Lock 17 and Little Falls City Hall**. Entry forms available online or at local venues and shops. We invite amateur and professional photographers of all ages to enter.

Entry Deadline 09.30.2016
Entry Fee \$10.00 per Photo

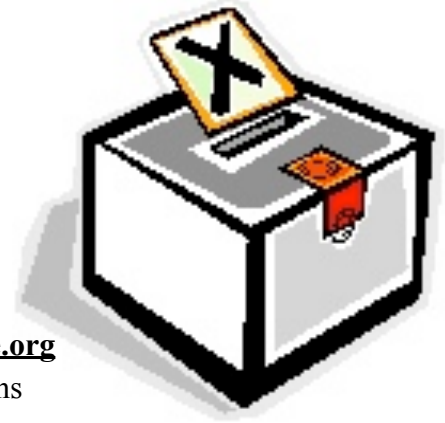
www.preserveourpast.org
Facebook



Artwork by Oscar Stivala

Therefore, when we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, "See! this our fathers did for us." —John Ruskin

WHO? YOU!
WHAT? VOTE!
WHERE? Holy Family Parish Hall
 763 East Main St., Little Falls
WHEN? Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2016 6 am - 9 pm
WHY? It is ***YOUR RIGHT & YOUR DUTY***
HOW? Register to Vote. Be informed. Show up.



You can register on-line by going to: www.registertovote.org

OR in person at: Herkimer County Board of Elections
 109 Mary Street, Suite 1306
 Herkimer, NY 13350
 Phone: (315) 867-1102

***State-wide registration day, Herkimer County Board of Elections - Oct. 15: special hours, 1 to 9 pm.
 You must have your registration in NO LATER THAN Oct. 15, or postmarked by Oct. 14.***

FEDERAL OFFICES: President and Vice President

Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine (DEM) (WOR)
 Donald Trump and Mike Pence (REP)
 Gary Johnson and Bill Weld (LBT)
 Lynn Kahn & Kathleen Monahan (VUP)
 Roque DeLaFuente & Michael Steinberg (I)
 Green Party - nominating convention not yet held at time of printing,
 major names: Jill Stein and Ajamu Baraka (GRE)

UNITED STATES Senator

Charles Schumer (DEM) (WOR) (IND) (WEP) *incumbent*
 Wendy Long (REP) (CON) (REF)
 Robin Laverne Wilson (GRE)
 Alex Merced (LBT)

UNITED STATES House of Representatives (22nd District)

Kim Myers (DEM) (WOR)
 Claudia Tenney (REP)
 Martin Babinec (REF) (UJP)

NEW YORK STATE Senator (51st District)

James Seward (REP) (CON) (WEP) *incumbent*
 Jermaine Bagnall-Graham (DEM) (WOR)

NEW YORK STATE Member of Assembly (101st District)

Arlene Feldmeier (DEM) (WOR)
 Maria Kelso (REP) (CON) (REF)
 Brian Miller (REP) (IND)

HERKIMER COUNTY OFFICES

Herkimer County District Attorney	*Mike Daley (REP)* (DEM) (IND) *Jeffrey Carpenter (REP)* (CON)
Herkimer County Treasurer	Kimberlee Enea (REP) (CON) (REF)
Herkimer County Clerk	Sylvia Rowan (REP) (CON) (IND) (REF)
Coroner	*Vincent Enea (REP)* (CON) (REF) *Daniel Enea (REP)* (CON) (IND)

PARTIES: DEM=Democrat, REP=Republican, CON=Conservative, REF=Reform, IND=Independence,
 LBT=Libertarian, GRE=Green, WOR=Working Families, I=Independent(no party), WEP=Womens Equality Party
 VUP=Voter United Party, UJP=Upstate Jobs Party

*(pending primary)



Citizenship is every person's highest calling. - Ambassador Walter H. Annenberg

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2016

- ❖ Every Saturday, 9 am to 1 pm. Farmers' Market, M&T Bank parking lot.
- ❖ Saturday, 9/10, from 10 am to 5 pm. 15th Annual Mohawk Valley Garlic & Herb Festival, Canal Place. Donation \$3 per person, \$10 per family. Over 80 vendors, live music, free horse-drawn carriage rides along the Erie Canal, fun for the whole family. Please visit www.mvghf.com or check the Facebook page for full details.
- ❖ Thursday, 9/15. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. Featuring the 2nd Annual Pizza Challenge! Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.
- ❖ Saturday, 9/17, 5 pm, Beardslee Castle. MVCA Fundraiser and Honoree Dinner. Funds will help replenish the scholarship fund; honoring Kevin and Rose Mihaly. \$60 per person. For more information/tickets, call Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts at (315) 823-0808 or visit www.MohawkValleyArts.org.
- ❖ Sunday, 9/25, 3 to 5 pm. 19th Annual Great Art Giveaway (art now hanging in the 401 Gallery); drawing and reception, Gallery/Canal Side Inn. \$5 donation at the door, includes hors d'oeuvres and drawing for door prize. Tickets may be purchased for Chinese Auction; call MVCA for details at (315) 823-0808.

OCTOBER 2016

- ❖ Every Saturday, 9 am to 1 pm. Farmers' Market, M&T Bank parking lot
- ❖ Saturday, 10/1, 2 to 4 pm. Opening reception for solo exhibit in the 401 Gallery, "Hello Mother, Love Daughter – A Life Story," the artwork of local artist Donna Veeder. Exhibit will be on display through Saturday 10/29.
- ❖ Tuesday, 10/4 at 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall.
- ❖ Friday, 10/7, 4:30 to 7 pm. Arts for Awareness – an evening to raise awareness for Herkimer County Domestic Violence Program. Studio 411 in Canal Place, free to the public, hors d'oeuvres, wine, refreshments. Artwork for sale, gift cards will be raffled off, 30% of proceeds will go to Herkimer County Domestic Violence Program, 70% to the artists.
- ❖ Saturday, 10/15, 5 to 7 pm, Mohawk Valley Country Club. "Igniting the Creative Spirit," a fundraiser for the Little Falls Public Library featuring local author David Casullo as keynote speaker, as well as many other local authors. Information and reservations, please call (315) 823-1542 or see <http://www.lflibrary.org/2016/08/18/igniting-the-creative-spirit/>.
- ❖ Thursday, 10/20. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. Featuring "Oktoberfest"-themed specials and activities. Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.
- ❖ Thursday, 10/20, 6:30 to 8 pm. 401 Gallery, "Devils, Wakes and Ghosts: Irish Tales of Fairies and the Ghost World" -- just in time for Halloween, Readings and music performed by Mike Carroll and Irish Settlement Road.

NOVEMBER 2016

- ❖ Tuesday, 11/1 at 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall.
- ❖ Tuesday, 11/8. Election Day. Vote in the Holy Family Parish Hall. Polls open 6 am to 9 pm. See opposite page for details or visit/call Herkimer County Board of Elections.
- ❖ Sunday, 11/13, 3 pm. Syracuse University Brass Ensemble, under the direction of Dr. James T. Spencer, will present their annual MVCA community concert at Holy Family Parish. Ticket price and other details TBA.
- ❖ Thursday, 11/17. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.
- ❖ Saturday, 11/26. Small Business Saturday. Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com for details.



SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH SOMEONE
PLEASE RECYCLE , DON'T LITTER!

COMING TO TERMS: PLANNING, CHARETTES, LITTLE FALLS, AND YOU *(continued from page 1)*

But it is precisely these sorts of efforts that successful communities do in order to organize their time, resources, and efforts, to achieve their vision. The City of Little Falls indeed already does have a plan, but it was written in 1970, and is not particularly comprehensive. At any rate, it cannot serve as an outline by which we can try to deal with the significant changes in business patterns, jobs, services, and population patterns that have occurred since 1970 and will accelerate going forward. With or without a current plan, towns and cities will change. Planning, at its best, gives us data and tools to try to make the inevitable changes prosperous and positive.

A good “Master Plan” is comprehensive, and seeks to address most of the objectives for the community. A good plan makes all the citizens stakeholders in the success of the plan by involving them, at an early stage, in the development of that plan.

A planning process accomplishes this by hosting a series of charettes. These are simply public meetings that attempt to get the sense of the community, to either obtain or develop consensus on what we want our community to be like in the future. These charettes can be seen as a means of community decision-making through public participation.

The City of Little Falls will be organizing these initial planning charettes in the next few months. Stay tuned, think about our community, and please be ready to help when the time comes!

—Alan Chace

Alan Chace is a member of the Little Falls Planning Board.



You got to be careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there. — Yogi Berra

The Little Falls Micro Fund: If you or someone you know needs one-time financial help in the form of an interest-free loan of \$2,000 or less, please contact:

P.O. Box 817, Little Falls, NY 13365

littlefallsmicrofund@gmail.com

www.littlefallsmicrofund.org

(315) 219-9396



Little Falls Micro Fund
Helping Our Community Grow



SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH SOMEONE
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LEARNING TO 'LOCAL': OUR MAIN STREET DINER



It used to be that many places had a centrally located diner. This was a place to come in out of the weather and enjoy a beverage or an inexpensive, home-cooked meal. You could stuff into a booth with your friends or family. Or you could sit alone at the counter on a “twisty stool,” rub elbows with neighbors, joke with the waitress or grillman, and not feel the least bit lonely.

Diners are traditionally community gathering places. It’s no accident that in election years, a diner is a popular stop for a campaigning politician. It’s no coincidence that a weary solo traveler or an enterprising couple chooses to stop at a diner when traveling in unfamiliar territory. Diners are comforting, welcoming, and democratic with a small “d.”

Like cars, diners come in different makes and models. Crazy Otto’s Empire Diner in Herkimer, with its shiny stainless steel, is a Mountain View. Silk City diners have porcelain siding, for example, Bev’s Place in Oriskany. The Miss Johnstown is a Ward & Dickinson. Alas, diners are no longer being manufactured and those that survive need updates and/or restoration.

A diner manufacturer from 1913 to 1956, the Jerry O’Mahony Company made hundreds of diners. Few survive nowadays, but there are three right here in the Mohawk Valley: The Gloversville Palace Diner, Eddie’s in Rome, and our own That Little Place on Main (formerly Kristen’s Cafe and the Wagon Wheel).

That Little Place on Main is special not only because it is a rare type, but also because it is a vintage example. Citing old photos, the present owner Gary Bowman estimates it arrived here around 1923. Other clues include the smaller size (the company marketed larger and fancier “modern” styles by the late 1920s) and the barrel roof (discontinued in 1930). Gary also noticed that the booths were assembled with the sort of screws that went out of production by 1936 (when threaded screws became vogue). Its original exterior, kitchen, and inside ceiling have been lost to the years, remodeling projects, and perhaps a long-ago kitchen fire. However, the stools appear old or original.

So next time you’re in there, take a closer look and appreciate not only a piece of Little Falls history but a piece of our country’s history. A Main Street diner is an American icon and we are fortunate to still have one!

—Teri Chace

Teri Chace is the former editor of Roadside Magazine, which celebrated diners and other roadside Americana and was published from 1990 to 2004.



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PO Box 65
Little Falls, NY 13365

Main Street First, Inc. is an organization of Little Falls residents as well as other stakeholders in the cultural and commercial life of our city.

Main Street First, Inc. does not act on the behalf of individual businesses in Little Falls, but is dedicated to the interests of our residents in preserving and revitalizing the Little Falls City Center.

PURPOSES: The purposes for which the Corporation is formed are to combat community deterioration in the city by organizing the community to create sustainable initiatives to revitalize the city, by supporting city revitalization through smart growth principles, the creation of a comprehensive master plan, the participation of all interested parties in directing the city's future, citywide residential revitalization, the development of green and sustainable technologies throughout the city, to provide financial assistance and volunteers for the improvement and maintenance of the city's buildings and homes, and to increase recreational facilities. To do any other act or thing incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes or in the advancement thereof, but not for the pecuniary profit or financial gain of its members, directors, or officers.

MSF'S SHORT-TERM GOALS

- ❖ Continue to work with local businesses to promote monthly "Third Thursday" events.
- ❖ Expand and develop our network of volunteers.

MSF'S LONG-TERM GOALS

- ❖ Continue to expand and improve the "Think Local Little Falls" venture.
- ❖ Position MSF as a strong partner with Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful (KMVB).
- ❖ Pursue grant opportunities for projects aligned with MSF's mission and principles.

These are the sorts of things we discuss and plan at our meetings. Join us! Bring your ideas, skills, and energy and help us reach these and other good goals for our community.

To receive a copy of this quarterly newsletter electronically, please send your request to: mainstreetfirst@yahoo.com.



HOW TO JOIN MSF

If you would like to get involved, have questions or ideas, or are thinking of joining, we invite you to come to our meetings — everyone is welcome!

Email us at:

mainstreetfirst@yahoo.com

Visit our new website at:

www.mainstreetfirst.com

Facebook:

"like" the Main Street First page
"like" the Think Local Little Falls page

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