



Main Street First is a nonpartisan group whose interests are to help revitalize our city and to work constructively towards a better future.

PO Box 65
Little Falls, NY 13365

THIRD THURSDAYS!

Over 60 Little Falls merchants and service providers are offering discounts and specials. Think Local - Live Local - Live BETTER! For more information, please visit our website or <http://www.shoplittlefallsny.com/>

MSF'S SHORT-TERM GOALS

- * Continue to work with local businesses to promote monthly "Third Thursday" events.
- * Help facilitate the completion of the construction of a composting toilet facility on Moss Island.
- * Expand MSF cleanup projects by participating as a member of the Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful committee.



MSF'S LONG-TERM GOALS

- * Continue to expand and improve the "Think Local Little Falls" venture.
- * Work with city officials to promote residential revitalization through consistent codes enforcement.
- * 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 website at:
www.mainstreetfirstny.com
 Visit our blog at:
<http://mainstreetfirst.wordpress.com/>
 Facebook: "like" the Main Street

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MSF Gazette



BRAINSTORMING: Keep Little Falls Beautiful and MSF

Covering up unsightly graffiti, picking up litter, planting trees and shrubs, assisting with school-district downtown spring cleanups—these are just a few ongoing Main Street First "Keep Little Falls Beautiful" projects.

For the past four years, Main Street

First members have been quite active in various efforts to help beautify city streets, parks and passageways.

The most visible example of these MSF efforts has been the seasonal window displays in several vacant Main Street buildings.

These displays have creatively transformed the sidewalk level appearance of Main Street.

One of our more ambitious undertakings began in October 2012 when we committed ourselves to keeping the railroad underpass graffiti and litter-free.

This effort has led to an enlarged recent commitment to maintain the overall upkeep of South Ann Street. Our vision is to beautify the entire walking corridor from Main Street to Canal Place.

Perhaps you have noticed the new rose shrubs on the west *continued on p. 3*

MSF PROJECT UPDATE: "Statement of Principles" Revisited

Two years ago--it seems longer than that, so much has happened!--we mailed a flyer to every household in the city. This flyer was our "Statement of Principles" and our goal was to bring everyone into the discussion about constructive ways to improve and direct the future of our community.

Here they are again--just the principles. We had specific suggestions and goals under each one, not repeated here because some have been realized, while others are underway or have been updated.

Of course, your ideas, comments, and help are always welcome!

1. The members of Main Street First support the economic revitalization of Little Falls.
2. We support the creation of a comprehensive master plan for economic development.
3. We support the participation of

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

Next scheduled meetings:
Monday, September 23
Monday, October 7
Monday, October 21
@ 6:30 pm
690 Main Street, Little Falls

(For more details about our group, please see the back cover/p. 4)

COMING TO TERMS: The Topic We All Hate--Property Taxes

In New York, starting in the mid-1600s, it was deemed fair to tax the people based upon their real property rather than by taxing the exportation of wine, liquor, and beaver skins. This form of taxation would spread the costs of the government over the entire population with a heavier burden placed upon the people who could more readily afford it, the assumption being that the wealthier individuals would own more property. This form of taxation is still in use today, thus the term "property taxes."

"People want just taxes more than they want lower taxes. They want to know that every man is paying his proportionate share according to his wealth." --Will Rogers

New York state law requires all property within the City of Little Falls to be assessed at the same percentage of market value. To do this, a fair market value must be established for each individual piece of property. Fair market value is the price that a property would sell for assuming a motivated buyer and seller. This value is best established by recent sales of

comparable properties. The cost to build a new building can also be used, although this is less reliable where depreciation is significant.

Since markets fluctuate over time, it is necessary to periodically update the assessed values. This has not been done in our city since the mid-70s. If a reappraisal is done in Little Falls, some property assessments will go up in value and some will go down.

What will NOT change is the total tax levy. The amount of taxes needed is determined by the budgets of the school system, plus the local city and county governments.

If the total value of the city's properties goes up, the tax rate will go down. This means that even if your assessment goes up, you don't necessarily have to pay more taxes.

What will happen is that the amount of taxes will be fairly distributed among all property owners based solely upon the value of their individual properties.

Mike Evans

MSF PROJECT UPDATE: "Statement of Principles" Revisited (continued from p. 1)

everyone in directing our city's future.

4. We support citywide residential revitalization.
5. We support development of green and sustainable technologies throughout our community.
6. We support historic preservation

efforts and increased recreational facilities.

Interested citizens are encouraged to visit our website, attend our meetings and/or work within our community and local government towards the realization of these goals.

BRAINSTORMING: Keeping Little Falls Beautiful and MSF (continued from p. 1)

side of School Street opposite the Post Office or the improved appearance of the entry to the City on East Main Street? These are also MSF efforts.

Some MSF members work in both the spring and fall with the high school "Service Learning" class to assist DPW workers with the maintenance of Columbus Park. Other MSF members work to maintain Sterzinar Park. We have also volunteered for block-by-block assignments to pick up litter along Main Street.

Various MSF members also provided strategic cleanup assistance to Main Street merchants following the late-June storm damage. The owners of Ed's Pizzeria, Little Falls Hardware, and Tracy Lynn Fashion expressed their sincere appreciation for these efforts.

MSF has also established a tree nursery with young seedlings that will be ready in a few years for civic planting projects. We are also considering joining the ranks of "Keep The Mohawk Valley Beautiful" regional effort. This will make it easier to obtain government grant funds for still more beautification projects in the future.

As an organization, MSF has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to the function and appearance of our

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- * Saturday, 9/14, 10 am - 5 pm. Little Falls Garlic & Herb Festival. Canal Place. Donation admission \$3 (\$10 for family groups). For more details: <http://mvghf.com/>.
- * Thursday, 9/19. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. (Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the "Think Local Little Falls" Facebook page for full details.)
- * Tuesday, 9/24, 7 pm. Little Falls Historical Society presents Tony Carlisto on "What Lurks Beneath Our City?" WCA, 534 Garden Street.

OCTOBER

- * Tuesday, 10/1. 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting at 7 pm. Little Falls City Hall.
- * Friday, 10/4, 4 to 7 pm. MSF fundraiser evening at the Overlook Mansion. \$25 donation per person. Includes plentiful appetizers, wine, sodas; live jazz.
- * Thursday, 10/17. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. (Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the "Think Local Little Falls" Facebook page for full details.)
- * Saturday, 10/26, 3 to 8 pm, Knights Inn, 20 Albany St. "Go Digital or Go Dark" fundraiser for Valley Cinema. Full details on the Cinema's Facebook page.

NOVEMBER

- * Tuesday, 11/5. Election Day (local). Polling place is Holy Family Church Hall; polling hours are 6 am - 9 pm.
- * Tuesday, 11/12. 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting at 7 pm. Little Falls City Hall.

community. We appreciate our DPW crews for providing us with tools as well as post-cleanup project hauling assistance. This type of cooperation benefits our community, and makes our streets and parks more attractive for both residents and visitors alike. We also feel empowered to make a difference in our collective quality of life!

Jeffrey Gressler