

Autumn 2017  
Volume 6, Issue 3  
A quarterly publication

# MSF Gazette

**MAIN STREET FIRST • LITTLE FALLS • NEW YORK**



## AT HOME ON MAIN STREET: “RESIDENTIAL REVITALIZATION” BUILDS MOMENTUM

Upper-floor Main Street residential restoration in Little Falls is flourishing. Beautiful historic architecture, center city convenience with easy access to shopping and restaurants, and a good commercial district investment climate are driving forces behind this renaissance. What a difference five years and a new anchor grocery store can make!

Many different investment strategies and business plans are moving forward as both natives and newcomers alike sense opportunity. Historic district tax credits provide additional incentive for newer developers to follow in the wake of longtime Main Street landlords like Bob “Moose” Kurzbach and Larry Peruzzi.

Little Falls native Mike Molinaro purchased his 80 West Main Street building in 2013, and with the help of a commercial-district grant, he has transformed his two-story structure into a first-floor Tang Soo Do of Central New York karate studio and a spacious second floor apartment. Molinaro is motivated both by a desire to expand the teaching influence of his karate master and by a sense of community “giveback.”

In 2012 Little Falls native Richard Ruggiero obtained the long-neglected 542-546 East Main Street building that once housed the venerable Kandyland ice cream parlor. The veteran restaurateur has transformed the ground floor into Ruggiero’s Trattoria. Second-floor apartments are ready for occupancy, and work will soon begin on the third floor.

Hudson Valley transplant David Herodes purchased his 576-580 East Main St. four-story building in 2010 and has renovated several upper-floor apartments with the help of a combination grant.

*(continued on page 6)*



Partway through renovations, Gavin Maloney surveys the Little Falls skyline from the second floor of 600 Main Street.

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

Next scheduled meetings:

Monday, September 25  
Monday, October 9  
Monday, October 23  
Monday, November 6  
Monday, November 20  
Monday, December 4  
@ 6:30 pm  
690 East Main Street,  
Little Falls

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

## NEW BUSINESSES ROUNDUP!

Main Street First welcomes the following recently opened/recently relocated local businesses:

Body Siense  
54 West Main St. (relocating)  
(315) 985-8556  
[bodysiense@gmail.com](mailto:bodysiense@gmail.com)  
visit us on Facebook  
*massage therapy, including packages*

Chapter Designs  
Old Barn Marketplace  
Rte. 5 between Little Falls and Herkimer  
(relocating)  
(315) 985-2837  
chapterdesigns.com  
or visit us on Facebook  
*unique home goods*

Joyfuls Vintage Designs  
10 West Main St.  
(315) 542-5135 or (315) 360-6673  
visit us on Facebook  
*custom-made furniture and decor*

Prima Donna's Boutique  
411 Canal Place  
(315) 868-0725  
visit us on Facebook  
*fashion \* jewelry \* home \* resale*

R&J's Pizzeria (reopened)  
612 E. Main Street  
(315) 508-5262  
*pizza, wings, specials \* take out and delivery*

Ruggiero's Tap & Tavern  
Second Street, adjacent to Ruggiero's  
Trattoria & Steakhouse  
(315) 823-1414  
visit us on Facebook  
*full bar, bar menu*



MAIN STREET FIRST, Inc.  
little falls ■ new york

PO Box 65  
Little Falls, NY 13365

## MSF Gazette AUTUMN 2017 Volume 6, Issue 3

**Editor**  
Teri Chace

**Layout/Art Direction**  
David Dardzinski

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

**Photography Credits**  
David Dardzinski, Adrienne Neff,  
Elaine Cobb, Gavin Maloney

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, are also available online at [mainstreetfirst.org](http://mainstreetfirst.org)

Suggestions and contributions (articles and art) are always welcome; please contact someone on the staff or write to [editor@mainstreetfirst.org](mailto:editor@mainstreetfirst.org)

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



## ABOUT LITTLE FALLS: “THINK LOCAL” REFLECTIONS

When Think Local Little Falls launched on Small Business Saturday in 2012, we didn't know how difficult the task ahead would be. Our first “SUPER THIRD THURSDAYS” were held in 2013. Our July event floundered under extreme heat, with one vendor reduced to tears as her chocolate melted. Heavy rains drowned out our October event. By 2014, the committee had lost heart, and merchants were disenchanted with our efforts.

But 2015 found the committee re-energized by the young women who joined us. Our Facebook presence was enhanced, our press releases were expanded, and two events were added to our schedule: a Midsummer Night's Picnic and a Pizza Challenge. What a difference one year had made.

Now in 2017, we find our events exploding! Our June Art Walk attracted 53+ artists at 40 locations and brought, we believe, 1,200 people out to Main Street.

*“Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision, the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.”*

*—Andrew Carnegie*



It has been said that it takes a village; for Think Local it has taken a community:

- ❖ dedicated committee members
- ❖ 80+ engaged Think Local business members
- ❖ a supportive City Government: the Mayor's office, the DPW, the Police and Fire Departments
- ❖ the Sponsorship of the Little Falls City Tourism Committee and the Little Falls Family YMCA
- ❖ a school district that allows us to utilize their backpack program to advertise children's events and whose teachers enrich our events
- ❖ supportive community groups
- ❖ Van Meter & Van Meter, who maintain our Shop Local website, write our grants, and provide endless guidance
- ❖ H&H Accounting and Little Falls Construction, who provide us with inexpensive printing
- ❖ countless individuals behind the scenes who do a myriad of tasks and,
- ❖ the boundless support and encouragement of Main Street First, including their efforts to organize a merchant's group before we emerged as Think Local

Please volunteer to help our efforts. We have numerous tasks, and we promise to find a task that suits both your interests and your time limitations. Contact us on our Think Local Little Falls Facebook page or email us at [contact@mainstreetfirst.org](mailto:contact@mainstreetfirst.org).

*—Elaine Cobb*

*Elaine Cobb is Co-Chair of Think Local Little Falls with Christine Van Meter.*



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





## LOCAL ELECTIONS ARE COMING UP!

**WHO?** YOU

**WHERE?** Holy Family Parish Hall  
763 East Main St., Little Falls

**HOW?** Register to vote. Be informed. Show up.

**WHAT?** VOTE!

**WHEN?** Tuesday, November 7, 2017 from 6 am - 9 pm

**WHY?** It is **YOUR RIGHT AND YOUR DUTY**

You can register online by going to: [www.registertovote.org](http://www.registertovote.org) **OR** in person at:

Herkimer County Board of Election

109 Mary Street, Suite 1306

Herkimer, NY 13350 Phone: (315) 867-1102

The following local races are uncontested: City Clerk, City Treasurer, Ward Representatives. For each ward, you are to choose two people:

**City Clerk:** Kira M. Miller (D)

**City Treasurer:** David M. Petkovsek, (D)

**Ward 1:** Jonathan Shaffer (R) / Jeffery Gressler (Citizen Service Party)

**Ward 2:** Todd Dillon (D) / Justin David Welyczko (D)

**Ward 3:** Mark Ruffing (D) / Nicholas Regan (D)

**Ward 4:** Peter A. Atutis Jr. (D) / Daniel Carter (D)

**Herkimer County Legislator, vote for one:** Kurt Ackerman (R) / Timothy Lyon (D)

**Three statewide ballot measures** were certified to appear on the ballot in New York on November 7, 2017:

**Proposal 1** would call for a constitutional convention to explore proposals for changes to the [state constitution](#).

**Proposal 2** would allow judges to reduce or revoke the state pension of a public officer convicted of a felony related to his or her duties.

**Proposal 3** would create a 250-acre land bank, which would allow local governments to request forest preserve land for projects in exchange for the state acquiring 250 acres for the forest preserves.

Link for more information: [https://ballotpedia.org/New\\_York](https://ballotpedia.org/New_York)

**THINK ABOUT IT!**

**TALK ABOUT IT!**

**VOTE ABOUT IT!**

**Are YOU registered to vote?**

*New registrations due no later than Oct. 13. • Registration for change of address within the county due no later than Oct. 18*

***Voter Registration forms will be available at Sept. 21's "Third Thursday."***

Gavin Maloney LLC  
*Proud sponsor of this newsletter*

New Rental Apartments Available  
600-608 East Main Street  
Little Falls, NY



Quality Construction  
Historic Details  
Green Building Technology

347-703-6986  
template776@yahoo.com  
gavinyoungmaloney.com

# MAYOR AND MAIN STREET FIRST MEET, DISCUSS COOPERATIVE EFFORTS

Little Falls is a city blessed with active citizen volunteers and engaged and responsive government representatives. Each of us has a role to play in making sure Little Falls is a healthy, vibrant community. There are several grassroots, not-for-profit organizations like Main Street First that bring people together around our common passion for Little Falls. These organizations help to channel our collective efforts into community projects – and these projects often overlap and require coordination with the City of Little Falls government.

With so much community engagement and so many great ideas for projects floating around, one of Main Street First's priorities this year is finding ways to make sure we're not duplicating efforts with other organizations or pursuing a path that's out of sync with the City's own agenda, budget, or priorities. If we want to make the most of our available resources – including people's time and energy – it's far better to be coordinated so we're all pulling in the same direction on projects.

The first step in achieving this is open communication. As a major step toward this goal, Main Street First was pleased to welcome Mayor Mark Blask to our July 31 meeting for what was mutually agreed will be just the first conversation in an ongoing dialogue with the City.

*"Coming together is a beginning;  
keeping together is progress;  
working together is success."  
—Henry Ford*

The Mayor started the discussion with an overview of the City and its departments, staff, services, resources, and budget. "My number one job is keeping us fiscally sound," he said, noting some of the realities and challenges the City faces and the creativity and cooperation required to achieve this goal. He went on to discuss current areas of focus, including urban renewal, Vets Park improvements, shared services discussions with surrounding communities, flood recovery, and the master plan.

He also graciously acknowledged the work of organizations like Main Street First, Rotary, Preserve Our Past, the Beautification Committee, and others, and the countless volunteer hours and effort that go into creating community events and projects. In discussing how the City works with these various organizations and responds to requests for City involvement and support, he described his administration's approach as one of "How do we get to yes?"

Council member Justin Welyczko also attended the meeting and actively participated in brainstorming about potential projects and City needs. Mayor Blask assigned Welyczko as MSF's liaison for project-specific discussions and coordination with the City. It would appear based on this very positive meeting that Main Street First's goal of improving communication and coordination with the City is well under way!

*—Judy Wolf*

*Judy Wolf is President of Main Street First.*



MSF Clubhouse -  
690 E Main Street

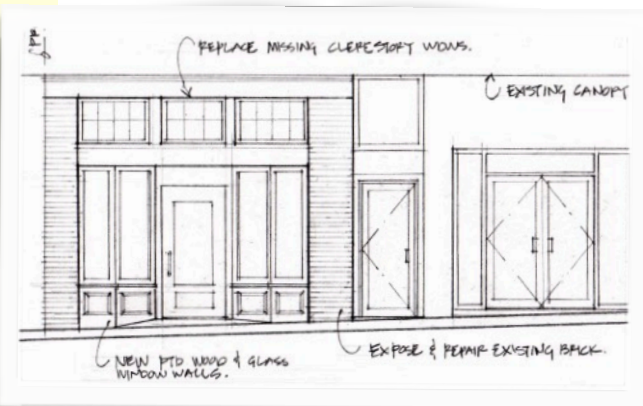


# MAIN STREET RESIDENTIAL REVITALIZATION

(continued from page 1)



Before and after images of the new apartment on the second floor at 584 Main Street.



Proposal to return storefronts to the style of the original designs.

He has two solid ground-floor tenants where Carpeneti's Barber Shop was once located and will continue with additional upper-floor renovations over time.

In 2013 Philadelphia native and Preserve Our Past president David Dardzinski gained ownership of his four-story 582-586 East Main Street building, where Goldstein's Men's Shop was once located. He lives with his family in a restored second-floor apartment and is hard at work restoring other upper-floor apartments. Ground-floor commercial development is also being planned.

Gavin Maloney was drawn to Little Falls by its physical beauty, historic architecture, and friendliness. Maloney purchased his three-story 600-08 East Main Street building in 2014. He has solid first-floor commercial tenants where Bride's Cigar Store and poolroom once thrived, and is well along with quality second- and third-floor apartment restorations.

Main Street residential restoration has presented unique challenges to each of these developers: A common concern expressed is the lack of space for year-round tenant parking, and most support alternate-side winter parking along Main St.

Main Street residential restoration is part of a broader struggle that Little Falls faces with deteriorated housing stock as we continue to seek a brighter future as a walkable and sustainable community.

—Jeffrey Gressler

"If you aren't a city where people want to live, you aren't a city where businesses want to invest."  
—Mayor Ron Littlefield of Chattanooga, Tennessee

# UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER 2017

- ❖ Saturdays, 8 am to noon. Little Falls Farmers' Market. M&T Bank parking lot. For more information, please visit and "friend" the Facebook page, LF FarmersMarket.
- ❖ Thursday, 9/21. "Third Thursday" featuring the Annual Pizza Challenge. A \$5 ticket will get you a party-size slice of pizza at each of our five pizza shops, a bite-size dessert at Il Caffe, and one vote for the best pizza in Little Falls. New this year: a "Dance Your Pizza Off" Block party (Main Street will be barricaded off from Second Street to Ann Street, 5 to 8:30 pm). Kids' challenges, prizes, dances with celebrities, bring your own vinyl records, request a song. \$1 donation for dances, special requests—all donations support MVCA (Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts). Free movie, "Emoji," at 7 pm. Please visit [shoplittlerefallsny.com](http://shoplittlerefallsny.com) or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for full details.
- ❖ Friday, 9/22, 5 to 8 pm, Little Falls Marina. The Cruise Inn will be hosting their last show of the year with fireworks at dark (raindate, Saturday, 9/23).
- ❖ Tuesday, 9/26, 7 pm. Little Falls Historical Society meeting, WCA, 534 Garden St. Free, everyone welcome.

## OCTOBER 2017

- ❖ Saturdays, 8 am to noon. Little Falls Farmers' Market. M&T Bank parking lot. For more information, please visit and "friend" the Facebook page, LF FarmersMarket.
- ❖ Tuesday, 10/3. 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall.
- ❖ Wednesday, 10/4, 7 to 8:30 pm. "Downtown Revival," presented by national planning expert Mark Fenton. Learn how you can help bring back downtown and strengthen the social fabric of your community. Travelodge, 20 Albany St.
- ❖ Saturday, 10/7. MVCA will kick off its 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Art Giveaway. Pieces will be on display at the Gallery through Saturday, 11/18. Tickets will be available at the Arts Center.
- ❖ Saturday, 10/7, 6:30 pm. Open Mic Night, Ole Sal's. Free. For more information or to sign up for a 15-minute performance spot, please visit [Ole Sal's Open Mic Night](#) Facebook page.
- ❖ Sunday, 10/15, noon to 3 pm. "Blues & BBQ" fundraiser for Little Falls Community Outreach, Burke Park. Advance food tickets are \$12/\$15 at the door; children under 5, free. Chicken BBQ by "Two Fat Italian Guys Catering," music by Tim Iversen and friends. Silent auctions, drawings, and a bounce house for the kids. For more information, call [823-1409](tel:823-1409).
- ❖ Thursday, 10/19. "Third Thursday" Oktoberfest, with great food and drink specials, live music by the Fulton Chain Gang, a Zombie race, pumpkin bowling, face-painting & more! Please visit [shoplittlerefallsny.com](http://shoplittlerefallsny.com) or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for details.
- ❖ Thursday, 10/19, 6:30 to 8 pm. 401 Gallery, MVCA. Third Thursday Coffee House, featuring the beautiful music of the saxophone quartet Praxis Saxes. Suggested donation of \$5 at the door is appreciated to benefit the musicians.
- ❖ Saturday, 10/21, 2 to 4 pm. 401 Gallery, MVCA. Presentation and book-signing event by (retired) Dr. John S. Davis. His newly released coffee-table book on the prestigious history of Bassett Hospital is fascinating.
- ❖ Saturday, 10/28, 1:30 to 4:30 pm. Local poet James Fahy will do a book signing and readings from his new book of poetry, "In the Hush." MVCA 401 Gallery.
- ❖ Saturday, 10/28, 7 pm. Little Falls Historical Society meeting, WCA, 534 Garden St. Free, everyone welcome.

## NOVEMBER 2017

- ❖ Sunday, 11/2, 3 pm, Holy Family Parish. The Syracuse University Brass Ensemble returns for its annual Holiday Concert to benefit MVCA. Tickets are \$10 and all proceeds go to the Art Center.
- ❖ Friday to Sunday, 11/3 to 11/5, First Presbyterian Church, 16 Jackson St. MVCA and the Church will present the creative community artwork for children of all ages in an "Upcycled Robot Art Show." Kids and adults are encouraged to save their recycled "treasures" to fashion into creative robotic figures. Details of times will be announced soon.
- ❖ Tuesday, 11/7. 7 pm. Monthly Common Council meeting. Little Falls City Hall.
- ❖ Saturday, 11/4. 6:30 pm. Open Mic Night, Ole Sal's. Free. For more information or to sign up for a 15-minute performance spot, please visit [Ole Sal's Open Mic Night](#) Facebook page.
- ❖ Thursday, 11/16. "Third Thursday." "Give thanks, give back, get deals." Please visit [shoplittlerefallsny.com](http://shoplittlerefallsny.com) or the Think Local Little Falls Facebook page for details.
- ❖ Saturday, 11/18, 2 to 4 pm. 401 Gallery, MVCA. 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Art Giveaway Reception and Auction. Last chance to purchase tickets for your favorite pieces of art (Chinese Auction). Drawing will be held at 3 pm.
- ❖ Saturday, 11/18, "Igniting the Creative Spirit," the Little Falls Public Library's annual fundraiser. Meet and mingle with local authors and renowned local painter Bob Willman. Beardslee Manor, Rte. 5 east of Little Falls. Author seminar, 4 to 5 pm; cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, 5 to 7 pm. Tickets: \$35 in advance. \$38 at the door. Tickets will be available at the Little Falls Public Library. For more information or to reserve, please contact [peggyscarano1@hotmail.com](mailto:peggyscarano1@hotmail.com).
- ❖ Tuesday, 11/28, 7 pm. Little Falls Historical Society meeting, WCA 534 Garden St. Free, everyone welcome.



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

- ❖ Strengthen our relationship with the City, and with other not-for-profits
- ❖ Help coordinate community action to flight blight in our neighborhoods
- ❖ Collaborate on maximizing the Explore Little Falls NY initiative
- ❖ Explore partnerships with other not-for-profits

## MSF'S LONG-TERM GOALS

- ❖ Support the development and implementation of a sustainability-based comprehensive plan
- ❖ Expand and engage our membership, especially young adults
- ❖ Find and pursue grant opportunities for projects aligned with MSF's purposes
- ❖ Hold educational community sessions on topics of interest that are aligned with MSF's purposes

To receive a copy of this quarterly newsletter electronically, please send your request to:  
[gazette@mainstreetfirst.org](mailto:gazette@mainstreetfirst.org)

*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.*



## 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:  
[contact@mainstreetfirst.org](mailto:contact@mainstreetfirst.org)  
Visit our website at:  
[mainstreetfirst.org](http://mainstreetfirst.org)

Facebook:  
“like” the Main Street First page  
“like” the Think Local Little Falls page

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH SOMEONE

PLEASE RECYCLE, DON'T LITTER!

