



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.
- * Work with the City to establish an improved climbing-permit process for Moss Island.
- * Participate in two KMVB events: The Great American Cleanup and the Litter Inventory.

MSF'S LONG-TERM GOALS

- * Continue to expand and improve the "Think Local Little Falls" venture.
- * Position MSF as a strong partner with 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 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: Dealing with the Crisis in Our City Neighborhoods

We now have a number, a point of beginning.

A recently completed citywide inventory of badly deteriorated and vacant houses reveals a city with a housing crisis. No buildings were entered; determinations were made solely on building exteriors.

The inventory suggests that no fewer than 146 houses are in need of either extensive repair or complete demolition.

As many as 95 houses were determined to be either vacant or abandoned. At least 15 of these buildings probably need to be demolished.

Former residents are often shocked by the condition of our neighborhoods. City government can ill-afford multiple demolitions; losing more properties to neglect is no answer.

A program of incentives and the right owners committed to property

refurbishment could help bring back our neighborhoods. Low-interest bank loans, state and federal housing grants and a period of no property tax increases as repairs progress could be part of the answer. Contractors could bid on multiple repair contracts; this *continued on p. 3*

MSF PROJECT UPDATE: Moss Island's Composting Toilet

In our last issue, we told you about a foundation that donated \$50,000 for the construction and maintenance of a composting toilet facility on Moss Island. We are pleased to announce that construction is now complete!

It is located at the base of the rocks, near the climbing area.

The facility is currently closed while winter lingers, but an official opening, dedication, and ribbon cutting event is planned for

Friday, April 25 at 2 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Main Street First worked closely with the city's Board of Public Works to make this project happen.

Rob Richard

COMING TO TERMS: KMVB, Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful

Main Street First is now a member of Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful (KMVB).

KMVB, a six-county private not-for-profit, works to create sustainable communities that are socially connected, environmentally healthy, and economically sound.

KMVB represents the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council target area: the counties of Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, and Schoharie.

KMVB works to create or preserve jobs through sustainable practices, and individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for producing attractive stable communities for the good of all.

KMVB uses its extensive network of individuals, citizen action groups like Main Street First, service organizations, governments, and business partners to meet its goals.

KMVB is a standing committee of the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District under the Economic Development Administration and the United States

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

Next scheduled meetings:

Monday, March 24
Monday, April 7
Monday, April 21
Monday, May 5
@ 6:30 pm

690 Main Street, Little Falls

(For more details about our group, please see the back

Keep America Beautiful, KMVB's parent national organization, is the country's leading nonprofit that brings people together to build and sustain vibrant communities.

With a strong national network of affiliates and partners, KAB works with millions of volunteers who take action in their communities. KAB offers programs and engages in public-private partnerships that help create clean, beautiful public places. The goals are to reduce waste and increase recycling while educating generations of environmental stewards--all for the purpose of regional sustainable economic development.

There is no limit to the potential to advance communities like Little Falls through KMVB. By working on common projects and recording volunteer hours, KMVB can bring national partners and grant dollars to municipalities like ours.

This is the time for service organizations and civic-minded individuals to join the network and leverage their own efforts for greater local benefit. For more, please visit www.KAB.org.

Local note: Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful's "Great American Cleanup" will be from April 1 through May 31, 2014.

Robert Albrecht, Chair, KMVB Board of Directors, 605rja@gmail.com



ing you feel overwhelmed and powerless.
Involved you feel the sense of hope and
at comes from knowing you are working to
" Maya Angelou

BRAINSTORMING: Dealing with the Crisis in Our City Neighborhoods (continued from p. 1)

would help keep repair costs down.

Residents, City government, banks and industry all have a stake. Everyone benefits from increased property values and additional property tax revenue. No one benefits from falling property values. Our individual and collective quality of life is at risk.

Stressed properties contribute to stressed families. Our schools and government services feel the impact. A number of other upstate towns and cities mirror our situation.

We need to create the proper stimulus. Ongoing commercial and industrial expansion promises more jobs. Area nanotech and government drone contracts and jobs will bring an educated workforce within commuting distance of our community. This workforce needs good housing.

We cannot wring our hands and hope for a better outcome. Addressing this housing crisis is perhaps our greatest challenge. Future generations will judge us poorly if we fail to take action against this slow-motion housing crisis.

Future articles will expand upon possible solutions to this problem.

Jeffrey Gressler

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

MARCH

- * Tuesday, 3/18, 6:30 pm, Mohawk Valley Center for the Arts, Canal Place. KMVB presentation by Bob Albrecht. Public welcome; sponsored by POP.
- * Thursday, 3/20. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. (Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the "Think Local Little Falls" Facebook page for full details.)
- * Friday, 3/28 and Saturday, 3/29, 7:30 pm. Little Falls High School spring play, "Damn Yankees."

Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful's "Great American Cleanup," April 1 - May 31.

APRIL

- * Tuesday, 4/1. Monthly Common Council meeting at 7 pm, Little Falls City Hall.
- * Saturday, 4/5, 7:30 pm. Little Falls Has Talent, presented by the Little Falls Rotary Club, Benton Hall Auditorium. Proceeds benefit the Little Falls Rotary Scholarship Fund.
- * Thursday, 4/17. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. (Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the "Think Local Little Falls" Facebook page for full details.)
- * Tuesday, 4/22 (subject to change). Projected Grand Opening of Price Chopper market, Shopper's Square.
- * Friday, 4/25, 2 pm. Dedication and Grand Opening of the Composting Toilet on Moss Island. Public invited.
- * Friday, April 25th through Sunday, 4/27. 9th Annual Canal Clean Sweep. For details, please visit <http://www.ptny.org/canalway/sweep/>

MAY

- * Tuesday, 5/6. Monthly Common Council meeting at 7 pm, Little Falls City Hall.
- * Thursday, 5/15. "Third Thursday" at participating area businesses. (Please visit www.shoplittlefallsny.com or the "Think Local Little Falls" Facebook page for full details.)