

Viewpoints

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THIS NEWSLETTER IS COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY THE MIDDLEPORT COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL. IT IS THE EXPRESS INTENT OF THE CAP TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS OF MIDDLEPORT CREDIBLE INFORMATION REGARDING COMMUNITY ISSUES, FMC PLANT ACTIVITIES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS.

The Middleport Community Advisory Panel - CAP

By Pastor Andy Pollock

In the Spring of 1998, the Middleport Community Advisory Panel, or CAP, began as a group of Middleport area neighbors concerned with the well being and growth of the area. The CAP was initiated by FMC and a few community leaders to build a relationship focused upon the interests and betterment of area citizens and businesses.

CAP members are parents, grandparents, business owners, politicians, village and town officials, law enforcement officials, fire service officials, clergy, school administrators, teachers, Roy-Hart students, and FMC staff.

The intent of the CAP is to be an active agent in addressing the concerns of Middleport residents. We have taken a leading role in informing residents

about the Roy-Hart schoolyard remediation process. With the same commitment and concerns for the Middleport area, the CAP is now shifting focus in order to offer information

about the plans and intentions of a new group - Grassroots-Middleport.

Articles in this issue of Viewpoints will inform you of their plans for the buildings burned in the July 24 fire in Middleport. They include information about the Long Range Development Plan for Middleport, and future long-range plans for the canal front.

Of course, we will continue to bring you information

about the schoolyard restoration project.

As members of the Middleport CAP, we will serve area residents by sharing information that affects us where we live.



Andy Pollock and Herb Koenig (above) meet monthly with other CAP members to discuss issues related to Middleport, to plan articles in "Viewpoints" and to address questions and concerns from residents.

Questions and answers about Grassroots - Middleport



GRASSROOTS - MIDDLEPORT MEMBERS BEGAN MEETING IN SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS WAYS TO SAVE THE BUILDINGS DAMAGED IN MIDDLEPORT'S JULY 24 FIRE. THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WERE POSED BY THE CAP TO MEMBERS OF GRASSROOTS. THE ANSWERS EXPLAIN THE GRASSROOT'S GOALS AND THEIR PLANS FOR REACHING THOSE GOALS. ANY FURTHER INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE BY CONTACTING ANNE HOLAHAN AT 735-9149 OR DAVID STOCKTON AT 735-9887.

HOW AND WHY DID GRASSROOTS - MIDDLEPORT GET STARTED?

While attending a downtown car show in early September, David Stockton, a new Middleport resident, inquired about the future of the buildings. He heard that they were likely to be torn down as the Village did not have the funds to save them.

Stockton expressed his concerns to a neighbor, Anne Holahan, a life-long Middleport resident. The pair agreed to try to rally interest in preserving the building facades.

They contacted neighbors, business owners and concerned citizens and scheduled a meeting to discuss what could be done.

WHY IS GRASSROOTS - MIDDLEPORT DOING THIS?

These Middleport residents saw a precious historical resource, part of its canal town charm, about to be lost. They were compelled to try to do something to save them. Win, lose or draw, they felt it necessary to at least try.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS?

The short-term goals are to acquire and structurally stabilize

17 Main Street and possibly 2 State Street until long-range plans and funding are in place.

Long-term goals are to preserve these buildings, maintaining the historical integrity of their facades, and make them available for successful businesses that will benefit our community.



Grassroots - Middleport sees many opportunities for the Village to grow and develop by taking advantage of the growth of canal tourism, which is expected to be New York State's biggest industry in the future.

WHERE WILL THE MONEY COME FROM?

The money will come from government agencies, charitable foundations, private donations and local fund raising activities.

It is important that residents know that no Village tax dollars will be spent.

WHO WILL OWN THE BUILDING(S)?

The not-for-profit organization called Grassroots - Middleport has been incorporated to be the pass through agency or caretaker of the property until the long-range plans have been formulated.

Grassroots will retain ownership for the period of time it takes to reach our goals. In these early stages of the project, it is not known who will buy the buildings for commercial use.

IS THIS INITIATIVE JUST FOCUSED ON THESE BUILDINGS, OR IS THERE A LONG-RANGE PLAN?

The project is in the beginning stages of creating a comprehensive development plan of the Village business district.

Establishing a local Village historical charter or ordinance to re-establish the appearance of the Village from a by-gone era will be a start.

Working together, we would like to turn the tragic consequences of the July 24 fire into a revitalized downtown with its future rooted in its canal side beginnings.

Yes, Middleport does have a plan

By Julie Maedl
CAP Member
Trustee, Village of Middleport



When you read in the newspapers about grant monies that have been awarded to communities, especially canal communities, each grant has one component that is critical to the success of that funding process. That important component is - A PLAN. Without a plan, applying for substantial funds isn't possible.

The Village of Middleport applied for and received a 50/50 matching funds grant from the New York Department of State under the Environmental Protection Fund Program. This grant will fund the planning needed to advance the development of a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, or LWRP.

Just as the commerce on the early Erie Canal helped build the Village, so will the current industry, tourism, help rebuild Middleport's economy in the new millennium. The LWRP plan, which will drive this forward, is in the beginning stages.

There is a process for writing this plan. It includes public hearings and the formation of an Advisory Committee. This committee will be the direct link with the Village and the engineering firm of Wendel Design.

The LWRP will be prepared to meet established professional standards as well as the requirements of the New York Department of State.

Professional planners

from the firm of Wendel are handling the technical scope of services for Middleport's plan. It includes the following tasks: identify boundaries; inventory and analysis; develop policies for management of the plan and proposed land and water uses; develop techniques for implementation of the program, state actions and programs, local commitment and consultation; prepare program reports; organize public participation, mapping, meetings and schedules.

The leadership of the Village is committed to this project and has an active part in the LWRP. This plan focuses clearly on the needs and proposed projects for addressing these needs for the Village and surrounding towns of Hartland and Royalton.

It is imperative that the nature of the Village, the essence of tranquility and friendliness, be maintained. Middleport is not looking to become a major commercialized port along the canal way. The people who live and work here are the people who have kept the Village alive and viable. The goal is to entice people who visit here to relocate to our area,

bring their businesses with them, and become active participants in our community.

*Simply put,
having a plan
is the key
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redevelopment.*



Nearly 1,500 boaters stopped in Middleport last year to enjoy the park-like landing area and to take advantage of the electrical, lavatory and shower facilities on the canal bank.

Through good planning and strong community involvement, this LWRP will be a catalyst to our redevelopment. It will help create opportunities to apply for future grants needed to reach the goals set forth in the plan.

Simply put, having a plan is the key to obtaining funding for redevelopment.

Middleport is in the midst of that planning process.

Viewpoints

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Inside Viewpoints

Grassroots - Middleport
Middleport's Long Range Plan
A look back at Middleport

A look back

Compiled by Sharon Smith with assistance from Anna Wallace,
Historian, Royalton Historical Society

The fire of July 24 prompted questions: How old is the Village? What businesses were in the buildings? Who owned them in the past? Here is a look back at the buildings that burned this summer.

Prior to November 1878, the structures from 17 Main Street around to State Street were wood. On November 30, 1878 these structures burned and were rebuilt only to burn again on January 23, 1879. The buildings were reconstructed of brick by John Lennon, a mason in Lockport, in October of 1879.

2 State Street was a pub called Whalen's White Elephant. Around 1941, George and Josephine Laub took the building over and opened Laub's Tavern. They held a farewell chicken dinner for



Frank Secore, Laverne Miller, and Ronald Harpuder before the men left to serve in WW II. In the 1960's the Laub's sold the property to Robert and Claire Allen. The Allen's called the new business Plowy's Restaurant: Plowy was Bob's nickname. In 1990, Gerald Jacob's bought the building, where Fatty's Pizza presently operates.

17 Main Street was a hardware store from the beginning. In an 1879 newspaper article it was known as Dan VanBroucklin's Hardware. VanBroucklin operated a hardware store on that same site before the 1878 fire making it one of the earliest businesses on Main Street. In 1905 it was Arza Sherwood Hardware. From 1912-1916 it was Sherwood and Snell Hardware, and later Snell Brothers Hardware. By 1946 it became Snell Hardware: Gordon Jones Proprietor. Of course, up until the most recent fire it was known to all of us as Jones Hardware.