



The Allentown Neighbor

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What will the new Allen Street look like?

*Planners expect to know by October,
and break ground in just 15 months*

By **RICHARD R. HAYNES**

Groundbreaking could begin on the Allen Street Extension and Improvement Project in as little as 15 months.

The project will transform the look of Allentown's main thoroughfare and provide a better link to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus with a bicycle-and-pedestrian path from Main Street to Oak Street.

At this stage, Allen Street's new look is undecided. Will it be one-way with bicycle lanes? Will bus stops be eliminated, adding several more parking spots? Will it be curbless as in some European cities, allowing flexibility in vehicle and pedestrian access? Planners are still gathering public input, doing technical surveys, and considering options.

But the timetable is ambitious: Meetings, surveys and
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The Association's 2010 'Allen Street Reimagined' study by architect and board member Adam Sokol showed the curbless 'shared space' concept seen in some European cities. Even if it's too radical for Buffalo, some elements of it could be incorporated into Allen's redesign.

People tell what they like about the street, what needs improvement

Here's what neighborhood residents and stakeholders like best about Allen Street: Its vibrant commerce, street festivals, nightlife, its sense of history, its architecture, creative culture and art galleries.

Here's what they see as its biggest problems: Insufficient pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, insufficient street parking, and aging infrastructure.

That information comes out of a survey from its first month of posting on www.allenstreetextension.com

and answered by 182 people as of Feb. 11 – far more respondents than planners had expected. The survey was to stay up until Feb. 25, and Tanya Moozo Zwahlen of Highland Planning said she was hoping for 300 respondents by then.

"It is very clear that this neighborhood is beloved," said Kelly M. Thompson of Bergmann Associates, the engineering and architectural design firm leading the Allen Street Extension and Improvement Project.

Asked about traffic flow, only 5% think it goes "well," 64% thought it was "good" or "fair," about 30% thought "not well."

A traffic study by planners of the Allen Street Extension and Improvement Project shows that a moderate 4,500 vehicles a day traverse the street, moving on average at 20 to 21 m.p.h., but at just 9 to 12 m.p.h. after taking stop lights into consideration. That probably indicates that Allen itself is a destination for many drivers,

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Neighborhood news notes

New events pondered for First Fridays

The Greater Allentown Gallery Association is looking to add a few new elements to its popular Allentown First Fridays programming. That could mean featuring outdoor sculptures made of bicycle parts for a GObike Buffalo cycling event; holding a first-ever art parade, perhaps during Infringement Festival; having a Teddy Roosevelt re-enactor engaging people on the street during an event at the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site, and collaborating with Mark Goldman on a mural project. Details will be posted on www.firstfridaysallentown.com. GAGA, which operates with sponsorship of the Allentown Association, received a \$2,920 grant this year from the New York State Council on Arts, which is less than it had hoped for, but still has \$3,000 in reserve funds.

Expect some new vendors at Allen West

The Association's Allen West Festival isn't until June 14-15, but committee chair Gretchan Grobe and Executive Director Andrew Earnhardt are already deep into work on it. They're working on city permits and lining up sponsors. In January they sent applications to previous food, art and craft vendors, and received several back. Some great new vendors have applied, too. Allen West is staged on Allen and Wadsworth streets from Elmwood to Hudson the same weekend as the Allentown Art Festival.

Spring trash collections set

The spring bulk trash collection schedule is out. Allentown is divided among three Council districts and each has a different collection date. The dates listed here are Sundays; the pickups will be sometime that week.

• **Ellicott, April 6.** (Streets are Orton, St. John's, Hudson, Plymouth, the eastern half of Symphony Circle and parts of North, Wadsworth and Pennsylvania.)

• **Niagara, April 27.** (Streets are part of Pennsylvania and the western half of Symphony Circle.)

• **Fillmore, June 8.** (All the other streets of the neighborhood.)

Trash piles can be as big as 12 feet long, 3 feet wide and 3 feet high. There'll be a second round of trash collections in the autumn. And you can always put out up to two bulk trash items every garbage day, and arrange for special collections by calling 851-5570.

Also, you can drop off up to four tires (clean, off rims) at the Broadway Garage, 197 Broadway, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 27, June 1, Aug. 3 and Sept. 14.

This year's household hazardous waste drop-off day is June 22, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Honeywell, 20 Peabody St. in South Buffalo. Oil-based paints, solvents, pesticides and electronics such as TVs, computers and printers will be accepted.

Ciminelli takes long view in acquisitions

Ciminelli Real Estate Corp. has an agreement to purchase the EPIC building at 1000 Main St. for \$2.1 million and is discussing possible purchase of the adjacent Salvation Army property.

The two non-profits are in the northwest corner of Allentown, across Main Street from Ciminelli's \$100 million Conventus building project on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. EPIC, a child-welfare agency, is to remain on site on a lease for at least seven years.

The Salvation Army put its four-building complex on the market last June, seeking proposals that would include a replacement property at a new location. The Salvation Army board was "looking at the values in the neighborhood and questioning if it was the right time to monetize that asset given the rising values," Ciminelli Executive Vice President Dennis Penman told The Buffalo News.

The developer has no specific plans for either building, but Penman sees both as being linked to the BNMC and Conventus, with the potential for housing and retail space.

Association partnering with PBN

Preservation Buffalo Niagara and the Allentown Association are cooperating on several important initiatives:

- Cosponsoring seminars on historic preservation tax credits (details to be announced).
- Jointly promoting and sharing revenues from tours such as last year's Allentown Literary Ghost Tour.
- Jointly lobbying for a law to add fines by building inspectors and Housing Court to property tax bills so that they cannot ultimately be evaded.
- And working to improve staffing and operations of the Buffalo Preservation Board.



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Home values up in Allentown

But not many homes come onto the market

By **RICHARD R. HAYNES**

Home values continue to rise in Allentown, according to data from the Buffalo Niagara Association of Realtors, as more and more people see the allure of city living.

"Everyone wants to be in the Elmwood Village or Allentown," said Susan Lenahan, a broker at MJ Peterson Real Estate.

The median sales price of a single-family home or condo in Allentown rose \$43,800 last year to \$191,800, compared with a countywide median \$135,000, the BNAR says. For 2-3-4 unit homes, the Allentown median price was \$247,500, compared to \$73,000 countywide.

Sales numbers are very low, however. Realtors sold only 18 singles and 8 doubles or multiples in the neighborhood last year, making it easy for one or two sales at the top or bottom to skew statistics.

"There's not enough inventory," Lenahan said.

Anya Wright of Nothnagle Realtors agreed. Allentown homes last year sold on average after only 66 days on the market, compared to typical 80-to-90 days or more elsewhere. "Part of the reason homes sell quick is due to the consistent low inventory of homes for sale in the neighborhood," she said.

One reason so few Allentown homes come onto the market may be that residents love the neighborhood and don't want to move.

Another is that elderly homeowners with limited resources sometimes feel stuck, not realizing they could sell even if their house needs repairs.

"I see this all the time," Lenahan said. "They don't want to spend \$10,000 on a new roof. Then there's a leak and \$5,000 in interior damage. What did they accomplish?" If they can't afford repairs, they're better off putting the house on the market and selling it to someone who has money to fix it, she said.

Rising home prices mean people can invest in home improvements and feel confident they'll get the money back when they sell.

Take 170 Mariner St. for example. It had been a rooming house that got turned into a single and then into a double. It sold in 2002 for \$160,000; in 2005 for \$297,000, and last year for \$388,000.

The current owner estimates the house has had about \$150,000 put into over the past 10 years. Obviously, that investment has paid off, not only for the homeowners who improved the property, but for the neighborhood as well.

Similarly, consider 74 Mariner St., a single that sold for \$20,000 in distressed condition in 2004 and then underwent extensive renovation. It sold last May for \$230,000, and



170 Mariner St., a double, sold for \$388,000 last year.

then went on the market again this January at an asking price of \$269,900 and sold immediately.

Another factor making renovations pay off is the 20% state income tax credits payable for approved work on homes in historic preservation districts such as Allentown. Go to www.nysparks.com/shpo for details.

Even though such work will increase the value of a house, it won't cause an immediate jump in tax assessment. Under the city's historic property partial tax exemption program, any increase in assessment resulting from rehabilitation work is phased in gradually over 10 years.

For more information, contact the Department of Assessment and Taxation at 851-5733.

Lenahan expects the upward price trend to continue, partly due to growth of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. By the end of 2016 it will have 5,000 more employees plus students at the new UB Medical School.

Many of them will want to live nearby. For Allentown, that should mean more residential and business growth.

NOTE: Data in this story and accompanying chart reflect only sales by Realtors through the Multiple Listing System. "For sale by owner" transactions, tax sales or other property transfers are not included. Also, BNAR's Allentown category is not exactly co-terminus with the historic district.

Median Prices Singles/Condos

Year	Price	Sales
2013	\$191,800	18
2012	\$148,000	17
2011	\$129,000	21

Median Prices 2-3-4 Unit Homes

Year	Price	Sales
2013	\$247,500	8
2012	\$140,250	18
2011	\$129,000	12



Association's traditional Spring Dinner is April 29

The Allentown Association's annual Spring Dinner is an opportunity for members get an update on what's happening in the neighborhood and to meet fellow Allentowners in a casual, friendly venue.

It will be held Tuesday, April 29, in Hamlin House Restaurant in Troop I Post American Legion, 432 Franklin St. Cash bar opens at 6 p.m.; dinner service begins at 7.

Tickets are \$25 and are payable at the door, but reservations are neces-

sary. Please leave a message at 881-1024 with your name, contact information and number of tickets needed.

Last year, to celebrate the Association's 50th anniversary, the dinner was held in Coco's by LeMetro, 888 Main St. Many members commented that they enjoyed the format there, where guests could go to the buffet and dine at their leisure rather than be called to the buffet table by table.

The same format is planned at Hamlin House this year to provide a

more informal atmosphere that encourages attendees to mingle with more guests rather than just those seated at their table. It also makes it easier for people to arrive a little late or leave early without disrupting dining.

The Association is happy to be back at Hamlin House, its traditional event venue, but plans to move the dinner in alternate years to different locations in order to add variety and excitement to the experience.

Association adopts \$89,600 budget for 2014

Allentown Association directors in January approved a 2014 budget totaling \$89,600.

That's up from about \$77,200 spent by the Association in 2013.

The increase reflects higher spending in a few key areas – \$2,000 more for beautification; \$1,000 more for First Fridays promotions and activities; \$6,000 more in administration costs, mostly due to increasing the part-time executive director's work week to 20 hours from 15 hours; \$450 more for housing and historic preservation efforts, and \$2,000 more to ramp-up membership campaigns.

It also includes funding some new initiatives – \$10,000 to stage a family-friendly Harvest Festival in October; \$500 to \$1,000 for business relations affairs; \$1,000 to begin offering

neighborhood tours; \$1,000 for Allen Street Extension and Improvement activities, and \$6,000 for advertising to give the Association and the neighborhood a higher public profile.

On the revenue side, although the Association receives no government operating funds, the 2014 budget does anticipate \$8,000 in foundation and public-sector grants, double the 2013 amount.

Nearly \$7,000 more in membership dues is anticipated.

Other new revenues include more than \$7,500 in expected corporate sponsorships for events such as the Harvest Festival and Allen West Festival; \$1,400 more in newsletter and website advertising; \$3,000 from neighborhood tours, and \$10,000 from Harvest Festival fees.

Operating revenues and expenses of the Association's major fundraiser – the Allen West Festival – are expected to be about the same as last year, netting about \$20,000.

At the end of 2013, the Association had about \$43,000 in cash accounts and about \$70,000 in investment accounts. There is also \$117,000 in endowment funds restricted by the by-laws for emergencies, for investments in revenue-producing endeavors or for preserving neighborhood historic structures.

The Association also administers a fund from a settlement with National Fuel to pay for grants to homeowners in the city's local preservation districts to camouflage outdoor gas meters. About \$19,500 remains in that account.

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Upscale restaurant set for former Cozumel site



An architectural design of the new Black Swan Lounge.

The Black Swan Lounge is scheduled to open in June as an “upscale restaurant and lounge” at 153 Elmwood Ave., the former Cozumel site, according to Brian Lester and his wife Monique, owners of the new business who have a long-term lease for the property.

Exterior changes include repointing the brick façade, repair and replacement of wood trim and windows, a new concrete patio, a new steel and aluminum fence and glass vestibule.

The Buffalo Preservation Board approved the plan at its Feb. 14 meeting.

The effort will be “to beautify and preserve” the structure, Brian Lester said. He is a co-owner of Vera Pizzeria, 220 Lexington Ave.

The new business will not have dancing or a live band but may offer soft recorded or piano music, Monique Lester said.

Association’s goals: Get stronger, increase services to neighborhood

The Allentown Association's ambitious list of goals and priorities for the year are aimed at strengthening the organization and ramping-up activities on behalf of the neighborhood.

New initiatives include:

- Establishing semiannual meetings with block clubs to discuss common concerns relating to crime, property maintenance and city services.
- Holding business mixers with merchants to keep them informed and to hear their ideas and concerns.
- Improving relationships and communications with peer organizations such as the Elmwood Village Association, Linwood Preservation Association, West Village Association and Hispanics United, and working with Preservation Buffalo Niagara to try to establish of Council of Historic Neighborhoods.
- Bulking up the Association’s working committees so that each has at least four members, drawing on the Association's general membership for greater involvement. Crafting a five-year strategic plan.

Other priorities build on or aim to complete initiatives started last year, including:

- Updating and enhancing the Association's website.
- Increasing membership by 150 over two years.
- Strengthening preservation efforts by co-sponsoring some seminars for property owners on tax credits and restoration rules; by having representatives appear in housing court, at Planning Board and Preservation Board meetings when necessary, and by continuing to identify problem properties and work with owners to fix them or call in building inspectors when necessary.

All this is in addition to what the Association normally does: Meeting with police on crime problems; sponsoring the very successful Allentown First Fridays; planting flowers, paying for hanging baskets and promoting the Litter Mob; working with elected officials on neighborhood needs – especially the all-important Allen Street Improvement Project – and promoting the neighborhood to media and tourism entities.



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Association has members on technical advisory committee

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planning from now until September; a public hearing on final designs in October; construction bids going out in April 2015; groundbreaking in June 2015.

John Bidell, the city engineer assigned to the project, said that before the June groundbreaking, he expects water, sewer, gas and electric utilities to dig to improve the street's aging underground infrastructure.

The planning team, headed by engineer Kelly M. Thompson of Bergmann Associates, already has done a traffic study, an aerial photo survey and base mapping. Next comes ground surveys, environmental testing, pedestrian and bicycle traffic studies, and an analysis of how changes on Allen could affect nearby street such as Virginia and North.

There's already been a considerable amount of outreach to the public, with more to come.

A team from Highland Planning under Tanya Moozo Zwahlen interviewed 34 Allen Street merchants about current conditions and design preferences.

The website www.allenstreetextension.com went online to keep people informed about the project. Through February, the site contained an online survey to solicit public input.

Public's top priorities: bike racks, crosswalks

Continued from Page 1

rather than an east-west artery to someplace else.

Asked about what amenities they wanted for Allen, 84% said bicycle and pedestrian enhancements such as bike racks and better crossings; 68% said more trees, 60% landscaping, 60% better street lighting, 60% bike lanes, 57% benches and banners, and 50% better storm-water management.

As for cultural, historical and art elements, the Association's circled "A" symbol, LGBT designs and historic architecture designations were often mentioned.

At a community meeting about the Allen Street Project held Feb. 12 in the Olmsted Center for Sight, 1170 Main St., the 80 attendees were invited after a general presentation to break into small groups to talk about specifics. Facilitators wrote people's points down

A public meeting Feb. 12 drew 80 residents and other stakeholders to learn about the project, ask questions, and offer opinions. Another will be held in coming months.

In addition, the Allentown Association has three people – Vice President Brian Gould and architects Adam Sokol and Matt Moscati – on the project's 24-member technical advisory committee along with city, state and BNMC representatives. Those three plus Erika Abbondanzieri of Watts Architects & Engineering; Tom Fox of Ellicott Development; Mark Goldman of Allen Street Hardware; Creighton Randall of Buffalo CarShare; and residents Kim Mosgeller and Don Kinsman comprise the Association's own Allen Street design task force.

There's \$4.5 million allocated for the project – 80% in federal funds, 20% from the city. The BNMC portion is expected to cost \$1 million of that, partly for some land acquisition. That leaves \$3.5 million for Allen Street, which is probably only enough to rebuild from Main Street to Delaware Avenue.

"Everything will be designed to Wadsworth," Bidell said. "What gets built depends on funding."

The Allentown Association expects to work with elected officials and BNMC representatives to find the funds to complete the project.



A facilitator writes down issues that small-group participants think need attention on Allen Street at a public meeting Feb. 12.

on presentation pads for group discussion. Among the words written that illustrate perceived shortcomings:

Bicycling is dangerous; low police presence; indifferent snow maintenance; trash is dangerous for dogs; lack of lighting; poor landscaping; safety at risk crossing Main at Allen.

One-way streets confusing; architecture is historic but streetscape is generic; get No. 7 city buses off Allen; sidewalk cafes take a lot of room; cars fly through the stop signs at Allen-Wadsworth intersection.

All that should give planners a lot to think about.



Coles, Blue Monk owner buying Quaker Bonnet site

The owner of two Elmwood Avenue restaurants and bars – Coles and the Blue Monk – is buying Quaker Bonnet Eatery at 175 Allen St. and turning it into a spot with a top-tier beer list and innovative burgers.

Mike Shatzel told The Buffalo News that having a place on Allen is “a dream come true.”

Besides the Eatery building, he is acquiring a carriage house in the back, a storage garage, the former Quaker meeting house at 173 Allen, and the Massage Studio house at 181 Allen.

All are owned by Liz Kolken, the caterer and restaurateur who is an Allentown resident and generous supporter

of events sponsored by the Association and other non-profit organizations.

Although Kolken is leaving the restaurant business, she will retain her Quaker Bonnet catering operation to 69 Chango St. “We’ll still do retail, takeout lunches, delivery, wholesale, catering and web stuff,” she said.

Kolken said she has known Shatzel his whole life and trusts him to be a good steward of the Allentown properties she has owned since 2002.

She said selling the restaurant will free her up for other interests, such as spending more time with her grandchildren.

Preliminary planning under way for Fall Harvest Festival

Are you ready to enjoy yet another festival on Allen Street? The Allentown Association hopes so, because it’s planning a family-friendly Fall Harvest Festival on Saturday, Oct. 11, that will be big and different from any event the Association has ever attempted.

Until about 15 years ago, the Association held an annual Oktoberfest centered at the west end of Allen Street, but that was mostly a food-and-beer event with a nod to German culture. This is different.

A committee headed by Jim Nash with Leon Rung and Henry Raess envisions a 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. festival that would close Allen Street from Delaware to Main, with family activities until 5 p.m., and over-21 fun after that. Among activities contemplated:

- A farmers market from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Children’s events from late morning to early afternoon, perhaps including an inflatable gym, bobbing for apples and pumpkin carving.
- Music, dance, movement and theatrical performances.
- A bicycle ride around the city that starts and ends on Allen Street.
- Artists selling locally produced arts and crafts.
- Exhibits by non-profit cultural and environmental organizations.

Nothing is set in stone. The festival is still seven months away and work on organizing it is just beginning.

First Niagara Bank and Key Bank already have signed up as sponsors, and the Association is looking for more.

The Allentown Association: *Serving Buffalo’s Great Historic Neighborhood for 50 years*

Incorporated in 1963 as a 501(c)3 charitable not-for profit community organization. Our Mission Statement: *The only purpose of The Allentown Association is to serve its community. It does that through efforts to beautify the*

neighborhood; to encourage historic preservation and property maintenance; to promote appropriate business development; to fight crime, and to protect and enhance Allentown’s unique urban ambiance.

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The Allentown Neighbor

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Calendar of Springtime Events

Allendale Theater, 203 Allen St. **Theatre of Youth** presents "Robin Hood" by Greg Banks, for ages 8 and up, March 21 at 7 p.m., March 22, 23, 29, 30, April 5 and 6, 2 p.m.; "Pinkalicious: the Musical" by Elizabeth and Victoria Kann, music by John Gregor, for all ages, May 9 at 7 p.m., May 10, 11, 17, 18, 30 and June 1 at 2 p.m. For information and tickets, call 884-4400, see www.theatreofyouth.org.

Allentown Association, 14 Allen St. Spring Dinner, 6:30 p.m. April 29, Hamlin House. Board of Directors meetings, March 11, April 8, May 13, 7 p.m. For information call 881-1024 or see www.allentown.org.

Art Dialogue Gallery, 5 Linwood Ave., Tuesday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Portraits by Andrew Sanders in several media, through March 29. "Buffalo, the Golden Years," engravings and postcards, April 4 to May 30. For information call 885-2251 or see artdialoguegallery.com.

Betty's restaurant, 370 Virginia St. at College St. Pastel landscapes by Cheryl Wnuk, through March 23.

Buffalo Big Print gallery, 78 Allen St. Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Paintings and drawings by Adele Cohen, through May. Haitian art for sale to raise funds for Haiti, opening March 7. For information call 884-1777.

College Street Gallery, 244 Allen St. Works by 20 artists in co-op, March 7, April 4, May 2, 5 to 9 p.m. Other dates by appointment. Open mic for musicians, poets and writers, Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. For information, call 868-8183.

First Friday Gallery Tours, Allentown galleries will have extended evening hours, some with new exhibits and receptions, March 7, April 4, May 2. See www.firstfridaysallentown.org.

Indigo gallery, 74 Allen St., Tuesday to Friday, noon to 5 p.m., Sunday from noon to 3 p.m. For information, call 984-9572.

Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum, 220 North St., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, "Wizard of Oz," through May. For information call 885-1986.

Kleinhans Music Hall, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra:
Classics series, Beethoven's Fifth, Ginastera, Piazzola, Beethoven, March 7, 10:30 a.m., March 8, 8 p.m.; Songs of Mahler and Barber, Vaughan Williams, Barber, Mahler, March 22, 8 p.m., March 23, 2:30 p.m.; East Meets West, Griffes, Zhao Jiping, Borodin, Debussy, March 29, 8 p.m., March 30, 2:30 p.m.; Journey on the Rhine, Webern, Korngold, Schumann, April 11, 10:30 a.m., April 12, 8 p.m., April 13, 2:30 p.m.; Drums Along the Niagara: Mambo! Moross, Russell Platt, Jennifer Higdon, Bernstein, April 26, 8 p.m., April 27, 2:30 p.m.; Invitation to the Dance, Ravel. Miguel del Aguila, Rachmaninoff, May 10, 8 p.m., May 11, 2:30 p.m.; Russian Rhapsody, May 31, 8 p.m., June 1, 2:30 p.m. **Pops and rock series**, the Beatles Classical Mystery Tour, March 1, 8 p.m.; the Chieftains, March 14, 8 p.m.; America, March 28, 8 p.m.; Ellis Hall's Tribute to Ray Charles, April 5, 8 p.m.; Big Band Salute with Matt Catingub, May 3, 8

p.m.; Star Spangled Pops, May 23, 10:30 a.m., May 24, 8 p.m. **Other concerts**, Knights, Princesses and Fairy Tale Royalty, kids, March 16, 2:30 p.m.; A Stravinsky's Petrushka, May 1, 7 p.m.; Get up and Dance, kids, May 4, 2:30 p.m.; Lou Gramm, the Voice of Foreigner, April 25, 8 p.m.; Polar Bear Obsession, stories and photographs by Paul Nicklen, March 4, 7:30 p.m. For tickets, call 885-5000 or see BPO.org. **Buffalo Chamber Music Society**, Artemis Quartet, March 18, Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, April 29, 8 p.m. For tickets, call 462-4939 or see www.bflochambermusic.org.

Nina Freudenheim Gallery, Hotel Lenox, 140 North St. Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays by appointment. "American Scenes from the Seventies" by John Pfahl, through April 7. For information call 882-5777.

Pausa Art House, 19 Wadsworth St., Art, music, entertainment café. Call 697-9069. See Pausearthouse.com.

Rust Belt Books, 202 Allen St. Frank Canino presents a stage reading of Benito Cereno, March 2 and 3, 7 p.m. Poetry readings, March 23, 2 p.m. Tangential readings, March 27, 6:30 p.m. open slots. Back room \$5-bag book sale, April 1 to 5. Elmwood Writers Group, April 11, 7 p.m. Autistic Services art show, April 1 to 30. Theater performance by Brazen Faced Varlets, May 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 7 p.m. For information call 885-9535.

Studio Hart, 65 Allen St. Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. "Current," watercolors by Patrick Willet, March; photographs by Ginny Rose Stewart, April; new works by Esther Neisen, May. For information call 536-8337.

Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site (Wilcox Mansion), 641 Delaware Ave. Hours, Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Half-price admission April 19 and 20, opening weekend of National Park Week. Special events, advance reservations required: Buffalo's Pan-Am Expo, a behind-the-scenes tour highlighting additions to the site's collection of Pan-Am memorabilia, March 26, 2 and 5:30 p.m.; A Moose Gets Loose in a Museum, an April Fool's Day-inspired family event, March 29, noon to 4 p.m.; A Bridal Party, evening dinner show, April 4, 6 to 9 p.m.; A Bridal Party, champagne tea, April 5, noon to 1:30 p.m. and 2 to 3:30 p.m.; Theodore Roosevelt: tales and treasures, a behind-the-scenes look, April 25, 6 to 7:30 p.m. For further information, call 884-0095 or see www.trsite.org.

Western New York Artists Group, 1 Linwood Ave. Tuesday through Friday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Members exhibition, traditional works, through March 28, juried by Justin W. Dahl. Members exhibition, modern works, juried by Brent Patterson, April 4 to May 2. Niagara Frontier Water Colors Society, May 9 to June 6. For information call 885-2251 or see wnyag.com.

The Calendar of Events is compiled by Pete Carroll. Email submissions to him at pconjoura@gmail.com.



Above, shingles missing from the roof of the former Immaculate Conception Church allow water to damage the sanctuary area, as can be seen at right. The church, dating back to 1869, served generations of Allentown Roman Catholics before the Diocese of Buffalo closed it in 2005. The Association fears further damage could make a restoration and reuse more difficult than it already might be.

Association urges repair of ex-Immaculate Conception Church

The Allentown Association is encouraging owners of the former Immaculate Conception Church property at Edward Street and South Elmwood Avenue to take immediate steps to preserve the church and promote reuse of the entire property including, church, rectory, school and parking.

Plaza Group bought the property in 2006 after the church closed. At the time, it planned condos first in the rectory and then in the church. That never happened, and recently Plaza Group put both up for sale.

"The owner has neglected the church property and failed to provide adequate maintenance to prevent deterioration," Jonathan White, Association president, wrote to the Preservation Board. "The church has visible holes in the roof and is deteriorating due to significant water damage and weather conditions," the letter added.

Preservation Buffalo Niagara supported the Association's request.

The Preservation Board on Jan. 30 tabled the Plaza Group's request to demolish a garage on the property and

asked the owner to address the Allentown Association's concerns. The owner's response was expected as *The Neighbor* went to press.

Ronald Alsheimer of Plaza Group said an estimate of \$105,000 to repair the church roof has been obtained and there is a prospective buyer.

"We put a new roof on the rectory," he added.

The parish school building is leased to Buffalo public schools for adult education.

The church, which dates back to 1869, and rectory are unoccupied.

The Allentown Association contends separating garage and parking from the church building would reduce chances for reuse of the church structure.



**Buffalo Niagara
Medical Campus**

www.bnmc.org



Houghton College opening campus here this fall

Houghton College is establishing a Buffalo campus at First Presbyterian Church on Symphony Circle, offering 2-year associate in arts degrees beginning with the fall semester.

The college is taking over one floor of the rear building near St. John's Place, the same building in which KC's Fitness has two floors. It has installed three classrooms and is refurbishing additional space.

Dr. Scott E. McClelland, Houghton's dean of extension studies, said the college is aiming for an initial enrollment of 25 full-time students.

The college has been doing outreach to Buffalo high school students and guidance councilors. "We're getting applications already," he said. "We're committed to the urban student."

That's a new target group for Houghton, a high-quality private Christian college with 1,000 students at its main campus in Allegany County that also offers part-time bachelor-degree studies for adults at sites in West Seneca, Jamestown, Olean and Lockport.

Dr. McClelland said most classes here will be staffed by full-time faculty from the main campus, a 90-minute drive away. Only one or two local adjuncts will be hired for the fall.

Courses will be offered in writing, history, philosophy, social sciences, literature, communications, the Bible, theology, mathematics and fine arts.

Students who successfully complete an associate's degree are automatically accepted to complete their bachelor's at the main campus, which offers more than 70 areas of study. Credits may also be transferred to other accredited colleges or universities.

Tuition is \$10,000 a year. More information and applications are at www.houghton.edu/buffalo.



Elmwood Village Charter School as it looks today . . .



. . . and how it will look in 2015 after additions on both the Days Park and Cottage Street sides.

Elmwood Village Charter School to add 7th and 8th grades with expansion

A \$2 million expansion of Elmwood Village Charter School at 40 Days Park will allow it to add 7th and 8th grades to its existing K-6 enrollment.

Construction is expected to begin in April, go into full gear this summer, slow down during the next school year, and then finish in summer 2015, said trustee Matthew Ryan.

When complete, two classes of 25 students in each grade are anticipated, for a maximum enrollment of 450.

The Buffalo Preservation Board approved the expansion Feb. 14.

The school will hold a lottery April 8 for new admittances for September. The application deadline is March 30 and is available on the school's website, www.elmwoodvillageschool.org.

Preference is given to siblings of current students and to city residents.

The school will hold its annual fundraising event "Evening in the Park" in the autumn, specific date to be announced in September.

"As a public charter school, EVCS receives only 52 percent of the state educational funding that is granted to the district schools," Ryan said. "Charter schools are also expected to derive all operational costs from this funding in contrast to separate facilities funding for the Buffalo public schools."

"Our commitment to small class size naturally limits our income and makes fundraising that much more important," he said.

Anyone wishing to donate money should write a check to: Elmwood Village Charter School and mailed to 40 Days Park, Buffalo, NY 14201.



Main-Allen gateway to be replanted, upgraded

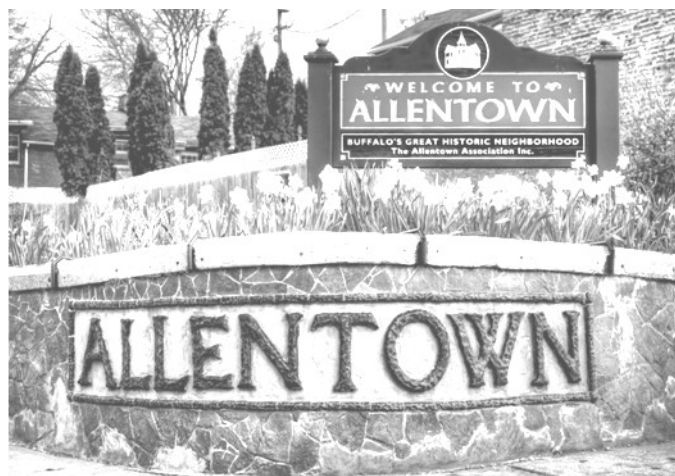
The “Welcome to Allentown” structure at Main and Allen is 12 years old and “is in dire need of makeover,” says Max Stephan, chair of the Association’s Beautification Committee.

He wants to remove existing shrubs and overgrown flowers, replacing them with “a new landscape design which will balance maintainability, durability, and attraction.”

The Board of Directors approved a \$2,000 increase in this year’s Beautification Committee’s budget to \$7,000 to fund the makeover. The work will probably be done after Allentown Art Festival weekend.

Once complete, maintenance “will be crucial in order to avoid neglect or unanticipated challenges down the road,” Stephan said. That means volunteers will be needed.

He noted that the Allentown Litter Mob – which gets residents together the third Thursday evening of each month to pick up litter and retire to Fat Bob’s Smokehouse for a few beers – has been very successful, so he’s hoping to spin off some enthusiasm from that.



Flowers and shrubs at the neighborhood’s eastern gateway structure have been neglected and need a makeover.

ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

If business, name of manager or owner: _____

Please select a contribution level:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$ 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing | \$ 250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$ 100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | \$ 50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$ 40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student/Senior | \$ 20 |

Optional activities/committees you’d like to help with:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Crime prevention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing/Historic Preservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership/PR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business development | <input type="checkbox"/> First Fridays |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nomination to the board of directors | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allen West Festival (adjacent to Allentown Art Festival) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hot dog stand at Allentown Art Festival | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secrets of Allentown (annual tour of homes) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special events/50th anniversary events | |

- ☐ To strengthen the Association in its 50th anniversary year, I’m making an additional contribution of \$_____.

*All contributions are tax-deductible. Please make a check payable to: The Allentown Association, Inc.
Mail to: Allentown Association, 14 Allen Street, Buffalo, NY 14202.*

Please feel free to enclose a note with any ideas you have for improving the neighborhood, or suggestions for strategies you think the Association should be pursuing or additional activities you think it should engage in.



THE ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION, INC.
14 Allen Street
Buffalo, New York 14202
Visit on the web: www.allentown.org

Non-Profit Organization
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BUFFALO, N.Y.
PERMIT NO. 266

Help us improve your neighborhood

If you live in Allentown – especially if you own a home, building or business here – you ought to be a member of the Allentown Association.

Please join your neighbors – all volunteers – who work so hard to keep Allentown a livable, energetic and eclectic community with historic architecture, a great nightlife, and a wonderful future.

The Association gets no government funds. It depends on tax-deductible membership dues from people like you and revenue from fundraising events. On the back of this message is a membership form. Please cut it out and mail it with your check today.