



The Allentown Neighbor

Special EXTRA Edition

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Collapse wrecks Association's office

By RICHARD R. HAYNES

A broken water line and ceiling collapse has wrecked the Allentown Association's office at 14 Allen St., leaving your neighborhood organization to operate temporarily out of its executive director's home.

The Red Jacket building at Allen and Main streets, where the office is located, has been undergoing extensive renovation under new owners Aaron Siegel and Brett Fitzpatrick.

In the early hours of Sunday, July 12, Executive Director Andrew Eisenhardt got a call from the Buffalo Fire Department saying bricks had fallen, rupturing a water pipe in the ceiling and causing a collapse.

Four days later, more ceiling and bricks came down inside the office.

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Falling bricks broke a water line and collapsed the ceiling at 14 Allen St.

How the Association helped make Allentown special

By RICHARD R. HAYNES

This special edition of The Allentown Neighbor has been sent to every residential address in the neighborhood, not just to members of the Allentown Association.

So some readers – new homeowners, recent renters – may not know much about the Association or what it does. If that's you, please read on.

Imagine our neighborhood without the Allendale Theater, the Birge Mansion, Sisti Park, half the buildings on Main Street between Virginia and Allen, the Coit House

(Buffalo's oldest house) or every house on the east side of Irving Place. Imagine Edward, Tupper, and Virginia streets obliterated for an elevated expressway.

Allentown would have been wrecked like that except for the Allentown Association and its members.

It all started in 1960 when some homeowners and business people started the North Street Block Club to "fight blight." By 1963, that club had grown to encompass the whole neighborhood and was incorporated as the non-profit Allentown Associ-

ation.

Over the subsequent 52 years, the Association has accomplished some amazing things, always promoting the neighborhood, tackling its problems, building its future – and nurturing its renaissance while so many other Buffalo neighborhoods that didn't have a grassroots organization like ours suffered decline.

And almost everything has been accomplished by volunteers – neighbors who refused to put up with bad absentee landlords, vandals, street
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Some historical records likely have been damaged

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It is presumed, but not established, that the initial brick drop was related to renovation work on the upper floors. Insurance adjusters for the Association, the landlords and the contractor are working on the case.

“If we go back there,” Eisenhardt said, “it’ll be at least three months from now before the office is ready for occupancy.”

He and Association President Jonathan White fear that some irreplaceable historical records have been damaged – things like meeting minutes from the earliest days of the Association in the 1960s. White said he will press for insurers to hire an archivist organization that specializes in restoring damaged documents to try to save as much as possible and perhaps digitize them.

No decisions have been made about whether the Association will eventually return to 14 Allen or try to find office space elsewhere.

The landlords had intended to tackle renovation of the Red Jacket’s ground-floor office spaces after completing work on the apartments above. As a result, there’d been no rush to discuss what office renovations would consist of or how much rent would cost on the spruced-up space.

Now however, Association officers expect to meet with the landlords soon.



The mess is carted away.

The Association had been sharing space and rent with Buffalo Car Share, but that organization ceased operations on June 15 after its insurer cancelled its automobile liability policy and no alternative could be found. That means the Association would have to bear the full cost of rent going forward unless it can find another office mate.

July 14’s regular monthly board meeting was held in the Innovation Center on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. Ekua Mends-Aidoo, who works in community relations at the BNMC and is an Association vice president, said the center could continue hosting meetings until the Association decides what to do.

Meanwhile, mail and phone calls to 14 Allen are being forwarded to Eisenhardt’s home.

The Allentown Farmers Market is back!

- *Fresh produce from George’s Produce and Yager Farms*
- *Healthy prepared foods to take home*
- *Delicious desserts*
- *Hand-crafted organic soap*
- *Gluten-free local dog treats*
- *Crafts by local artisans*

Sponsored by The Allentown Association

with the support of Councilmember David A. Franczyk



**On South Elmwood between Virginia and Edward streets
Every Friday 4-7 p.m. through October**

FREE PARKING behind Adult Learning Center and in the lot across Edward Street

Residents who care drive the Association's success

Continued from Page One

criminals, unkempt lots, rotting structures and oblivious city officials. They joined together in the Association, paid dues, went to meetings, worked on projects – and made all the difference.

Activities center around four priorities: Historic preservation, beautification, crime prevention and business development.

Historic Preservation

The Association's Housing and Historic Preservation Committee promotes upkeep and proper rehabilitation of properties to ensure that the historic fabric of the neighborhood remains intact. It calls in building inspectors when necessary and follows cases in Housing Court.

Back in 1978, the Association worked with a forerunner of Preservation Buffalo Niagara to create the Allentown Local Historic District. As a result, changes to the exteriors of buildings here have to be approved by the Buffalo Preservation Board.

In 1980, the Association successfully got the portion of the neighborhood west of Delaware Avenue listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2012 did the work to get the eastern part on the register, too.

The historic district designations open the whole neighborhood to state and federal tax credits for rehabilitating properties. If you're a homeowner planning a renovation, contact the Association for information on how 20 percent of the cost can be offset by tax credits. If you own a commercial building, up to 40 percent can be offset.

The Association's greatest preservation successes over the years include:

- Emptying its treasury to buy the Allendale Theater and save it from demolition, replacing the roof, and selling it to the city for \$1 so it could be refurbished and turned into the home of Theatre of Youth.
- Being key to the restoration of the 900 block of Main Street from Virginia to Allen across from the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.
- Successfully fighting demolition of half of Irving Place to create parking lots for Delaware Avenue buildings.
- Helping scuttle the proposed West Side Arterial/Virginia-Carolina Expressway that would have cut through Allentown.
- Purchasing Coit House at 414 Virginia St. for a headquarters to re-roof and stabilize it until it could be resold and restored.
- Working to prevent demolition of the Birge Mansion on Symphony Circle, now beautifully restored.

Beautification

The Beautification Committee installs and maintains flower planters and hanging baskets on Allen Street, and works with Re-Tree WNY to plant trees in the neighborhood.

It also sponsors the Allentown Litter Mob. Volunteers meet every third Thursday of the month in front of Fat Bob's on Virginia Place, where they're given gloves, bags and rakes, and then go out and clear litter for an hour. They return to Fat Bob's and for a \$5 donation to the Association, get a drink ticket and access to a small buffet, and often some extra goodies (like scratch-off Lotto tickets). On bad winter days, volunteers get shovels instead of rakes and go clear ice and snow for elderly or disabled residents.

Over the years, the committee has tackled a number of projects, but the most noteworthy is city-owned Sisti Park at Franklin and North streets to honor famed artist and Allentown resurgence advocate Tony Sisti.

Crime Prevention

The most important role of the Crime Prevention and Safety committee is to maintain a dialogue with the Buffalo Police Department. The committee keeps track of crime patterns and relays and shares information about criminal or suspicious activities.

An Allentown representative attends monthly precinct meetings for block club representatives. At the committee's request, police have stepped up weekend foot patrols on Allen Street to provide safety during the summer months for the increased number of visitors to bars and restaurants.

Earlier this year, Association leadership met with police and city officials for what resulted in a successful effort to make the annual St. Patrick's Day parade more family-friendly.

All neighborhood residents are invited to attend a National Night Out picnic at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 4, in front of Kleinhans Music Hall, where they can meet police and city officials and discuss crime issues.

Business Development

Bringing people into the neighborhood for fun events is one of the major ways the Association helps businesses.

The monthly Greater Allentown First Friday Gallery Tour shows off Allen and adjoining streets and businesses to hundreds of people from outside the neighborhood. Art galleries are open; bars and restaurants are jammed. Sometimes there are street performers, and in December, sleigh rides and a tree lighting.

The Association's Allen West Festival on the second full weekend of June adds thousands of visitors to the already-huge crowds pouring into the neighborhood for the Allentown Art Festival. Allen West is staged on Allen and Wadsworth from Elmwood to Hudson.

The Allentown Fall Festival on Allen Street brought in hundreds of people last year. This year it will be held Saturday, Oct. 3.

The Allentown Yard & Porch Sale – this year on Saturday, Aug. 15 – brings in bargain hunters who might want to stay for a meal or a drink.

Get to know your neighborhood: Take a tour

The best way of exploring Allentown and learning about the neighborhood's development and history is to take a tour.

The Association is partnering with Explore Buffalo and the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site to offer three different two-hour walks that will enlighten, entertain and engage people in exploring the remarkable streetscape of Allentown. Here are details:

Allentown's Delaware Avenue Midtown Tour

This shows off our most picturesque and best-preserved streets: Delaware Avenue, Irving Place, and Park Street. Filled with Victorian homes and lovingly-tended gardens, Irving was the birthplace of Allentown's renaissance in the 1950s, when the Beat Generation rediscovered Allentown's marvelous architecture and nurtured its reputation for the arts.

Tour begins at Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site, 641 Delaware Ave. *Times*: Sat. Aug. 22, 10 a.m.; Sat. Sept. 26, 10 a.m.

Allentown & Frederick Law Olmsted

Where the northern edge of Buffalo's original border

meets the old New York State Reservation line is a neighborhood of small parks, secluded enclaves, grand and humble Victorian houses, and a fulcrum of Frederick Law Olmsted's parkway design for Buffalo. Included in the tour are Symphony Circle, Day's Park, and Arlington Park.

Tour begins at First Presbyterian Church on Symphony Circle. *Times*: Sat. Aug. 1, 10 a.m. (during Infringement Festival); Tues. Aug. 11, 6 p.m.; Mon. Aug. 17, 10 a.m.; Mon. Sept. 28, 10 a.m.

Allentown in Brick

Shows off North Pearl and Franklin streets, two of Allentown's most intriguing residential quarters, filled with brick mid-Victorian manses designed in the Italianate and Queen Anne styles.

Tour begins at TR Site. *Times*: Mon. Aug. 3, 10 a.m.; Mon. Sept. 4, 10 a.m.; Tues. Sept. 8, 6 p.m.

The fee for tours is \$15.

Allentown Literary Ghost Walks will be back again this October. Details will be in the autumn issue of *The Allentown Neighbor*.

Come to the Allentown Association's and Kleinhans Community Association's Picnic for 'National Night Out'

Tuesday, Aug. 4, 6:30-8:30p.m.

on Kleinhans Music Hall lawn
(at Porter and Wadsworth)

Bring a chair/blanket; food and
beverages provided, but feel free to
bring a dish to pass



Come and meet your neighbors, your elected officials,
and B District police officers

Bring the kids for the Fire Engine tour!

Neighborhood news notes . . .

20,000 jobs in BNMC's future?

The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus is probably going to be a lot bigger than you think.

It currently employs nearly 15,000 people, and projections call for 17,000 jobs and \$1.4 billion in new investments by 2017, the year that the University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and the new John R. Oishei Children's Hospital of Buffalo.

But growth won't stop there. UB plans to move its dental school to the campus, as well as the schools of pharmacy, nursing and public health.

So the BNMC will likely hit the 20,000 jobs mark by 2020, says William Joyce, chairman of Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Corp.

New coffee houses evoke old Allentown

A new coffee house has recently opened on Allen Street and another plans to begin business later this year, evoking a nostalgia for the Allentown of the Beat Generation and attesting to the vitality of the business district today.

The Grindhaus Café, 160 Allen, a coffee house and vegan-vegetarian restaurant that opened in late June, features pour-over coffee, espresso, and black, green and herbal full-leaf teas.



23 Allen St.

Community support has been "overwhelming," according to owner Megan Stewart. "People donated coffee mugs and even helped with our gardening!"

Caffeology, at 23 Allen, expects to formally open in October. It will offer a half-dozen

coffees with differing brewing methods and handcrafted tea blends, owner Hamada Saleh said. Sandwiches, salads, snacks, and pastries will also be available.

Caffeology hopes to draw patrons from Allentown as well as UB Medical School students and staff and visitors from the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

"We are not going to be your typical cafe, as we are not conventional," Saleh explained. "We are going to be closer to shops in Italy and Japan."

TR Site adds fun on Tuesday nights

The Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site, 641 Delaware Ave., offers a slate of new programming and extended hours on Tuesdays.

"Tuesday Nite @ the Site" keeps the museum open until 8 p.m. on most Tuesdays, making it more accessible for people who may not be able to visit during traditional operating hours. New programs are:

Sketch Nite on the first Tuesday of each month.

Artists of all ages and levels can bring sketch pads and pencils to draw a variety of themed objects from the TR Site's collections or to look for inspiration in the restored areas in the museum and sketch architectural features and/or anything else that intrigues them.

TRivia Nite on the third Tuesdays. The evening starts with some informal networking and light refreshments before visitors have the chance to test their knowledge on a wide variety of topics from history to current events. Co-sponsored by the Pan-American Grill & Brewery, a cash bar features – what else? – its popular "Roosevelt Red" ale. Prizes for the top-scoring teams are also being provided by the Pan-Am.

Speaker Nite on fourth Tuesdays. Noted local and national authors, scholars and experts explore a wide range of subjects.

Also new: "**Teddy Bear Story Hour**" at 2 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month. It's aimed at children aged 3-8, and includes a story, a snack and a special gift, as well as a family-friendly tour of the TR Site.

TR Site members can take part in the programs at either no charge, or in the case of TRivia Nite, for half the general admission price of \$10. For more details and to purchase tickets, visit: TR Site.org.

Franczyk assists Farmers Market

The Allentown Association gratefully acknowledges Fillmore District Councilmember David Franczyk for securing \$2,500 in funding to support the Allentown Farmers Market. Funding through Councilmember Franczyk has made the market possible for the past two years and enables the Association to bring fresh, local, healthy food options and locally made products to the residents of Allentown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Miller-Williams helps fund events

The Allentown Association would like to thank Erie County Legislator Barbara Miller-Williams, who secured cultural funding for the First Legislative District and to the African American Cultural Center for sponsoring the Allentown Association as a recipient of \$500 of this cultural funding. Through these funds the African American Cultural Center will co-sponsor elements of the 2015 First Fridays Gallery Walks and the 2015 Allentown Fall Festival.



July's First Friday Gallery Walk was delayed a week due to Independence Day, but it was worth the wait. The Association staged a free ice cream social with hula-hooping.



Sat., Oct. 3

9 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Fall Festival

On Allen Street

between Delaware and North Pearl

and on Franklin at Allen

Fun events for the whole family!

- **Farmers' Market 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**
- **Craft vendors throughout the day**
- **Children's activities beginning at 10 a.m.**
- **Live music on 4 stages**
- **GObike Buffalo cycling tour begins at 9 a.m.**
- **Beer available for purchase after 1 p.m.**

Admission is free

Presented by The Allentown Association

Thank you to our sponsors:

**First Niagara Bank, Try-It Distributing,
North American Brewing, Pepsi-Cola Buffalo Bottling Corp.
and County Legislator Barbara Miller-Williams**



ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION

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 this 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 ambience."

Officers: Jonathan White, president; Steve Earnhart, Ekua Mends-Aidoo, vice presidents; Kelly Martin, treasurer; Jillian Stiefel, secretary.

Directors: Seth Amman, Chris Brown; Pete Carroll; Bob Fink; Gretchen Grobe; Barbara Hart; Stanton Hudson; Ekua Mends-Aidoo; Jim Nash, Andrew Pace; Christopher Poole; Kevin Rabner; Henry Raess; Max Stephen; Laine Walnicki.

Ex-officio (non-voting): Ed Castine; Richard Haynes; Holly Holdaway; Elizabeth Licata; Melissa Osmon, Adam Sokol.

Executive Director:
Andrew Eisenhardt

THE ALLENTOWN NEIGHBOR

Editor: Richard R. Haynes
Email: rhaynes15@aol.com

Consider an upgraded membership level

Please consider joining the Allentown Association at an elevated membership level. Besides providing more money to help fund the activities that keep your neighborhood great, you'll get some extra benefits in gratitude.

Sustaining members at the \$100 level get one free ticket to the spring members' dinner and notecards with iconic Buffalo images.

At the \$250 Contributing level, members get two free tickets to the dinner and an invitation to a wine and cheese reception in an historic Allentown home.

Members at the \$500 Patron level get two dinner tickets, the wine and cheese reception, two tickets to an annual special event or tour, and a private tour of Allentown for up to 10 people.

Those at the \$1,000 Benefactor level get all the Patron rewards, plus four tickets to a Theatre of Youth performance at the Allendale Theater and two tickets to a Buffalo Philharmonic performance at Kleinhans Music Hall.

Of course, members at all levels receive this newsletter; email, tweets and Facebook messages about important neighborhood activities and developments; and discounts on tours and special events.

A special note to our senior citizen homeowners: Yes, you can join at the \$20 Student/Senior rate. But if you've lived in Allentown for many years, the Association's work on behalf of the neighborhood has had lot to do with the skyrocketed value of your home. Unless you are living on a low income, please think about contributing more.

ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

If business, name of manager or owner: _____

Please select a contribution level:

- Benefactor \$1000
- Patron \$ 500
- Contributing \$ 250
- Sustaining \$ 100
- Business \$ 50
- Family \$ 40
- Individual \$ 35
- Student/Senior \$ 20

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

- Beautification
- Crime prevention
- Housing/Historic Preservation
- Membership
- Business development
- Nomination to the board of directors
- Allen West Festival
- Marketing/Public Relations
- First Fridays
- Special events

All contributions are tax-deductible. Indicate payment method:

- PAYING BY CHECK.** Make it payable to: The Allentown Association, Inc.

Mail to: Allentown Association, 14 Allen Street, Buffalo, NY 14202.

- PAYING BY PAYPAL.** Log onto your account or set one up at www.paypal.org.

Then search for the Association by phone number, 716-881-1024.

Or go www.allentown.org and fill-in the online membership form and pay dues on the "donate" link to Paypal.

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

PRSRT STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM RETAIL

Local
Postal Customer

Sell your unwanted stuff!

Join in the Allentown Yard & Porch Sale

10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 15

PARTICIPATION IS FREE TO ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

**Non-member residents can
participate for just a \$5 fee**

The Allentown Association will
advertise the sale and publish a map of
all participating addresses.

Send an email with your name, address
and a contact phone number to
allIntown@localnet.com no later than
Monday, Aug. 10 to register your
address for the map.

