

Frontier House to offer restaurant, short-term and longer rentals



From left: Another look at the future restaurant space. • The marvelous top floor. • The first-floor staircase. • The exterior of 460 Center St., Lewiston.



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new restaurant tenant was announced in January, and construction has ramped up since then.

"Once you get to finishes, it's generally a lot quicker work. You can see plumbing rough has already happened in most cases. Electrical is about to happen, too. Once the stuff is set and they're boarding the walls – all the frosting – all the flooring and the paint and the trim – that stuff all generally happens pretty quick."

"At this stage now, with the unknowns generally identified and addressed, I think we're in a position for an early-summer completion. Hopefully not too

proper consultants in to review things that you find, and address them properly."

"I could've been a structural issue somewhere, something – there's been a lot of that work in here to turn things up. It's a lot of exploratory work, which takes more time. Decisions have to be made. You've got to get the

much (phasing). I know that the restaurant's anxious to open, hopefully, by then – if not sooner. And I think we're in a position here to be able to do the same with the residential units."

Fox noted, "We've got different groups of contractors working on both spaces, different templates, obviously; completely different finish work and scope. But they should pretty well align right now, if not right in alignment, maybe within a month of each other."

Frontier House basement

Across from the kitchen and side porch door is a staircase leading down to the basement.

A row of bathrooms will be found to the far right (in and just past the former birthday party room), as will another entrance (across from former outdoor playground area).

The rathskeller is to the left, and the space will tentatively have a long seating area that is sure to be popular with guests.

Frontier House upper levels

The "upstairs is all framed now, with the residential units" on the second floor. This is where longer-term rentals and apartments will be offered, with the units "a little bit bigger" than what's on the third floor, Fox said.

One of the building's largest

Find more photos and past Frontier House articles online at www.wnypapers.com.



Frontier House photos

"I'm always impressed, when I come up, with these timbers that frame the roof," Fox said. "The logs with bark still on them from hundreds of years ago – it's pretty cool."

"These (floorboards) will all be put back in. The historic barrel-vaulted ceiling will be reformed just as it was historically. When we came up here initially, before we started doing the demo up here, the ceiling was caving in in sections. The lathe was all beaten up and it was falling. We'll reframe all that and reboard it to match the original look."

The Frontier House's third floor will offer "hotel-room-style" vacation and short-term rental units.

Here again, main hallways are woven together with smaller corridors to blend history with functionality. This level also will include a common laundry room.

The fourth floor is another highlight of the building. It will be converted into a single long-term unit.

come up the stairs, you'll be in a short hallway. There will be a coat closet on the left. Then, as you continue down, you've got a bedroom on your right-hand side here, a living space in the middle, and then the bedroom on the other side, with a bathroom on the back."

Telling the tale

Fox said the pathway to the Frontier House's future has not been easy to pave.

"I think initially, when we came through, we were hoping to not do this level of peeling the layers away, but it became clear once we started to really get into things that it became a necessary thing to do," he said. "It just became apparent that that's something that we

needed to do, to do it right." Ellicott Development's website describes the business as "a full-service real estate management and development company with over 40 years of experience," and with "extensive resources" to develop property.

But even still, Fox said, "It's a daunting task" rehabilitating an historically designated building.

to take it on and do it right."

With the Frontier House set to reopen in its 200th year, Fox said plans are in place to chronicle the site's history and rehabilitation, partly to help guests appreciate the steps taken to honor the building's legacy while also making the structure viable for 2024 and beyond.

"Yeah, I think part of that is

on us, through our documentation of it, and being able to show before and after, I think, for those that don't know what it was before," he said. "I think a lot of people – our residents and our tenants ... in the residential units – may not be existing local residents who know the history of this place. More certainly, those frequenting the restau-

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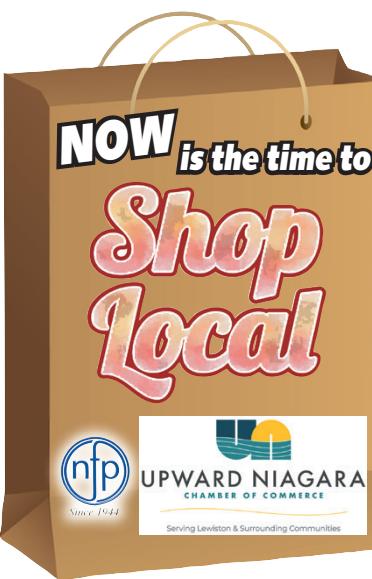
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rant space may know what it was before, in its last restaurant use as a McDonald's, and know what it looked like. So, I think they'll have a strong appreciation for seeing the transformation."

He added, "The history will not be lost. I think the way we document it – I know Fairbanks, too – I know they've done a lot of historic research, as well, and are trying to embrace the history of the building through their space."

"We have a commitment to making sure that that doesn't get lost – the history of the building – it's very important. Simply showing the visual before and after, I think, will be telling, for sure."

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