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Lewiston to mark 2024 eclipse with Center Street observance

BY JOSHUA MALONI
GM/Managing Editor

The Historical Association of Lewiston on Sept. 14 announced a special event planned around the total eclipse of the sun next spring.

“Something very special is going to happen on Monday, April 8, 2024,” Lee Simonson announced at the annual “Lewiston Jeopardy” fundraiser inside the Brickyard Brewing Company. “It’s going to be the first time in 100 years that Western New York is going to experience the total eclipse of the sun. People are going to be traveling all over the world to see this. I already know people from California who are going to be arriving in Western New York.”

“Well, the other communities can do their thing and have little star-watching parties. That’s fine. We’re going to do something a little bit different.”

SEE THE ECLIPSE, on Page 16

Historical Association of Lewiston member Leandra Collesano and President Ken Slauchenhaupt display a promotional poster for “The Eclipse: A Step Back in Time.”



Peach powerhouse Aimee Loughran recognized for culinary craftsmanship

BY JOSHUA MALONI
GM/Managing Editor

In a year where, seemingly, very little happened, something extraordinary materialized in the Just Desserts by Aimee Loughran kitchen.

As pastry chef Aimee Loughran recalled, it was September of 2020, and “We didn’t have the Peach Festival; and everybody was missing the peach shortcake. So, I decided, ‘OK, in honor of the Peach Festival, I’ll serve peach shortcakes.’”

Almost immediately, the sweet treat was a definite hit.

“I had an abundance of customers come back to me, I would say

within like an hour or so, stating that it was the best peach shortcake they’ve ever had,” Loughran said. “‘Did I have any more?’ So,

I did run another sale the following week in honor of that.

“Every single year, everybody keeps asking me. I grew from selling like 100 the very first year, in September 2020, to now I sell around like 550, I would say.”

Loughran could probably

make 5,050, but, “That’s where I max out; I can’t sell any more than that (550), because I physically peel all those peaches by hand by myself.”

SEE JUST, continued on Page 2



Public gets a say on proposed Uniland industrial project off Military Road

BY TIMOTHY CHIPP
Contributing Writer

More work is needed, but efforts to build an industrial facility off Military Road in the Town of Niagara got a slight boost Tuesday.

Town Board members held a public hearing regarding the proposal from Uniland Development before the start of their regular meeting Tuesday, moving the project one step closer to a final decision.

The Amherst-based development company has had a planned development for the nearly 26-acre parcel near the intersection of Military Road and Woodside Place before the board since June 2022.

While the project has been modified multiple times since its original iteration, the current

ask is to rezone about 17 acres to “light industrial” from its current “R-3 residential” for the purposes of building the facility.

Much of the remaining roughly 9 acres, bordering the residences on JoAnne Circle and Sunnydale Drive, would remain zoned R-3, which is a zoning specifically for apartment complexes, according to the town’s code.

A small buffer of land, Uniland Director of Planning & Design Kevin B. Kirk said, would set off the space directly behind those JoAnne Circle residences and be undevelopable, protecting residents.

Despite the assurances, two residents of the area spoke their minds during the public hearing, requesting the land set to remain R-3 be switched to either light industrial like the planned facility, or converted to R-1, which would

most likely require single-family dwellings, should any real estate be developed.

Marvin Henchbarger said the town could be putting itself into a difficult spot if the vacant R-3 portion is developed. She questioned the impact the Uniland development and a potential apartment complex could have on traffic on Military Road, especially if the town’s recent big-ticket development – Amazon’s warehouse approved for Lockport Road – ever comes to fruition.

“This is home,” she said. “I appreciate all the things (Uniland) has done to help the residents, but some of those things coming in make me unhappy.”

In a short follow-up comment, Vicki Orzetti echoed her neighbor and offered support for the idea of forcing the complete re-

zoning or turning the leftover portion from R-3 to R-1.

For the project to gain approval, the town’s Planning Board must first give the OK. That won’t happen until at least Oct. 3, as concerns over utility hookups in the area persist, town Building Inspector Charles Haseley said during the hearing.

After that, Town Supervisor Lee Wallace said, the board reviews the Planning Board’s recommendations, consults with legal counsel, and decides whether to approve the rezoning and the project.

Among considerations, Wallace said, is the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process. If it’s determined the project will have an impact on the environment, a positive declaration could be declared and kick off a pro-

cess Uniland must complete before the project can be given the green light.

“It’s rare, but it happens,” Wallace said, directing his comments to the two speakers during the public hearing.

In other Town Board news, a public hearing regarding the proposed change to the zoning laws was set for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 17, at Town Hall, 7105 Lockport Road.

Town officials wish to remove self-storage facilities and similar structures from approval in business districts, instead relegating future buildings of this type to industrial-zoned areas.

It’s a return to a previous zoning law the Town Board established at its Sept. 13 work session, fixing an oversight a previous board made to grant a single exception.



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