

BBC fire: First responders, fire safety measures stop blaze from spreading along Center Street

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“Lewiston No. 1 firefighters were dispatched to a commercial structure fire at the Brickyard Brewing Company, 436 Center St., at 10:39 p.m. The Lewiston No. 1 fire chief arrived minutes later to a well-evolved commercial structure with flames coming from the roof and rear of the building.

“Activating the mutual aid plan for a village business district fire brought in firefighters from Upper Mountain, Niagara Active and Youngstown fire companies along with placing Ransomville and Lewiston No. 2 fire companies on standby.

“Crews from Lewiston No. 1 were able to make entry into the Brickyard Brewing Company, to the second floor event center, but were pulled out due to heavy fire. Ladder trucks from Upper Mountain Fire and Niagara Active Hose were deployed in the front and rear of the structure and directed large water streams onto the fire. Ground crews worked using hand lines and master streams to stop the fire from spreading to the attached Brickyard Pub and other nearby structures containing new build construction.

“Further obstacles arose as the roof collapsed and firefighters had to navigate between the two adjoining roofs. An additional ladder truck from Sanborn Fire Co. and engine crew from Ransomville Fire Co. responded to further aid operations.

“Crews worked throughout the night to extinguish the blaze. Niagara County Origin and Cause and Town of Lewiston fire investigators are investigating the incident further.

“EMS was staffed by Lewiston Fire Co. No. 1 ambulances with the assistance of Youngstown and Upper Mountain ambulances in rehab operations for the nearly 50 firefighters. One firefighter was treated and transported for heat exhaustion, but is home at this time recovering.”

Welch and trustees Vic Eydt, Nick Conde and Claudia Marasco were on the scene at various hours of the night. They reiterated what the press release explained, that the BBC’s metal roof

and fire prevention features stopped the blaze from moving down Center Street.

The BBC opened in late spring of 2017, as the new “crown jewel” of breweries. It was designed by Brickyard owners Ken Bryan and Eric Matthews, GM Steve Matthews, and architect Jim Fittante.

Brickyard, meanwhile, just marked its 15th anniversary in February.

Welch said, “It was devastating to watch Eric, Ken and Steve’s hard work go up in flames, but they assured me that they will rebuild. The Brickyard is still intact with smoke and water damage, but the firewall and the door held and saved the restaurant. The BBC top floor was severely damaged, but the first floor and bar area is intact – with smoke debris and water damage – but salvageable. The back Barrel House was damaged, but is also salvageable.

On Twitter, the BBC page said, “This isn’t the end of us. We will be back. Bigger and better than ever. Thank you for all the love and support. #2020Sucks.”



Photos by Mark Williams Jr.



The adjacent buildings remained unscathed.

“As mayor, I assured the owners that we will do everything to help and support them in this difficult time. Ken, Eric and Steve have always donated to every cause, event and festival, and many charities and fundraisers. Now it is the time for all of us to help them. We have a great community, and I know their friends, neighbors and fellow businesses are already stepping up to help.”

To Myers, she said, “I was so impressed with everybody that worked there last night. That was a really scary fire, and they did an awesome job. And I was there this morning to find out that it was not as devastating as I thought it was going to be.”

The chief gave credit to Apple Granny restaurant for providing a comfort station for firefighters.

“(Co-owner and first respond-

er) Mike Burke from Apple Granny opened up his doors for our firefighters to go in there and get some rehab – out of the smoke and get some cold water and get their vitals taken. That was nice of him to allow us to do that,” Myers said.

“People are stepping up,” Eydt noted.

“Yeah – and you’re gonna see more of it,” Welch said.

Myers thanked the Department of Public Works and Lewiston Police Department for working to clean up the areas on Center and Ridge streets and reopen them to the public in time for the morning commute.

DPW Superintendent Larry Wills said, “I want to thank my whole crew, because sometimes they don’t get recognized – because we’re in and out. ... We do our job and ‘bam,’ we’re out of there. ... People drive drove

down at 8:30 this morning, down Center Street, they’re like, ‘What happened down here?’ They don’t know that the whole street was full of wood.”

Not the End

A message posted on the Brickyard Facebook page read, “If 2020 couldn’t be enough of a kick in the balls, tonight we faced our most difficult tragedy ever. A massive fire broke out at BBC and has caused enormous damage. Our sign still remains in our window though ‘LEWISTON STRONG.’ The support of our community already is unbelievable. THANK GOD nobody was in the building when this happened. Thank you to every first responder who helped contain this and we will rebuild and be better than ever! @Brickyard Pub & BBQ”

On Twitter, the BBC page said, “This isn’t the end of us. We will be back. Bigger and better than ever. Thank you for all the love and support. #2020Sucks.”

Additionally, Brewed and Bottled Craft Beer Shop, located just a stones throw away from Brickyard, said on Facebook, “Our love and thoughts go out to our friends and family at the

Brickyard Brewing Co. The news of the horrible fire and the loss of their building is being felt across our community. In a time filled with terrible news, this is a massive blow to all of us in Lewiston, NY. We have all of the confidence in the world that you will rise again and stand with you to assist in any way possible.”

Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce President Jennifer Pauly said, “Just a big, devastating loss to everyone. They were leaders in the restaurants. They kind of helped rally all of the restaurant owners together for different things, and definitely huge supporters of the chamber. We will help however we can, in whatever way that we can.”

David Yarger contributed to this report.

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To our friends at Brickyard Brewing Co., Pub & BBQ
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Your friends @ Coppins Service Center, 550 Center St., Lewiston