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Councilperson Celeste Friend
SOUTH UTICA - THIRD WARD



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South Utica Newsletter #30 from Councilperson Celeste Friend

Summer got away from me! And now September is over too! I never squeezed in a Newsletter for August. But now Fall is upon us, and I'm back into a more regular pattern. So here we go, Newsletter #30. We can pretend that this is the September newsletter, and then the October one will come along in just a couple of weeks....

As always, please forward this email to anyone you know who might enjoy it. They can easily sign up just by clicking the link below.

[Sign Up for This Newsletter](#)

Update on Stewart's Shop on Genesee St

On August 9th, I hosted a Town Hall meeting in order to inform people of

Stewart's desire to bring a gas station and convenience store to the site of the old Raspberries restaurant on South Genesee St. Chuck Marshall, the Stewart's representative and Brian Thomas, the Commissioner of Urban and Economic Development, both attended. I presented the results of the online survey I conducted and also described the process by which Stewart's could apply to the City for permission for the construction of their new store. Mr. Marshall presented Stewart's proposal. We then opened it up for questions. The discussion was passionate at times, with the people who attended expressing their opposition to a new Stewart's at the proposed location. But it was also, I believe, very informative.

Stewart's then submitted an application to Utica's Planning Board in time for their plans to be considered at the September Planning Board meeting, held on Thursday, September 15th. I was there, as were several residents of South Utica. This meeting was not a Public Hearing, and so neither the public nor I were allowed to speak. I did make a request to speak and was denied by the Chair of the Planning Board. I did ask that both my request to speak and the subsequent denial of this request be recorded in the minutes of the meeting, which it was. (I believe that Common Councilmembers, as elected representatives of Utica's residents, ought to be allowed to weigh in at these types of meetings, whether or not they are Public Hearings. I will work to codify this in the Zoning Ordinance.) The Planning Board asked several questions, mostly in regards to the fact that Stewart's plans include tearing down the house next to Raspberries and putting in a curb cut on Woodlawn so that the Stewart's can be accessed by vehicles from both Woodlawn Ave and Genesee Street.

The Planning Board then referred the application to the Scenic & Historic Commission. They are required to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for any development within Utica's Scenic & Historic Districts. Also, only this Commission can give permission to demolish any building inside of the the District. The Stewart's plan includes tearing down the (perfectly good) two family house on Genesee Street, at the southern corner of Woodlawn Ave West. The Commission met on Monday, September 26th at 4pm in Council Chambers at City Hall. After a full discussion of Stewart's plans, including of the plans to demolish that house at the corner of Woodlawn Ave West, they decided to table the issue. They will be taking up the issue again on Monday, October 24th at their 4pm meeting. **I encourage everyone who cares about this issue to attend this meeting.**

I will continue to keep you informed of these meetings, including in separate emails.

My legislation: Being involved in this case, and drilling down on the ways in

which our relatively new Zoning Ordinance made it possible for Stewart's to open a store on South Genesee St, something important occurred to me. South Genesee St is now designated as a "Neighborhood Mixed Use" district, and gas stations/convenience stores ARE permitted in these districts. I have come to the conclusion that gas stations in fact DO NOT belong in these neighborhoods. So, I submitted legislation that would amend what is called the "Use Table" of the Zoning Ordinance that the Common Council passed into law in February 2021. This would mean that these kinds of businesses would not be permitted in these Districts. My legislation sits in Committee, but unfortunately, I do not think that I will have five votes to pass it. Some of my colleagues from other districts do not want to restrict development in this way. So what makes sense for South Utica, may not make sense for other parts of the City. So for now, I will leave this in Committee.

Two important changes that I believe we should make:

1) I believe that members of the Common Council should always be allowed to speak at Planning Board meetings and Scenic & Historic Commission meetings. (As it stands, all Zoning Board of Appeals meetings are public hearings, and so we already have the right to speak at these meetings.) If I can convince enough of my colleagues to agree with me, I will work to have the Common Council amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow us to speak at these meetings.

2) I also believe that in order for these meetings to be truly open to the public, they should meet in the evenings, as does the Common Council. The Planning Board, the Scenic & Historic Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals meetings should begin at 5:30, so that those people who work during the day will be able to attend.



Help to Restore the Lily Pond

Olmsted City is in the midst of a campaign to raise funds for a once-in-a-century restoration of the Lily Pond in Utica's Frederick T. Proctor Park. This will create a winding, handicapped-accessible pathway--landscaped with trees, shrubs, and benches--to connect the Lily Pond to other features of the Park. Designed in 1913 by renowned American landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., the Lily Pond has long been a beloved, iconic feature of this park, but after nearly 110 years, it is very much showing its age.

Olmsted City has to date raised \$124,000 to carry out this project, the cost of which is currently estimated at around \$160,000. It is also in the midst of a \$50,000 match challenge, which is about 70% complete. Please help put us over the top on this match challenge!

This is not just about historic restoration or beautification. This project is informed by decades of public health research that confirms what Olmsted and his father (the designer of Central Park) knew well over a century ago: time

spent in urban parks confers significant physical and mental health benefits. In addition, people are more likely to visit parks that are in a good state of repair.

Olmsted City is a program of the Landmarks Society of Greater Utica, a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit dedicated since 1974 to historic preservation. All donations to Olmsted City are tax deductible. Olmsted City is volunteer-driven and has no paid employees; only 7% of what we raise goes toward overhead (mostly communications). Please help us make this happen! For more information, please visit our Facebook page and our website. You can also simply mail a check made out to "Olmsted City" to Olmsted City, PO Box 8597, Utica, NY 13505.



An artist's rendering of how beautiful the restored Lily Pond will be.

[Olmsted City on Facebook](#)

[Visit Olmsted City's Website](#)

Fall Film Series at Utica University

Every semester, Utica University Professor Jeff Miller organizes a film series that is free and open to the public. There are still three films left in this semester. This series is a great opportunity to see wonderful films you just won't get to see anywhere else.



Fall 2022 Utica University Film Series Dates and Descriptions

My Votes on the Council in August &

September 2022

Here are all my votes in August & September. Wow - we did a lot in these two months! All votes described below were unanimous unless otherwise noted. But, of course, if there is more you'd like to understand, please let me know.

URA Properties sold:

after holding Public Hearings, we passed the necessary legislation to sell the following properties:

a portion of 1226 Whitesboro St to Eddy C. Soriano for \$250
another portion of 1226 Whitesboro St. to George Waters for \$250
101 Mathews Avenue to Vincent Ficchi for \$5,000
1102 & 1104 Howard Ave to David Giglio for \$1,500
1710 Whitesboro St to Najeeba Delawar for \$1,000
2160 Broad St to Artur Pyrda for \$150,711
1220 Neilson St to Agnes Kulick for \$250
1407 Taylor Ave to Yajaira Almanzar for \$250
816 Catherine St to Mowlid Hussein and Arbai Majeni for \$18,000
408 Blandina St to Santa Maribel Garcia Duarte for \$10,000
713 & 715 Oswego St to Americo D. Romero for \$500
3-5 Waverly Place to Janette Martinez for \$8.500
1502 & 1506 Miller St to Joyrai Htoo & Gay Ler Paw for \$17,426
35 Faxton St to Abdirham Awu Mwalinu & Safiya Osman for \$30,000

Authorizing the Sale of Wine and Beer:

to the Irish Cultural Center on Saturday, August 6th
to St. Anthony and St. Agnes Church on Saturday, September 24th
to St. Rosalia Society on Saturday, August 27th
to Utica Center for Development on Saturday, August 27th
to Mary, Mother of Our Savior Parish for September 1-3
to Woodland Brewery on Saturday, September 24th
to FX Matt Brewing Co for September 30 - October 1
to Bagg's Square Brewing Co. for Saturday, September 24th

Proclamations:

We passed a few Proclamations over the last couple of months. These Resolutions are important ways to honor and recognize various efforts and contributions that people and groups have made and continue to make to Utica.

Proclamation Honoring O'Scugnizzo Pizza

Proclamation Honoring the Staff at Babe's and Five Nurses for their Professionalism and Care

Proclamation in Recognition of the Levitt AMP Music Series and Its Ongoing

Contributions to Utica, NY

Proclamation Recognizing Charles "Sonny" Greco

A Local Law to Dispense with the Residency Requirement for Police Officers Transferred from Other Jurisdictions:

In general, we require Police Officers, and most other employees, to live in Utica. In 2020, a majority of the Council voted to limit that to five years. I voted against that. This local law means that "lateral transfers" do not have to live in Utica to transfer into the Utica Police Department. Chief Mark Williams argued convincingly that requiring these lateral transfers to live in the City was preventing him from hiring qualified police officers. This local law passed unanimously.

Ordinance Amending Off-Street Parking Facilities:

This Ordinance applies to four facilities owned by the City - two garages and two surface lots. It set rates for use of these facilities by hour, day, and month. Good urban planning includes charging reasonable rates for parking in City facilities, so I will continue to support reasonable rates for downtown parking.

Ordinances for Various Streets:

"No Parking at All Times" to now include Welshbush Rd north side from Culver to South Park Drive

"Two-hour Parking" now to include State St, west side, from Cottage Place to Williams St.

"No Parking at All Times" rescinded on State St west side, between Henry and Williams St

"Speed Limit 20mph" to be amended to include State St from Mandeville St to Plant St.

"Schedule M: Limited Parking" amended to include Bleeker Str, fronting 707 to 717, Monday through Saturday, 8am to 4pm.

"Intersections Where Stop Required" - John St, northwest corner & southeast corner; Laurelwood Drive at Tamarack St, southwest corner to control eastbound traffic

Ordinance Waiving Residency Requirement for Assistant Engineer:

This waiver allows Assistant Engineer Austin Cornacchia to continue to live outside of the City. He is an asset to the Department of Engineering, and to Utica in general, and we risked losing him as an employee if we required that he live in Utica.

Resolution Approving Shared Services Agreement:

This simple Resolution allows the City to enter into agreements with the NYS DoT to share various services related to the maintenance of roads and

highways in Utica.

Resolution Approving the Granting of Easements to Niagara Mohawk for Nail Creek:

This simple Resolution will allow Niagara Mohawk to replace a section of exposed natural gas main that spans Nail Creek.

E&A Transfers:

Remember - any transfers made by the Board of Estimate & Apportionment that are for \$15,000 or more must be approved by the Common Council. The following transfers were approved by the Council in August & September

\$2,700,000 in reallocation of ARPA funds

\$48,750 to re-class salaries within the Codes Department

\$254,244 to reallocate electrical expenses due to new street lights

\$65,000 to adjust for unexpected increases in settlements due to sewer damage

\$439,353 between various budget lines within the Police Department

\$313,606 between various budget lines within the Fire Department

\$30,000 from "Contingency" to "Softball - Contractual" to adjust for unbudgeted softball umpire expenses

\$143,404 between different DPW budget lines to adjust for contract settlement and increased gas expenses

\$71,893 from Police Salaries to various Parks & Playgrounds wages and social security

Resolutions calling for Public Hearing for streets in the Harbor Point area:

We passed two Resolutions calling for Public Hearings on November 3rd for new streets in the Harbor Point area in North Utica.

Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing on a Zoning Amendment:

Any change to the Zoning Ordinance requires a Public Hearing. The Council is considering amending the Ordinance, so that "neighborhood retail establishments" cannot be located within 2,000 feet of one another. This Public Hearing will be held at the start of the October 5th Common Council meeting.

Resolution Authorizing Adjustment to the 2022-2-23 Solid Waste Service Charge:

Once a year, the OHSWA comes to the Council and asks for a Resolution to adjust the solid waste fees for various properties that for one reason or another do not use this service. (In other words, we make an effort not to charge fees for services that some people simply do not use.)

Resolution Authorizing a Memorial on the Parkway in Memory of Jaedon

Jarosz:

This young man died in a car accident on the Parkway on November 20th, 2021. This Resolution will allow a permanent memorial to be placed on the Parkway in his memory.

Two Ordinances Allowing for the Discontinuance of Streets:

Portions of Carton Ave and Cornelia Street and Lafayette St. will now be incorporated into the campus of the new Winn Hospital. The Common Council therefore approved officially discontinuing these portions of these streets.

Temporary Moratorium on Convenience Stores/Smoke Shops:

The Council passed a three-month moratorium on new shops of this kind. We did this in order to have time to work out a better legal means by which to regulate these businesses, which are very problematic in many of our neighborhoods.

Ordinance Amending the Civilian Public Safety Board:

In order to add an alternate to the Board, we first had to amend the Ordinance that regulates this Board. We did this by giving both the Mayor and the Council three appointments, with one of those appointments serving as an alternate.

Resolution Appointing Frederick Nichols as an alternate on the Civilian Public Safety Board:

Having then amended the Ordinance, described just above, we appointed Mr. Nichols as an alternate.

Placement of a Memorial Street Sign for Patricia Jean Zajac on Francis St:

This Resolution calls for a memorial street sign "Patrick Zajac Way" be placed at the intersections of Francis St & Oswego St and Francis St & Tracy St. Ms. Zajac was much loved and valued member of Cornhill for many years.

Placement of an Honorary Street Sign for Joseph Moskal on Cornelia Place:

This Resolution calls for a memorial street sign "Moskal Way" to be placed at Cornelia Place & Genesee St and Cornelia Place & Cornelia St to honor Mr. Moskal who was a longtime resident, member of the Board of Alderman, and business man who made important contributions to the City of Utica.

Resolution Approving Intermunicipal Agreement with Oneida County for a Law Enforcement Coordinator for the Child Advocacy Center:

This intermunicipal agreement allows for the Utica Police Department to provide a Law Enforcement Coordinator that the County will pay for with a grant from New York State.

Commissioner of Deeds:

The Council can appoint residents of the City of Utica as Commissioners of Deeds, which allows them to collect petition signatures, as well as fulfill other duties. In September, we appointed:

Jade Euceda, 600 Blandina St, Utica NY

Resolution Endorsing Restore NY Grant Application - "Reinventing 131 Boston Place":

This Resolution allows the County to apply for a grant from the Empire State Development Corporation, to help improve and restore the old Boston Store.

Resolution for "Restore NY Special Project":

This allows the City to apply for a grant from the Empire State Development Corporation on behalf of the rehabilitation of the Mayro Building.

Resolution for "Restore NY Harbor":

This allows the City to apply for a grant from the Empire State Development Corporation on behalf of the rehabilitation of the "1933 Building" at Harbor Point.

New Forest Cemetery Has a New Board

On Friday, August 5th, there was a well-attended meeting of stakeholders for New Forest Cemetery. Slates of candidates for a new Board were presented, and everyone who owns a plot in the cemetery was allowed to vote. A combination of the slates were elected, and so the cemetery now has a new Board. It is a good, diverse group of men and women, who together represent the various people whose families are buried in New Forest or who own plots there. The new Board is working hard to get the Cemetery up on its feet again, and to explore ways in which the Cemetery can become more financially stable going forward. They will be holding an open house event this Fall, so stay tuned for details on that.

Left to right, the new Board members are: Kathy Hughes - Board Member,; Shawn Lancaster - Board Trustee and President; Jeremy Hayes - Board Trustee and Superintendent; Freddie Hamilton, Board Trustee and Treasurer; Michele Hart - Board Trustee and Secretary; and Sabrina Brown-Engram - Board Trustee.

New Forest Cemetery has a Facebook page, which you can find just by clicking the link provided below.



The newly elected Board of Trustees for New Forest Cemetery

[New Forest Cemetery on Facebook](#)

Loose Green Waste Pick Up Begins This Week

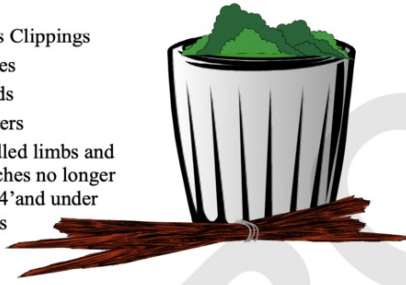
For the next 6 weeks, we can place our green waste loose at the curb and the DPW will come around at night and pick it up. Please be courteous to your neighbors and your City employees and follow the rules, as listed below.



CITY OF UTICA 2022 GREEN WASTE PICK-UP SCHEDULE

ALLOWABLE GREEN WASTE ITEMS

- Grass Clippings
- Leaves
- Weeds
- Flowers
- Bundled limbs and branches no longer than 4' and under 50 lbs



ITEMS NOT ALLOWED

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| NO Household garbage | NO Plastic |
| NO Plant Pots | NO Bricks |
| NO Soil | NO Cement |
| NO Shrubs | NO Lumber |
| NO Stumps | NO Construction Debris |
| NO Logs | NO Hazardous Waste |
| NO TREES | NO Chemicals |

The City of Utica **DOES NOT** pick up large green waste items such as trees, shrubs, logs and stumps. If you have large green waste items to be removed, call Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority at (315) 731-0238 to schedule a pick-up. A nominal fee is charged for this service.

NOTE: Landscaping and construction contractors are mandated by the City of Utica Code Sec. 2-22-41 to remove all green waste from any city property at which they have provided services.

City of Utica
1 Kennedy Plaza
Utica, NY 13502

Standard Mail
US Postage
PAID
Permit # 566
Utica, NY

Photo: an image of a postcard that Utica mailed to all households with the Green Waste schedule on it



CITY OF UTICA 2022 GREEN WASTE PICK-UP SCHEDULE

Place items loose at curb, **NOT** in the street.
(See reverse side for a list of allowable items.)

- NORTH** (Broad St. and NYC & HR Railroad north to city line)
Spring: STARTS April 11 – May 23 FINAL PICK-UP
Fall: STARTS Oct. 3 – Nov. 14 FINAL PICK-UP
- UPPER EAST** (Eagle St./Welshbush Rd. south to the city line and east of Genesee St./Memorial Parkway/Oneida St.)
Spring: STARTS April 12 – May 24 FINAL PICK-UP
Fall: STARTS Oct. 4 – Nov. 15 FINAL PICK-UP
- SOUTH** (Burrstone Rd. south to the city line and west of Oneida St.)
Spring: STARTS April 13 – May 25 FINAL PICK-UP
Fall: STARTS Oct. 5 – Nov. 16 FINAL PICK-UP
- LOWER EAST** (Broad St. to Eagle St. and east of Genesee St.)
Spring: STARTS April 14 – May 26 FINAL PICK-UP
Fall: STARTS Oct. 6 – Nov. 17 FINAL PICK-UP
- WEST** (Oriskany St. to Burrstone Rd. and west of Genesee St.)
Spring: STARTS April 15 – May 27 FINAL PICK-UP
Fall: STARTS Oct. 7 – Nov. 18 FINAL PICK-UP



CITY OF UTICA GREEN WASTE COLLECTION ROUTES

Dates subject to change due to weather at the DPW Commissioner's discretion. Your FINAL PICK-UP is the last day to put out bulk green waste. Heavy volume of green waste in certain areas of the city may cause delays. Please be patient with crews.

Between May 28 – September 30,
green waste **MUST** be in containers.
Each household is allowed (5) – 32 gallon barrels no more than 50 lbs each.
Branches must be bundled, no longer than 4' and weigh no more than 50 lbs.

**BULK GREEN WASTE PILES PUT OUT DURING
THE REST OF THE YEAR WILL BE CITED.**

Photo: an image of a postcard that Utica mailed to all households with the Green Waste schedule on it

Report from E&A - August - September 2022

The Board of Estimate and Apportionment is a five person Board, on which I serve, that oversees the day-to-day budget operations of the City. All transfers

of monies from one area of the budget to another must be approved by E&A, as well as all expenditures of supplemental monies that come into the City, as well as any and all changes to the Table of Organization, which lists all employees of the City. E&A is also authorized to settle lawsuits brought against the City.

Listing every transfer we make is turning out to be very time consuming. So from here on out, I will give a general summary of the work of E&A, and also provide a link where all of the minutes of E&A can be found.

E&A has met five times since my last Newsletter. The Board has run the full gamut of its various responsibilities. We've made budgetary transfers, added positions to the Table of Organization, allocated supplemental appropriations, and approved the new contract with both the CSEA and the union that represents members of the police department.

Full minutes of the Board of Estimate & Apportionment can be found at the link below.

[**Minutes for Board of Estimate & Apportionment**](#)

Watch Common Council Meetings Online

I've always encouraged everyone to attend Common Council meetings. Come and participate in our democratic process, even if only by witnessing the Council as we conduct the City's business. But if you can't come in person, you can always watch the livestream available on YouTube. So, young or old, on a computer or on your phone, even while eating pizza, feel free to tune in. Regular meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Our pre-meeting conference is at 6pm, and the Council meeting is at 7pm.

[**Watch Common Council Live on YouTube**](#)

Go to SUNA and Stay Informed

The South Utica Neighborhood Association meets every month at the Parkway Rec Center. Sign up for their Newsletter so you can stay informed of what's going on in South Utica.



Photo: an image of a SUNA meeting at the Ski Chalet at the Parkway Rec Center

[Sign up for the SUNA Newsletter](#)

Newsletter Archive Now Online

If you have found my Newsletters interesting and informative, I have good news. They are now all archived on my website.

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