

'Survive, Remember, Thrive: Armenian Traditions in Western New York'

CAM documentary screening Sunday

"Survive, Remember, Thrive: Armenian Traditions in Western New York" is a documentary video series celebrating local expressions of Armenian culture and heritage. The series is produced by the folk arts program at the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University and the Buffalo Documentary Project.

A short film and five short videos will debut to the public on Sunday, April 24, from 2-4 p.m. at the Russell J. Salvatore Dining Commons on the Niagara University campus. Remarks about the project and a Q&A will take place following the screening. Light refreshments will be provided. Registration is required for this event. Visit armenianwnyfilmseries.eventbrite.com to make a reservation.

CAM stated, "The project preserves the traditions, memories and stories of the local Armenian community through a short film and video series highlighting local churches, oral history and

family narratives, food traditions, family-owned businesses, artistic crafts, music and more. Documentation of local festivals and participants continues through the end of 2022, culminating with a final full release of an 11-episode series in spring 2023."

The museum continued, "In the early and mid-20th century, Niagara Falls, New York, and the Niagara Region in Canada became home to many resettled genocide survivors. The Armenian genocide of 1915 resulted in a massive displacement of Armenian survivors and the formation of a significant diaspora refugee community throughout the world, including one that formed in Western New York. While families settled throughout the Buffalo-Niagara metropolitan area, the East Falls Street neighborhood in the City of Niagara Falls became the major hub for the local Armenian community in the 20th century."

Amazon proposal: Traffic patterns a concern

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an impact, as entrances for their vehicles will be on Lockport Road.

Tom Scalzo, another Lockport Road resident, said he recently sat at the intersection of Lockport and Packard roads between 5:55 and 6:10 a.m.

In that 15-minute span, a total of 100 vehicles came his way, he said. He questioned the board about the progress of any traffic studies being conducted. In particular, he focused on Packard Road as the roadway facing the most potential change.

Packard Road, owned by Niagara County, along with Lockport Road, are being studied by SRF Associates, a transportation engineering and planning company, on behalf of Amazon. Amy Drake, senior managing traffic engineer, told the Town Board at the April 13 work session there are 11 intersections under review going all the way to the interstate.

At the time, she said timeframes focus on times between 6 and 8 a.m. and 4 and 6 p.m., as those will be considered the heaviest traffic flow times both from employees coming to or leaving the facility. She said the company is studying

how traffic will change and grow.

One solution, she said, was widening Lockport Road in front of the proposed facility and adding signal lights, which would allow an easier turn into or out of the facility from three different intersections.

Widening the road wouldn't address concerns from residents like D'Antuono, as the proposal doesn't include the area by Tuscarora Road, she said.

Packard Road needs some work, Councilman Marc C. Carpenter said. He should know: He lives in a subdivision off the road. He's watched the traffic, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, increase.

He said he's in favor of finding alternatives, including a potential switch for truck traffic onto Lockport Road, a subject first broached by fellow Councilman Richard A. Sirianni on April 13.

Sirianni, meanwhile, said he's received calls from residents on that section of Lockport Road unhappy with that proposal, as well.

"No matter how this thing turns out, whether it's a yes or a no, 35% of people in this town are going to beat us up for it," Sirianni said.

"We have to make the best decisions for the town as a whole. We have to figure out what the incentives are for the town and use that information to make the right decisions."

Town Supervisor Lee Wallace finished the meeting Tuesday with some thoughts of his own.

"I don't want anyone to think this is a done deal," Wallace said. "This is far from done. And it was handled the same way any other project that comes before the Town Board has or will be handled. The developer makes an application. And first in line is the Planning Board. The Town Board has not taken any action without the Planning Board first reviewing all of the information and issuing an opinion."

Such an opinion is likely next month, as the town has pushed back its Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Town Board meetings by one week with the expectation that a New York State Department of Transportation traffic study will be concluded and filed. Though none of the roads in question are state-owned, the department is weighing in on the project, Wallace said.





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