

SLA working with eateries

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help restaurants expand their footprints to be able to host additional patrons.

"Today's announcement by Gov. Cuomo is welcome news, but many restaurants have limited outdoor seating or none at all, so we need to look for creative ways to help them be successful," Ortt said. "That could mean allowing them to use their parking lots to set up tables, perhaps adjacent sidewalks and maybe even look at ways to close some streets down to traffic if that makes sense in areas with several restaurant in close proximity."

Ortt and Andres said the ability to allow for an expanded footprint is a decision that rests with local governments, which would have to temporarily waive certain zoning ordinances.

"This is the time to cut through the red tape and help these local businesses that have been devastated over the last three months begin to get back on their feet," said Andres, who chairs the county economic development committee. "The county Health Department

has some oversight of restaurants, but I already checked with them and there is nothing under their purview that would prevent expanded outdoor dining options. So, now it's a matter of zoning and permitting."

Ortt said that, without localities joining the effort to help restaurants expand their capacity, many restaurants simply would not be able to reopen.

"As hopeful as today's announcement is, restaurants need to be able to serve a certain number of customers in order for it to be economically feasible, and they are already well aware that, when indoor dining resumes in phase three, it will be with a much reduced capacity," Ortt said. "So, relaxing zoning where appropriate is a step we must take if we want to save the local restaurant business in Niagara County."

The Village of Lewiston already opened up its green spaces for restaurant patrons to sit and "picnic in the park."

SLA Guidance

In response to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's decision to allow restaurants



Outdoor seating is available on the patio at Water Street Landing in Lewiston.

to offer outdoor seating in phase two, the New York State Liquor Authority posted the following:

Effective Thursday, June 4, 2020

Pursuant to the Governor's order, effective Thursday, June 4, 2020, all licensees in regions that have entered phase 2 of reopening and which have on-premises service privileges under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law (ABC Law) may, subject to the guidance below, resume outdoor, on-premises

service of alcoholic beverages and/or food. This guidance shall continue until July 3, 2020 but may be extended or reduced depending upon the circumstances.

To aid in prevention of the spread of the coronavirus and assist businesses impacted by the current state of emergency, the Governor has ordered the Chairman of the State Liquor Authority (SLA) to promulgate guidance on a streamlined process for expansion

of licensed premises for service of alcoholic beverages.

The State Liquor Authority offers the following guidance:

Consumption:

√ Any consumption of food and/or beverage must happen in outdoor, open-air areas, without a fixed roof (besides a temporary or seasonal awning or cover).

√ Any consumption of food and/or beverage must happen while seated at a table, bar, counter, or similar contrivance.

√ All tables must be 6 feet apart; any seat at a bar, counter, or similar contrivance must be 6 feet apart.

√ All staff of the licensed business must wear face masks at all times.

√ All customers must wear face masks at any time they are not seated.

√ Any consumption shall be subject to all other relevant executive orders, guidances promulgated by the Department of Health, and/or any other relevant agency guidance.

Find details related to expansion of premises online at www.wnypapers.com.

Old Fort Niagara to offer additional live, interactive, distance-learning programs in June

Old Fort Niagara will continue to offer live, interactive, distance-learning programs this month. Unique sessions will share information about Fort Niagara's military history, from the early 1700s to World War I, at 10 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. The content is suitable for adults and children

alike and all programs are free.

While the historic site remains closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, staffers are taking this opportunity to connect with people from near and far.

Using Zoom as the platform, the fort's new programs will be narrated PowerPoint presentations fol-

lowed by Q&As. The sessions will start at 10 a.m. and will last about 30 minutes.

June 9 - Fort Niagara in the American Revolution: Learn how British control of Fort Niagara impacted the events of the American Revolution along the expansive American frontier.

June 11 - An Overview of the War of 1812: Find out where Fort Niagara fits into the overall history of the War of 1812.

June 16 - Betsy Doyle: 1812 Heroine: Find out how historical detective work turned a legend into a flesh and blood woman who sacrificed almost everything for

her country.

June 18 - Training Ground for the Great War: Fort Niagara in World War One: Join the officer candidates who trained at Fort Niagara in the summer and fall of 1917 for service in World War I.

Register for each session at www.oldfortniagara.org.



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Erie County: Island Dispatch - Friday, June 26 / Grand Island PennySaver - Tuesday, June 23

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