

Carthage Downtown Restoration

Making Carthage a "Community of Choice"

Carthage Industrial Development
Corporation

6-1-08

Started With A Goal-Make Carthage a Community of Choice

- Recognized that the Downtown is the entrance to the Village, and the future of the community depended on peoples first impressions.
- As people move to the North Country they will chose where to live based in part on the overall appearance of the community
- An attractive downtown is indicative of a proud and vibrant community

Community Perspective

- Recognized that improving the appearance of Downtown benefited the entire community. In fact, in many cases the benefit to the community would far exceed the benefit to the individual property owner.
- Keeping public conversation positive is critical.
- Make process as seamless as possible. Keep property owner effort as painless as possible. Minimize property owner risk.

Take advantage of available resources

- The Carthage Village Board
- The Tug Hill Commission
- The Carthage Area Chamber of Commerce
- The Economic Development Corporation of Carthage
- National Grid Main Street Program
- The Carthage Department of Public Works
- Jefferson County Planning and Highway Departments
- Local Businesses
- Local Architects and Engineers
- DHCR Main Street Program Staff
- Development Authority of the North Country

Funding Sources

- New York Main Street Program Grant
- National Grid Main Street Program Grants
- RestoreNY Grant Program
- EDCC Loan funds
- EDCC grant for design work
- Owner's personal investment
- Local bank loans
- Village of Carthage Public Works
- CDBG Comprehensive Grant
- Carthage Industrial Development Corporation (grants and cash flow)

Three Facades at Once

This project included three separate properties all part of the same structure. The Challenge was to keep the cost low for the property owners who were very skeptical.

The owners each agreed to contribute \$5,000 in cash toward the project. We agreed to reimburse their funds if we were unsuccessful in developing an affordable project for which we could come up with the remaining match. Preliminary estimates totaled roughly \$60,000. We pursued assistance through the National Grid Main Street program and local program grants. Fortunately we had one contractor that was the low bidder on all three facades which totaled \$87,140. The remaining funding was not hard to secure, recognizing that the project benefit was significantly weighted to the overall community.



Before and After, 256-264 State St.



In 2002 the Carthage Industrial Development Corporation took ownership of the Carthage Furniture Store building (256 State Street) and the Dollar Depot building (262 State Street) in downtown Carthage. Both of these historic structures were in a serious state of disrepair and the roof of the Furniture Store building had recently collapsed. This \$7 million project funded primarily through tax credit programs became the anchor of downtown.

Rear of 256 State Street



- Rear of site was converted into a 80 space public parking lot for use by those doing business in downtown. The project was funded with a \$99,000 USDA RBEG and In-kind assistance from Jefferson county Highway Department

Stefano's and Carthage Fine Chocolates

- Both projects were completed as leasehold improvements.
- Stefano's Pizzeria was displaced by the fire. Stefano's is a major draw in the community and was planning to relocate outside town.
- We clearly recognized Stefano's as our downtown anchor.
- This \$400,000 project utilized \$100,000 in Main Street funds and was matched with tenant investments and project resources associated with the primary redevelopment of 256-264 State St.
- Carthage Fine Chocolates utilized \$23,700 in Main Street funds which was matched with tenant investments and overall project resources. The total project was \$62,000.
- In both cases, Main Street Grants made these projects happen



Carthage Fine Chocolate before and after



Stefano's Before and After

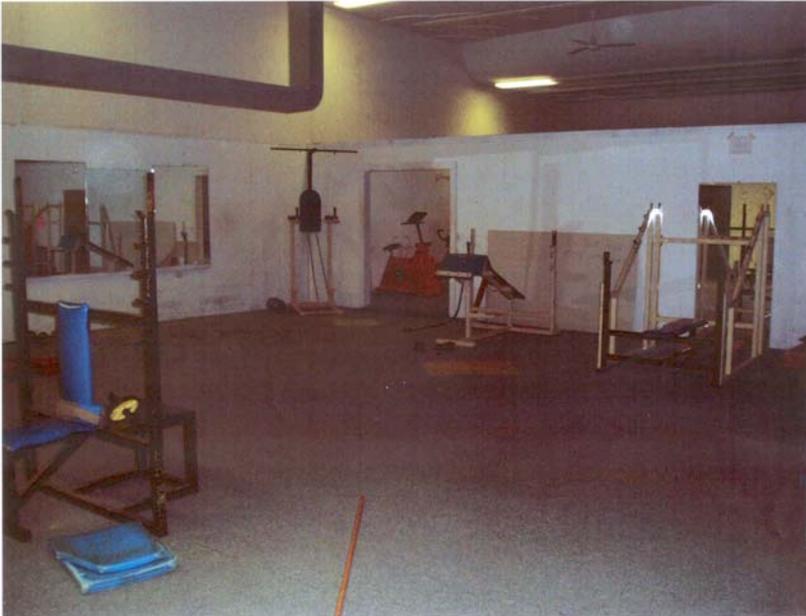


YMCA

The YMCA took on a major rehabilitation project at 250 State St.. We participated in the \$35,000 façade component with a \$10,000 façade grant. Interior restoration of the facility was completed at a cost of \$280,000. funds were secured from the Watertown YMCA as well as the local Boys Club and regional foundations.

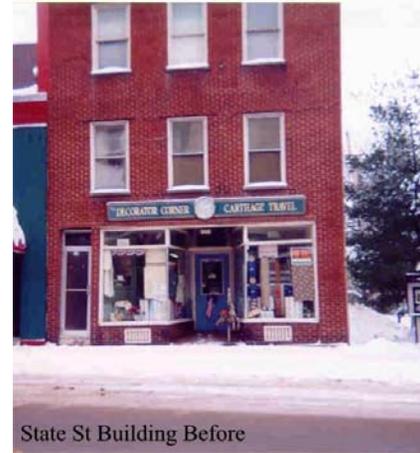


YMCA Before and After



246 State Street

- This was a \$66,000 project that included a \$25,000 loan from the EDCC, \$10,000 façade grant, \$19,441 Building renovation grant and \$12,000 in owner investment.

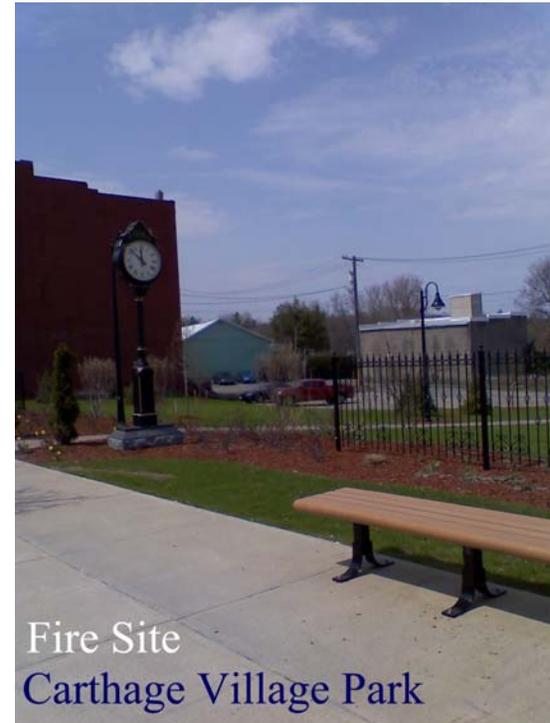


State St Building Before



State St Building After

Fire Site



The Village of Carthage entered into a lease agreement with the owner of the Fire Site to develop downtown parking. The owners agreed, as long as the parking lot was landscaped. The Carthage Industrial Development Corporation, and three local businesses donated funds toward the landscaping of the site and installation of a community clock. Total Value of improvements exceeded \$150,000.

Buckley Building

- The Buckley Building stood vacant since the late 1980's. This larger than life building was in imminent danger of collapse, but many years of study had produced no solutions.
- The RestoreNY program came to the rescue in late 2006 with the award of a one million dollar grant. Combined with \$300,000 in local loan funds the building is being renovated into first floor commercial space and upper floor apartments. Project completion is slated for August 2008.



Carthage Hospital Veteran's Clinic

- This \$1.9 million dollar project included converting an abandoned grocery store into a medical complex primarily serving Veterans. The project draws roughly 10,000 visitors to the community annually.
- The project was funded by the Carthage Area Hospital and a \$200,000 loan from the Economic Development Corporation of Carthage



VA Clinic - Before Pic



Results

- The Main Street program provided the seed money to convince the local business community that the downtown could be restored in an affordable manner. An attractive streetscape has resulted in 6 new businesses locating in the downtown including a candy store, Italian Restaurant and Pizzeria, Tax Software Company with 13 employees, an AT&T cell phone store, Dance Studio, Plumbing Store and soon to open Print Shop and Ice Cream Parlor.
- More than anything, Carthage is becoming a Community of Choice within the North Country and the community dialogue remains positive