Fairfax History

The Fairfax building, first located on the corner of Castle and Geneva Streets was built around 1890. Unfortunately, the building burned down around 1902 and was replaced with the Centennial Block, known today as the north side of Castle Street in downtown Geneva. Later on, Fairfax Paint and Wallpaper moved on to the corner of Castle and Linden Streets. The block we now know as Linden Street, was formerly known as the “Fairfax Block,” due to the Fairfax family owning all of the buildings on the block. The Fairfax Paint and Wallpaper building had four separate floors. The fourth floor manufactured paint, the second and third floor housed workers, and the first floor sold the paint. Today, if you are standing at the Southern end of Linden Street and look above The Gallery (the former Farmer's and Merchant's Bank), you can see a faded Fairfax advertisement, painted on the brick building, promoting their services.

Sustainability Plan

The block in downtown Geneva, that is defined by Main Street, Castle Street, Linden Street, and Seneca Street has great potential to become an environmentally friendly community space. Our team envisions making tax lot 305, the former Gas Station lot, a amphitheater that could serve as a place for concerts, wine tastings, or community lectures. In addition to the amphitheater, we envision the amphitheater that looks out on to a pergola which we serve as covered parking, as well as, a place to grow plants and vegetation on top of – making the area aesthetically pleasing. Next, a LED lit path that will lead from the alleyway on the eastern side of the Smith Opera Center to Castle Street will be constructed to encourage consumer activity throughout all of downtown Geneva. The path will be lined with old wine barrels and apple crates filled with plants to make the area inviting. This path will create a space for street vendors to sell their products, as well as, a place for the local restaurants to offer an “al fresco” option. Lastly, our team envisions a focus on rear entrance revitalization.

Demographics and Users

This area of downtown is frequented by a diverse array of people. The restaurants offer a wide-range of cuisine options making the area desirable to visit from the surrounding communities. The shops are unique drawing any passerby’s attention and making the area idiosyncratic. The combination of the local amenities draws students from Hobart and William Colleges to the local cafes, restaurants and bars on the weekends. It is a great collaboration space for the Geneva and HWS communities, alike.