



Canastota Public Library

CANASTOTA
CANAL TOWN
CORPORATION

YOUR Opportunity
To Help Mold
A Greater Community

Canastota Public Library

Erie Canal State Park Approved

Following completion of a successful feasibility study by the Old Erie Canal State Park Study Committee, which had been appointed by Governor Rockefeller, the 1967 Legislature unanimously approved the creation of a new State Park, along the length of the historic old Erie Canal between DeWitt and Rome in Onondaga, Madison and Oneida Counties.

Also approved was a State appropriation of \$150,000 to defray the cost of preparing a "Master Plan" for the development of this unique new State Park. This Master Plan Study, which has already begun, is expected to be completed some time in 1968. The entire Erie Canal Park project, as recommended in the Feasibility Study, is set up as a long range ten-year program, involving a potential total investment during the period of \$12,355,500. Historically and scenically this proposed Erie Canal Park development has promise of becoming one of the greatest tourist attractions in New York State in future years.

Canastota's Interest Stressed

Located in the center of the proposed park tract, Canastota's interest in the project is plainly evident. The Feasibility Study recommends that the administration and maintenance headquarters for the Erie Canal State Park, including a tourist information center, should be established in Canastota. Here the park naturally divides into two districts (a) Canastota west — the Erie Canal Park, and (b) Canastota east, the Erie Canal Park and a scenic highway.

Through the years, to a considerable extent, Canastota has maintained its integrity as a Canal Town. It is the largest of the communities along this stretch of the old Canal, and the richest in canal era architecture. One block, paralleling the Erie Canal on the north side of Canal Street, contains eleven structures that date back to the canal days of nearly a century ago. Restoration of an historic building as park headquarters could provide the incentive for private restoration of other canal architecture in the same area.

It is also to be noted that State development costs in Canastota for administrative and maintenance headquarters and information center are tentatively estimated at \$236,500.

Another important asset to Canastota's aspiration to be Canal Town, U.S.A., is that the project lies less than one mile from Exit 34 of the Thruway, a major access point to the proposed Park.

Economic Impact of Park Activities

The Erie Canal Park from DeWitt to Rome, as envisioned in the Feasibility Study, involves a 40-mile stretch of the old Erie Canal, and the only section remaining in which a flow of water is still maintained. It is of major significance in American history, since no other man-made waterway played a more important part in the development of the nation. The creation of the new Park contemplates facilities for canoeing, boating, fishing, swimming, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, picnicking and camping. This presently neglected historical and recreational resource, when properly developed, should be beneficial to the State, and particularly to our own locality, both culturally and economically.

An expert from Travel Research Associates has stated: "The typical touring couple spends at least \$35 a day for a room, meals, gasoline, shopping and sightseeing. If the Erie Canal Park attracted just one couple every day of the year it would mean an expenditure of \$12,775. Just 100 couples per day would mean total expenditures of \$1,277,500 in a year." Thus the tourism encouraged by the Erie Canal Park development would have a highly favorable impact on the economy of this area.

Canastota Canal Town Corporation Needed

If we are to keep abreast of progress, and co-ordinate our activities at the local level with those of the State and Counties, as the Park program advances, we must have an enthusiastic, continuing organization in Canastota dedicated to this specific purpose.

The Canal Town Planning Committee, with the counsel of Robert Morris, management consultant of Utica, whose services were assigned to this community under a grant by the New York State Council on the Arts, has decided that the following measures are immediately advisable and necessary:

1. A non-profit membership corporation should be formed to be known as Canastota Canal Town Corporation.
2. An intensive Charter Membership campaign should be conducted forthwith to obtain as many members of the Corporation as possible within the community and surrounding area, at a membership fee of \$10 each.
3. Following the conclusion of the membership drive, members will meet to approve corporation by-laws and elect directors and officers to promote the Corporation's work.
4. Set up necessary committees to assist in the work, such as Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Zoning Committee, Park Co-ordination Committee, and possibly others.

Scope of Corporation Activities

Among the activities such a corporation might fruitfully pursue might be mentioned the following:

1. Determine the status of current Village of Canastota and Town of Lenox Master Plans, in view of possible need for updating.

2. Engage a professional engineering and architectural firm for a survey and evaluation of existing structures in the Canal St. area, and the community at large for possible restoration, with determination of costs involved and a tentative time-table for restoration.

3. Review current municipal zoning codes for possible revision in connection with the Canal Park program.

4. Maintain close liaison with the consultants engaged by the Central New York State Park Council to develop the Master Plan for the Erie Canal State Park.

5. Evaluate both Federal and State assistance programs for possible financial aid in acquisition of properties or for their rehabilitation. Also explore with the HUD agency in Washington the steps necessary to qualify for Urban Renewal assistance.

YOU Are Invited To Join

If you believe with us that Canastota is coming alive to its fascinating date with destiny to be "Canal Town, U.S.A.", you are cordially invited to become a Charter Member of the Canastota Canal Town Corporation.

No longer should the familiar old Erie Canal with all its historic and scenic significance be taken for granted. Our future greatness and unique distinction as a community is already knocking at our door. The time to open the door to all this potential benefit for our whole area is now.

Help speed the day for "Canal Town, U.S.A." right here in Canastota, by becoming a Charter Member of Canastota Canal Town Corporation.

CANAL TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE

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