Mayor Aiello, city officials, contractors involved in the project and local residents attended the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting of Lincoln Square, Olean’s new open air pavilion in Lincoln Park on August 24, 2019 during the R.E.A.P. Olean Farmers’ Market.

The Lincoln Square project was funded in part by former Senator Catharine Young, Cattaraugus County and Empire State Development. The project included a permanent building to house the Farmers’ Market and other vendors as well as restrooms, park furniture, landscaping and an outdoor bistro.

Lincoln Park has been a part of Olean since it was founded. Initially called the Public Square and was charted from South Street to Times Square and Union Street to Barry Street.
It has been an excellent summer. The City’s Youth Recreation program in the parks had a banner year. Our pools were opened and made those hot summer days easier to handle. The summer concerts in the park were well received. And new this year, the City initiated roller skating at the Rec. Center. At the end of August the City opened our newest facility, Lincoln Square. If you haven’t visited the REAP Farmers’ Market on Saturday morning, it is worth the visit. You’ll find some great buys and probably meet up with an old friend or an acquaintance. A number of streets and crosswalks were worked on during the summer. In addition we started a TNRV program to work on the feral cat problem that has plagued our neighborhoods. It was been a great season and I look forward to fall.

The Beautification Committee did an excellent job with the flowers on North Union Street and we are always looking for more volunteers to help with weeding.
SCENES FROM LINCOLN SQUARE OPENING AUGUST 24, 2019
Lincoln Park has been a part of Olean since it was founded in 1804. Initially called the Public Square, it was charted from South Street to Times Square and Union Street to Barry Street. The above photo was taken in 1861.

The original St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church is on Barry Street. The building was moved to the corner of East State and Barry Street to allow for the current Church to be built.

The residence on the corner is the home of C.V.B. Barse. Mr. Barse was president of the Exchange Bank and elected to the State Legislature. His home was moved to make room for the Higgins’ mansion. One part of this extensive house is on the corner of West Henley and Seventh Street.

The next building is the First Baptist Church. The small building on the right is the original Olean Police Station.

The three surrounding photographs are in a Olean Historical Society scrapbook. They show Lincoln Park from different angles during its 215 years of serving as a public square. At some point the “Plank Road” or today’s E. State St. intersected the Public Square.

The town hall and School #3 were built on the land between the East State and today’s Times Square. School #3 was demolished in the 1950’s to make room for today’s Municipal Building.

On the South Union Street side, The Foreman Library stood from 1889-1908 when the Olean Public Library received funds from Andrew Carnegie to build the Beaux-Arts style building designed by Edward Tilton. At about the same time (1909-10) the Olean Post Office was built. It was designed by James Knox Taylor.
There are a number of monuments in Lincoln Park. The first monument is illustrated in the upper right hand corner. It was dedicated to Major Hoops by the Daughters of the American Revolution, Olean founder, during the City’s Centennial Celebration in 1904.

In 1909, Civil War veterans of the local GAR petitioned the commissioners of the park to name it Lincoln Park in honor of the great President, Abraham Lincoln. They also planned for a suitable soldiers’ monument to be erected in the park. In 1938 the Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War followed through and built the monument in the center of the park.

After WWII, the Gold Star Mothers commissioned a monument to honor those who served our country and made the ultimate sacrifice. The benches that surround the monument remind us of the four basic freedoms for which our soldiers fought: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Religion, Freedom from Fear, and Freedom from Want.

The bell at the west end of Lincoln Square has had a long history in Olean. It was originally the bell of the first Lutheran Church in Olean. In 1884 the town’s board of trustees purchased it, had it recast and placed in the town hall where it functioned as a fire warning system. During WWII it was moved to the Exchange Bank and its toll signaled a black out, a WWII defense measure. When the war ended the bell was tucked away with old pipes in the South Union Street pump station until 1954—when it was shined up and moved to the park as the City celebrated its 150th anniversary.

Special Thanks to City Historian Dave Deckman and Gail Feuchter of the Bartlett House for supplying historical information and photographs.
You can reach the mayor at his office in the Olean Municipal Building at 101 East State Street in Olean, or by phone at 716 376-5615, or by e-mail at waiello@cityofolean.org.

“T’m open to suggestions and I’d like to hear from people. If we’re doing something you think is right, I’d like to know. If we’re doing something you think is wrong, I’d like to know. If you have suggestions for me, I beg you pass them along.”

— Mayor Aiello, January 2, 2014

The City’s website is great source of up-to-date information. Please visit it at cityofolean.org. In addition the city has a Face Book page and Twitter feed—all are excellent sources for information.

Seniors are Never Bored In Olean

The Olean Senior Center located at the John Ash Community Center on North Barry Street has many activities and programs for those age 55 and above. The monthly calendar is now on the city’s website under the Youth and Recreation Department-Olean Senior Center. For more information please contact: 376-5670 or seniorcenter@cityofolean.org.

Making Wedding Plans?

Mayor Aiello is available to perform marriage ceremonies in the City of Olean. Please call his office (376-5615) for more details. There is no set fee, however any donations will be placed in the Mayor’s Scholarship Fund.

New York State law requires you to obtain a marriage license twenty-four hours prior to a marriage ceremony. For more information about marriage licenses please call the Department of Vital Records at 376-5605 or the City Clerk at 376-5604.

Many marriages are performed right in the Mayor’s Office. The John Ash Community Center on Barry Street is an excellent spot for a reception as are Olean’s various parks facilities. For more information on the city’s facilities please call 376-5666.

Lincoln Park has long been a place of congregation for our residents. In 1915 the Women’s Suffrage Movement held a torch rally in the park. And Robert Kennedy visited the park—twice.

The Rotary Club has been a big supporter of Lincoln Park. The Gazebo was built by the Rotarians and is currently being refurbished by the group. The Rotarians also commissioned the “silent policeman” on the corner.

“In this age when we are connected by computers, when we listen through ear buds, when so much of our daily routine includes screen-time, it is so important to have a refuge like this to bring us together, in the great outdoors, in the center of town, to interact and socialize with other members of our community.

“I thank Olean’s forefathers for planning and preserving this common area for us and I thank everyone who has supported the Lincoln Square project as we dedicate this new structure which will set Lincoln Park up to be Olean’s 21st century’s Public Square.”

— Mayor Aiello @ Lincoln Square Opening