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## Center for frail elders advances in Amherst



[Tracey Drury](#)

Buffalo Business First Reporter- *Business First*

[Email](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

It's been nearly a decade in the works, but a project designed to change the way seniors access services may finally open this year near the Weinberg Campus in Getzville.

The Town Square for Aging is a collaborative project by 25 agencies that will create a one-stop center for frail elderly, offering such services as primary and specialty care, behavioral health as well as retail services like banking and legal services and opportunities for socialization.

The project, led by the Weinberg Campus and its affiliated programs, will serve both individuals living in senior apartments as well as individuals in the community who opt to remain in their own homes.

Plans call for the Town Square for Aging to operate from a facility renovated this fall located near North Forest and John J. Audubon Parkway, strategically located near both the Weinberg Campus and the Amherst Center For Senior Services. Interior work continues within the site on tenant office suites.

"We are currently in the process of formalizing agreements with anchor tenants, and are busy readying the building for day-to-day operations," said [Kelly Lincoln](#), hired as project manager to get the site operational.

Meantime, the organization itself has been incorporated, and paperwork has been filed for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status; and a board of directors has also been elected to lead the Town Square Association.

The Town Square for Aging has received nearly \$6 million in support, including \$2 million from the state Department of Health, \$1 million from the Benderson Family Foundation and additional grants from the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation of Baltimore, MD, the Michael and Roberta Joseph Foundation, the James H. Cummings Foundation, Independent Health Foundation, the Michael and Roberta Joseph Foundation and the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York.

A second grant for \$235,000 from the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York came this winter to fund ongoing planning activities and operations support.

Projections call for serving 2,500 frail elders in northern Erie County. In addition to individual nonprofit agencies in the community, partners include Independent Health and the University at Buffalo, with participation by the schools of public health, nursing, social work, pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences.

Lincoln said more details on a timeline for opening and provider partners should be available by early summer.

Tracey Drury covers health/medical, nonprofits and insurance