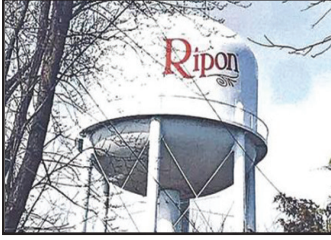


# Commonwealth Ripon Press

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By Joe Schulz

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Downtown Ripon was filled with holiday cheer this past weekend.

Storefront windows came to life with live music, scenes from “A Christmas Carol” and even Kevin McCallister from the 1990 classic “Home Alone.”

Add a festive holiday parade, opportunities for shopping, dining and multiple smaller events, and Ripon transformed into a winter wonderland.

That’s because the city’s signature holiday event, Dickens of a Christmas, returned for its 31st year.

**FOR MORE ON THIS**

✓ For more photos and coverage of Dickens, see pages 6, 10, 11 and 24.

While the event remained limited due to COVID-19, it was back stronger than 2020, when the holiday parade and multiple other facets were canceled.

Ripon Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Jason Man-smith was happy to see the event return, and was pleased with the turnout as downtown Ripon was

## Ripon comes to life with Dickens of a Christmas



HUDSON VANDE ZANDE, right, portrays Kevin McCallister from the Christmas classic “Home Alone” inside Fiddler Creek as Dickens of a Christmas patrons smile from outside the store. Jonathan Bailey photo

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# Village Green to expand in 2022

## Ripon Main Street purchases Ransom Street property adjacent to venue

By Joe Schulz

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A major upgrade will be coming to the Village Green in 2022.

The Village Green has become a community gathering place right in the heart of downtown Ripon, hosting the Summer Concert Series and various other events each year.

Ripon Main Street Inc. last week closed on the purchase of 409 Ransom St., a property adjacent to the Village Green. The purchase gives it the opportunity to expand the gathering space in the coming months.

Although the property has been purchased, Ripon Main Street still is in the process of brainstorming what exactly it wants to do with the new parcel of land.

Ripon Main Street Executive Director Craig Tebon said Main Street will look to potentially

relocate the structure on the Ransom Street property, if community members show interest in purchasing it.

If no one shows an interest in the home, it will be razed.

Main Street’s goal is to have the property cleared by spring, so it can begin landscaping.

“The hard part was acquiring the property,” Tebon said. “Now, everything will fall into place. As the weeks and months go by, we’ll have a better idea of what happens to the structure.”

While Main Street closed on the purchase of 409 Ransom St. recently, it’s something that’s been in the works for 25 years.

Ripon Main Street always has talked about trying to acquire the property, and had multiple discussions with the family that owned it over the years.

When the property was listed for sale several weeks ago, Main Street submitted an offer to purchase the property.



RIPON MAIN STREET Executive Director Craig Tebon, left, gets a little carried away with his excitement to expand the Village Green as he attempts to start clearing the 409 Ransom St. property with a mallet as Main Street Director Emeritus Bill Neill and Main Street board member Shelly Kastenschmidt of Diedrich Jewelers pretend to try to stop him. Joe Schulz photo

That purchase couldn’t have been achieved without community support for Ripon Main Street and the Summer Concert Series, Tebon added.

“We ended up using our savings account to come up with a down payment,” he said. “I don’t believe we would have been in the

position to make that investment had it not been for some really good years of concert attendance [because] we were able to create a nice, rainy day fund.”

Tom Moniz, president of the Ripon Main Street board of directors, believes the purchase of 409 Ransom St. serves as another

example of downtown leaders trying to be forward-thinking in looking for ways to continually enhance downtown.

“Hopefully, the payoff comes down the road,” he said. “This recognizes the importance of in-

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