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‘Little Chicago’ producers say they have a firm timeline

By Adam Vosler
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A firm timeline finally appears to be in place for “Little Chicago,” as local filming for the Prohibition-era mobster movie should begin by year’s end.

Filming for the movie, which tells a tale of 1920s bootleggers in Bradford and Olean, N.Y., has been delayed several times due to difficulty securing big-name actors and tax credit issues, among other snags.

“I’ve come to realize, there’s so much work to be done and all this advance stuff,” Carl Veno, screenwriter and executive producer, said Thursday.

If that wasn’t enough, Mr. Veno announced a new director in late September, as Jason Wiles took over for Terry O’Keefe.

Mr. Veno cited Wiles’ Hollywood connections as one reason for the switch, believing he can bring in top-end talent for the film. Progress on that end remains a mystery, as Mr. Wiles, who played Bosco on the television series “Third Watch” for six years, does not want Mr. Veno to reveal any cast members yet.

The crew’s tour of the area will begin in Arcade, N.Y., where Olean’s Erie Railroad Station will be recreated, along with an orphan train. Members of Christian Youth Corps Inc. recently helped restore passenger cars that will be used in an important scene.

“The Christian youth group really helped us up there,” Mr. Veno said. “They’re painting the trains dark green, as they were in the 1920s.”

After Arcade, Mr. Veno’s crew will next spend three to four days filming in Niagara Falls, N.Y. Olean filming will take place at the Christopher Columbus Lodge.

Tentative plans are to hold a nighttime gun battle in the nearby streets.

“That’s where (infamous Bradford gangster and focus of ‘Little Chicago’) Al Ritchie was badly wounded and was in the hospital for five months,” Mr. Veno explained.

Shooting will wrap up in Bradford at the Option House and the Pennhills Club. The Seneca Allegany Casino in Salamanca, N.Y., has also been mentioned in the past as the possible host of a boxing scene.

“We’re looking for a place to end the movie in Bradford,” Mr. Veno added. “We’re going to have an explosive end to it.”