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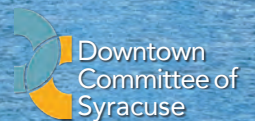
SYRACUSE 2023



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A time of transformation for downtown Syracuse

Downtown Syracuse is in a transformational moment. Reflecting on the last few years, I have watched our city reimagine its landscape into a thriving community with amazing places for people to explore and beautiful real estate for people to call home.

Our mission is to build a thriving downtown that is welcoming, diverse, safe, and accessible.

The success of downtown Syracuse's revitalization is a collaborative effort from community partners, residents, business owners, and investors who share the vision of our city center as a social hub and a place for people to connect. This partnership and dedication have helped downtown Syracuse to earn the reputation as a destination for memorable and meaningful experiences.

In the last year, \$180 million in new investment has occurred in downtown Syracuse, creating seven new Class A office headquarters, more than 135 new housing units and enhanced public infrastructure, and tourism amenities. We have welcomed 26 new businesses including 11 retail shops, nine food and drink establishments, five personal-service businesses, and an entertainment facility. Looking ahead, we anticipate \$26 million more in investment to occur before the end of the 2023 calendar year.

One of the most notable areas of investment is in downtown's housing. There are more than 2,800 apartments and condos in the district with another 120 additional apartments under construction this year. This represents 4 percent growth in housing, this year, alone. Every downtown Syracuse neighborhood is experiencing investment, including the following highlights:

- Work continues at the Mizpah Towers where new apartments, along with commercial and retail space are

being added through a \$6.7 million investment.

- In downtown's southern district, construction is underway as the former annex of the Hotel Syracuse is transformed into Symphony Place. This \$17.4 million redevelopment will result in two floors of commercial space and 75 apartments.

- In Hanover Square:

- The upper floors of 246 E. Water St. have been converted into two apartments, and two retail spaces are being improved on the ground floor.

- On East Genesee Street, a historic renovation of the Granite Building is underway. Vacant upper floors will become market-rate housing and the building's canal-era façade will be restored for a new retail space.

- At the former M&T Bank Building, 119 new residences have been added through a \$23 million investment. Now called The Treasury, the building also features unique event space, with more



VIEWPOINT:
MERIKE TREIER

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc.

than 500 onsite public-parking spaces to support demand in Hanover and Clinton Squares.

- In Armory Square:
 - A new six-story mixed-use building is planned to transform the existing Armory Parking Garage into THE CLINTON at Armory Square. This \$18 million investment will bring new vitality to the neighborhood and is scheduled to begin construction in the first quarter of 2024. A 100-car parking garage on the lower levels, with residential and commercial space above will energize a key downtown location. An open courtyard on the second level will overlook Clinton and Walton Streets.
 - One block away, the 128-year-old Bentley Settle Building is being converted into 30 residential units. A new restaurant, called The Whiskey Coop, is slated to open in the lower level.

This residential growth has helped attract new businesses to our city's core. Employers see the value of a downtown Syracuse location and the amenities it offers as both a talent attractor and retention tool.

In Clinton Square, VIP Structures completed its \$32 million renovation of The Post, adding employer density and new headquarters locations for Chase Design and VIP. NBT Bank will also be part of the development by moving its Central New York regional headquarters to The Post.

On Columbus Circle, the Carnegie Building has entered a



PHOTO CREDIT: ZOEYADVERTISING.COM

The Equitable Towers in downtown Syracuse, where renovations have created fresh, new office space.

▶ SEE TRANSFORMATION, PAGE 51

Officials held shovels and tossed dirt during a July 21 groundbreaking ceremony for the Interstate 81 viaduct-replacement project. State, federal, and local officials held the ceremony at STEAM at Dr. King Elementary School at 416 E. Raynor Ave. in Syracuse.

ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ



Work on I-81 construction project gets into full swing

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Crews have started their work on the first two contracts on the \$2.25 billion Interstate 81 (I-81) viaduct-replacement project, while those with questions, concerns, or a desire to help work

on the project can connect with two project-outreach centers in Syracuse.

At the same time, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) was scheduled to close the exit ramp along I-81 south to Interstate 481 north on the morning of Sept. 11.

The closure of exit 16A and traffic-pat-

tern change are related to the I-81 viaduct-replacement project, NYSDOT said in its Aug. 30 announcement. The department expects the newly aligned ramp to open in the spring of 2025.

The closure is “necessary” to begin

► SEE I-81, PAGE 50



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The Hayner Hoyt Corporation of Syracuse has been working to redevelop the building at 400 S. Salina St. in Syracuse, which is now known as City Center.

ERIC REINHARDT/CNYBJ

Redevelopment work on City Center is nearing completion

SYRACUSE — The makeover of the 280,000-square-foot downtown Syracuse building that was once home to Sibley's department store is nearly complete.

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

Jeremy Thurston, president of the Hayner Hoyt Corporation, figures the workers involved had about 98 percent of the exterior work done. On the inside, about 75 percent of City Center is occupied with some small spaces yet to be leased.

“As we get tenants lined up, we’ll finish building out the interior,” Thurston said in an Aug. 29 telephone interview with CNYBJ.

Hayner Hoyt has been working to redevelop the building at 400 S. Salina St. in Syracuse, which is now known as City

Center. The structure is situated on a block that is bordered by South Salina Street, West Jefferson Street, and South Clinton Street.

Thurston notes that Hayner Hoyt was scheduled to use a \$125,000 grant from the City of Syracuse for work on sidewalks around the building. The company has also been working to finish some work on building’s façade as well.

“Then what’s left is really just interior fit-outs with the remaining tenant spaces,” says Thurston.

Hayner Hoyt is hoping to hold a formal-opening event for City Center in October, he adds.

The project development cost is “north of \$30 million,” he tells CNYBJ. The project cost is listed at \$37 million in a document on the website of the Syracuse Industrial Development Agency.

Schopfer Architects, LLP of Syracuse is the project architect.

Interior tenants

Hayner Hoyt moved into the City Center building on Aug. 1, occupying 22,000 square feet on the structure’s second floor. Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII) moved in March 1, occupying about 50,000 square

▶ SEE CITY CENTER, PAGE 50

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Creekwalk Development



I-81 Viaduct Project

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ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ

VIP Structures Inc. in March formally started operations in its new headquarters in The Post, the former home of the *Post-Standard* and *Herald-Journal* newspapers at 101 N. Salina St. in Syracuse.

Downtown Committee report highlights projects, investments

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — The future of downtown’s city center is “strong,” with a 50 percent increase in inquiries this past winter from businesses interested in moving to the district compared to a year ago.

That’s according to the State of Downtown report that Merike Treier, executive director of the Downtown Committee of Syracuse Inc., delivered during the organization’s annual meeting on June 21.

The downtown area is home to more than 240 places to dine, shop, and pamper, with 88 restaurants, 52 retail stores, and more than 100 salons and personal-service businesses, per the report. It had more than \$180 million of investment in the last year.

The Downtown Committee also anticipates \$26 million more in investment to occur before the end of the 2023 calendar year.

Downtown housing

Downtown’s residential population is 4,400 people “and climbing,” according to the report. It has more than 2,800 apartments and condos, with another 120 additional apartments under construction this year. The figures equate to 4 percent growth in housing, “just this year alone.”

Work continues at the Mizpah Towers where Tom Cerio will create new apartments, along with commercial and retail space through a \$6.7 million investment.

In downtown’s southern district, construction is underway as the Hayner Hoyt Corporation works on turning the former annex of the Hotel Syracuse into Symphony Place. This \$17.4 million redevelopment will result in two floors of commercial space and 75 apartments.

The area will also have additional revitalization due to the “vision and partnership” of Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse, per the State of Downtown

report.

Across from the Centro bus hub, the former Central Tech High School will soon be under construction with a planned 2025 opening date. Through the “vision and collaboration” of Onondaga County, the City of Syracuse, and the Syracuse City School District, it’ll become the region’s first ever STEAM high school (STEAM is short for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics).

To the southwest, projects will activate key business corridors with \$10 million in Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) funding and a \$1.25 million commitment from Onondaga County Executive Ryan McMahan for West Onondaga Street.

In addition, the conversion of South Clinton Street to a new two-way traffic pattern between West Jefferson Street and Taylor Street “improves connectivity and creates a safer experience” for pedestrians and cyclists, per the report.

In Hanover Square, more than \$30 million of investment targeting vacant upper floors has resulted in space for new residents.

Hanover Real Estate Development has converted the upper floors of 246 East Water St. into two apartments and is improving two retail spaces on the ground floor.

At the same time, Gavin Maloney is completing a renovation of the Granite Building at 132 E. Genesee St. in Syracuse. Vacant upper floors will become market-rate housing and the building’s canal-era façade will be restored for a new retail space.

Douglas Development Corp. has completed 119 new residences in Hanover Square through a \$23 million investment into the former M&T Bank building. Now called the Treasury, the structure also offers unique event space, with more than 500 onsite public parking spaces to support demand in Hanover and Clinton Squares.

The City of Syracuse also relocated its operations from City Hall Commons to One Park Place as part of Mayor Ben Walsh’s strategy to improve access for constituents to several city departments. Walsh’s office on Aug. 28 announced the move was complete.

The move creates the “opportunity to expand” housing options downtown.



▶ SEE REPORT, PAGE 48

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Cjala Surratt, owner, stands in the doorway to her vintage-clothing store, Black Citizens Brigade, in downtown Syracuse.

PHOTO CREDIT: BLACK CITIZENS BRIGADE

Black Citizens Brigade brings more than vintage clothing to downtown Syracuse

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Vintage-clothing store Black Citizens Brigade is bringing more than just fashion from the 1950s through the 1980s to downtown Syracuse.

The shop, located at 140 Bank Alley, also brings Black culture and art, with a side of education, to the space.

Owner Cjala Surratt brings her background in marketing, public relations, and the arts to the business and weaves them

together into a safe and welcoming space that showcases vintage duds along with books and records focused on Black history and culture. Her plans don't end there.

The business got its start online during the COVID-19 pandemic when many retailers closed up shop temporarily. Surratt and her daughter discovered that thrift stores were still open, and the arts and social-justice activist began collecting things she used as prompts to talk about culture and more.

Eventually, with a need to get some of

that inventory out of her house, Surratt began hosting pop-up shops to sell her vintage-clothing finds.

"Doing the pop ups was great," she recalls. It was a good gauge to let her know that people were interested in her fashion finds.

Surratt worked initially with the Downtown Committee of Syracuse and eventually with Michael John Heagerty of Wildflowers Armory to find a brick-and-mortar location.

Ultimately, she landed with Washington

Street Partners, where she leases 500 square feet in the University Building at 120 E. Washington Street. The Black Citizens Brigade shop entrance is around the corner at 140 Bank Alley. It's the former location of Bradley's Jewelers.

"I had a soft opening in December [2022] to capitalize on the holiday season," Surratt says, and the shop officially opened on June 10, 2023, with a focus on high-end fashion in familiar brands. A partnership with the Bank Alley Urban Market provided a "wayfinding" boost that helped people find her shop, and the word continues to spread.

Having a brick-and-mortar store is important, she says, not just to shake off the pandemic isolation, but also to help dispel the notion that downtown Syracuse is devoid of culture, places to shop, or even parking space. All are untrue, Surratt says.

"The downtown economy needs people to walk through doors," she adds, and Surratt is doing her part to draw people in through her wares. She has seen a diverse array of customers of all ages, backgrounds, religions, and more.

"It has been a joy to have so many different people come through," says Surratt. Along with individual shoppers, Black Citizens Brigade is growing a customer base comprised of other retailers and even the local film industry looking for vintage pieces to outfit actors.

She hopes to build on that momentum to grow. "I'd like it to expand into a reading and listening room," she says of her shop. Surratt has a personal collection of archival materials that aren't for sale but feels should be shared. That space would allow people to access her collection, which includes a poetry book signed by Langston Hughes, recordings of John Lewis and Malcom X, and more.

Surratt also hopes within the next few years to include a space where she can host events such as reading circles, spoken-word



PHOTO CREDIT: BLACK CITIZENS BRIGADE

The interior of Black Citizens Brigade, a vintage-clothing store at 140 Bank Alley in downtown Syracuse that also offers books and records focused on Black history and culture.

events, and film screenings.

"It's an ever-evolving story," she says of her business's growth.

Currently, Black Citizens Brigade is open Thursdays and Fridays from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 6 p.m., and also offers private shopping by appointment. ■



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The headquarters and 5G manufacturing plant of JMA Wireless Inc. is located at 140 Cortland Ave. in Syracuse, just south of the downtown area off South Salina Street.

ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ

JMA Wireless, MIT professor to work on 5G research partnership

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Syracuse-based JMA Wireless Inc. (JMA) is involved in a three-year research partnership with a professor from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to deliver true ultra-reliable low-latency (URLLC) wireless service.

Muriel Médard is the NEC Professor of Software Science and Engineering at MIT and a “leading voice” in reliable network communications, per a JMA Wireless news release issued on July 25.

“Historically the industry has traded performance to achieve reliability — making wireless URLLC impossible. MIT and JMA are working to make URLLC a reality without sacrificing performance — delivering wirelessly what could previously only be done with a hard-wired

connection,” JMA contended.

The collaboration will focus on two key research areas. The first is how to deliver ultra-reliable low-latency wireless service to make mission-critical applications. Médard and JMA will also research how to make wireless networks “greener and more efficient without sacrificing performance.”

Smart applications such as autonomous driving are “promising in their ability to change lives for the better,” but their adoption has been “limited due to a lack of reliability,” JMA Wireless said. Médard’s research has created techniques that simultaneously improve reliability and reduce latency.

“Together with JMA, we will drastically reduce the types of legacy inefficiencies that currently stymie URLLC,” Médard contended in the release. “These lead not only to delays, but also to wasteful energy

consumption through needless retransmissions and palliative measures such as over-use of bandwidth. We are teaming up with JMA’s unique expertise in radio networks to apply network coding in a 5G standard-compatible way, also opening the way for 6G innovation in the area.”

“Today, nearly seven out of ten 6G patents belong to countries other than the U.S.,” Joe Constantine, JMA’s chief technology and strategy officer, said. “With Professor Médard, we are working to advance critical R&D right here in the U.S. with one of the greatest minds in our field, as we restore wireless leadership to this country and control our technology future.”

This partnership builds on Médard and Constantine’s panel at Mobile World Congress Barcelona, where they discussed the power of network slicing, JMA Wireless said. ■

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Cafe Blue brings breakfast and tasty treats to Iron Pier

SYRACUSE — Olivia Orlando grew up in the food business and knew she would continue the family tradition.

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

Starting with her grandfather, to her parents and her aunt and uncle, running a restaurant runs in the family.

Orlando's first venture into the business came in 2017 shortly after she graduated from Paul Smith's College's baking and pastry arts program.

"I got my trailer right after I graduated college," she says of her Blueberries and Lace food truck. It took her about a year and a half to renovate the trailer to suit her needs, and the bakery on wheels launched in March 2018.

Her baked treats were well received in Syracuse's busy food-truck scene, and it wasn't long before Orlando was outgrowing the kitchen at her parent's restaurant that she used as her required commissary kitchen.

"I needed more space," she says, "so might as well open a brick-and-mortar."

Orlando knew Merissa Lynch, marketing manager at COR Development Company, LLC, after

Olivia Orlando, at her restaurant, Cafe Blue, in Syracuse's Inner Harbor area.
PHOTO CREDIT: OLIVIA ORLANDO

meeting her at numerous events, and that led to conversations about Orlando opening her restaurant, Cafe Blue, at COR's Iron Pier Apartments project at 720 Van Rensselaer St. in the Inner Harbor. The residential-commercial project includes apartments across multiple buildings with first-floor retail space.

"They were super excited about it," Orlando says of COR, and she signed a lease on 1,500 square feet in April 2022. The unfinished space was a blank canvass she could complete to suit her needs.

Working primarily with COR, she had concrete poured, plumbing and electric installed, and "everything from the ground up," she says.

In late May, Orlando had her final health inspection, moved items over to her new kitchen, received her final fire department and city permits, and opened Cafe Blue the next day, May 25. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sunday from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.,



The Blueberries and Lace food truck.

PHOTO CREDIT: OLIVIA ORLANDO

the café serves breakfast, sandwiches, salads, pastries, coffees, and teas.

"We were busy from the start," she says. "We've been super lucky." The café benefited from the following the food truck built over the years, but also benefits from being located in Iron Pier, she adds.

"It really helps that we have the tenants upstairs," she says. There are also a lot of businesses around and the nearby Aloft Syracuse Inner Harbor hotel at 310 West Kirkpatrick St. "Every day is probably 50 percent new customers," she notes.

Iron Pier is fast becoming a bustling live-work-play-dine location and is also home to Meier's Creek Brewing Company at Inner

Harbor and a 315 Beauty Bar salon. Onondaga County is moving forward with plans to build a \$85 million aquarium along the Inner Harbor.

Orlando also expects events like the first annual Inner Harbor Fest, slated for Sept. 29 through Oct. 1, will bring in a lot of people to the area.

The event, put on by COR in collaboration with Empower Federal Credit Union, Equitable Advisors, and Limp Lizard, will feature live music, carnival rides and

games, dragon boat races, fireworks, and more.

Cafe Blue will be open and waiting to serve tasty treats, Orlando says. She currently employs about nine people at the café, which can seat about 25 people inside. It also has eight outdoor tables.

She's waiting to see how her first fall and winter in business go, but Orlando is already thinking about expanding into the empty space next door for more seating. She's looking to add a second Blueberries & Lace food truck, too.

"We're going to get there," she says. "We'll keep growing." ■

“Energy and persistence conquer all things.”

– Ben Franklin

Brett Holt is our newest energy expert. He shares ENGIE's dedication to decarbonization and works exclusively with business customers. Employees like Brett are why ENGIE serves nearly 2,000 organizations across New York.

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Downtown Syracuse businesses teem with diversity, study shows

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo_e@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — The one thing consistent with the new business owners in downtown Syracuse is that they are diverse.

With all the new businesses opening, the Downtown Committee of Syracuse commissioned its downtown retail demographic survey conducted last spring to learn more about the people behind the businesses that represent a landscape of cuisines and cultures.

“We were pleased and pleasantly surprised to see that the diversity we feel is here truly is,” says Heather Schroeder, deputy director and director of economic development at the Downtown Committee.

After taking time to review 106 survey responses, a surprising 65 percent response rate, what did the Downtown Committee learn? Plenty, Schroeder says.

First, the organization got confirmation that downtown indeed has a lot of new businesses. In fact, 54 percent of downtown Syracuse businesses opened within the past five years.

The Downtown Committee also learned that downtown business owners

are young, with 59 percent between the ages of 25 and 44, and that women are strong in downtown, with 42 percent of owners identifying as women.

“The growth in the past several years has been really dominated by women of color,” Schroeder adds. A total of 73 percent of Black business owners are women, according to the survey.

Nearly a quarter of respondents identify with a Census category race other than white, 13 percent identify as LGBTQIA+, just over 4 percent are veterans, 15 percent were born outside of the United States, and 21 percent can speak a language other than English.

“We’re thrilled downtown is giving off a welcoming vibe,” Schroeder says.

Salt City Market, which opened in January 2021, is perhaps the most concentrated display of downtown diversity. Located at 484 South Salina St., the market’s restaurant vendors offer up the flavors of Burma, Thailand, Jamaica, Vietnam, and Ethiopia.

Foreign-born downtown business owners hail from Vietnam, Bangladesh, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Myanmar, Spain, Jamaica, and the islands of islands of Sao Tome and Principe along the



PHOTO CREDIT: INTERNATIONAL DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

Heather Schroeder, deputy director and director of economic development at the Downtown Committee of Syracuse.

coast of Africa, according to the survey. Languages spoken besides English include Spanish, French, Arabic, Italian, Vietnamese, Catalan, German, Hindi, Myanmar, Japanese, and Jamaican patois.

So, what does all this tell the Downtown Committee? “Despite all the setbacks with COVID, downtown Syracuse has come back really strong,” Schroeder says.

In fact, COVID may have even influenced things, she says, with more people taking an “if not now, when” mentality in the wake of the pandemic.

“Several of the businesses started as a side hustle, Schroeder notes. The pandemic may have prompted those business owners to take the leap. The same with the influx of younger business owners. People are taking calculated risks and going after their dreams.

Now that it has the information, the Downtown Committee will use the survey results to figure out how it can help more businesses open and stay open, she says. The organization is currently seeking philanthropic support for programs that will help entrepreneurs, she adds.

“This is just the baseline,” Schroeder notes. “We plan to do follow-up surveys.” Survey results are available online at https://downtownsyracuse.com/sites/default/files/Retail%20Demographic%20Survey%20Data_0.pdf.

The Downtown Committee of Syracuse, a private, not-for-profit professional downtown management organization, has a mission to improve downtown by strengthening its economic base and making sure the area is clean, safe, accessible, and attractive. ■

Salt City Market, which opened in January 2021, is perhaps the most concentrated display of diversity in the downtown Syracuse business scene.

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ERIC REINHARDT/CNYBJ

Symphony Tower is located on the corner of East Onondaga Street and South Salina Street and formerly served as an annex to the Hotel Syracuse.

Prolonged Symphony Tower project heading for finish line

Apartment building will be known as Symphony Place

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — A project to renovate the Symphony Tower that started in 2007 and included a lengthy legal battle is heading toward completion.

It's a \$17.4 million mixed-use project in the 15-story building at 111-113 E. Onondaga St. that remains in progress.

Symphony Tower, situated on the corner of East Onondaga Street and South

Salina Street, formerly served as an annex to the Hotel Syracuse (now the Marriott Syracuse Downtown), when it was built in the 1980s.

"We're finishing the building as it was originally contemplated as an apartment building with 76 one- and two-bedroom apartments," Gary Thurston, CEO of the Hayner Hoyt Corporation, tells CNYBJ in an Aug. 30 phone interview.

Thurston anticipates having apartments ready for rent on Dec. 1.

The first and second floors will include rental space for retail outlets or offices. The first floor will also have a recreational area and a pickle ball court, Thurston says. Floors 3 through 15 will have apartments.

The first floor will also include All About Me Childcare Center, which plans to relocate to the building, according to Thurston. It currently operates at 422 W. Onondaga St. in Syracuse, per its website.

The structure will eventually be known as Symphony Place under Thurston's ownership entity called Symphony Tower, LLC, he notes.

Hayner Hoyt is the contractor and construction manager on the project, while Holmes King Kallquist & Associates, Architects of Syracuse is the design firm on the project.

Project history

Hayner Hoyt's work at Symphony Tower started back in 2007. As Thurston explains it, his firm was working for a developer from Israel.

Personnel from Hayner Hoyt worked on the project in 2007 and through the fall of 2008 after the developer stopped paying the Syracuse firm a few months earlier, says Thurston.

What followed was a seven-year legal battle with the original lender, an Israeli financial firm, until 2015 when the two sides reached a settlement.

He also tells CNYBJ that a few years earlier, Hayner won an early legal battle and bought the property in 2012 at a foreclosure sale. But the litigation continued, calling the purchase into question. In September 2015, Hayner Hoyt and the Israeli financier reached an agreement that involved Hayner Hoyt paying a fee in exchange for the clear title and an end to the ongoing legal challenges.

In the agreement, Hayner Hoyt "basically bought them out," according to Thurston.

"So, in 2015, we finally got clear title to the building," he says.

At that same time, Hayner Hoyt was finishing up work on renovations to the former Hotel Syracuse, what is now the Marriott Syracuse Downtown.

Thurston went on to say that Hayner Hoyt considered a suggestion to renovate the building into an extended-stay hotel, signing a franchise agreement with Hyatt. However, the project got delayed. As time passed, the pandemic became an issue and it "shut down any financing of hotels," according to Thurston.

A few years ago, Hayner Hoyt decided to return the original plan to renovate the structure for one- and two-bedroom apartments, he adds. ■



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As healthcare needs have evolved and communities have grown, a new main facility became essential. **Hueber-Breuer Construction** has been part of this transformation on the Southside, building the future for Syracuse Community Health Center.

The \$21.3 Million project includes a new 2-Story, 56,000 GSF medical office facility and an 8,200 SF renovation inside of SCHC's existing building.



In Progress - July 2023

Upon completion, the new building will consist of exam rooms, offices, nurse stations, operatory rooms, staff support/multi-use, fitness area, pharmaceuticals, and dental. **I:B**



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Project to expand the Tech Garden is underway

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — After a lot of planning, a \$32 million expansion project at the Tech Garden in Syracuse is well underway.

It's expected that crews from Hueber-Breuer Construction Co., Inc. will complete the work in about 14 months. Empire State Development (ESD) is providing up to \$16.6 million for the project, the office of Gov. Kathy Hochul said in a news release about the project.

CenterState CEO on Aug. 9 hosted a groundbreaking event for the project on the Tech Garden patio at 235 Harrison St. in Syracuse, across from the Marriott Syracuse Downtown.

The expansion will include a two-story, 46,000-square-foot addition; renovations to the facility's existing space; and updates to the on-site mechanical and security systems.

Robert Simpson, president and CEO of CenterState CEO, called it an "incredibly exciting moment" for the organization.

"We have been working towards this vision of expanding this facility for our entrepreneurs for the better part of six, almost seven years now," Simpson said in his remarks at the groundbreaking. "We would not be here today were it not for the incredible support of our partners in business."

Besides Hueber-Breuer, those partners also include QPK Design of Syracuse, which handled the design work, and Eli Smith of E. Smith Contractors of Syracuse.

The expansion effort includes a 5,000-square-foot roof terrace for uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) companies to launch and test drones, a 3,000-square-foot meeting room with seating for up to 180, private tenant offices for 35 additional resident startups, coworking areas, an expanded hardware space for prototype and product development, and a new entrance, Hochul's office said.

The Tech Garden is home to the New York State-supported Genius NY competition.

A state-certified Innovation Hot Spot, the

Tech Garden is the "key" tech business incubator for the Central New York region, per Hochul's office. In 2022, 114 companies were served by one of CenterState CEO's technical-assistance programs.

These teams employed 409 people, created 113 jobs, generated \$70.7 million in total revenue and half were minority, woman, veteran, and/or disabled-owned businesses.

In his remarks, Simpson touched on the Tech Garden's history.

"This building behind us was a collapsed parking garage, and over the course of the last 15 years, it has grown billion-dollar companies. That's remarkable," he said.

In that time period, he noted that companies in the Tech Garden have created more than 1,300 jobs and raised almost \$350 million in follow-on capital.

"And those are dollars that have been raised mostly from venture capital ... [out of-town investors] that are being put to work right here in Central New York," Simpson said, to applause from those gathered at the event.

“This \$32 million investment will completely transform the southwest gateway of downtown [Syracuse], creating a vibrant, exciting space for innovative companies to call home,” Dan Kolinski, ESD’s acting regional director of the Central New York region, said in his remarks at the groundbreaking event. “This building and its entirely new façade will better reflect the world class innovation ecosystem supported inside by CenterState CEO and further reinforces Gov. Hochul’s commitment to investing in the future of upstate New York’s flourishing high-tech economy.”

Kolinski went on to say, “This project will allow them to continue those focused efforts to lead the charge in the growth of advanced incubation and acceleration services, helping to make upstate New York the next major hub for innovative, high tech, 21st century businesses. The expanded facility will also serve as the anchor of Syracuse’s city center innovation hub, a core component of the Syracuse Surge economic development strategy and will serve as a gateway to innovation alley right here on Warren Street.”

Simpson also told the gathering that the Tech Garden expansion has been



ERIC REINHARDT / CNVBJ

Dan Kolinski, Empire State Development’s acting regional director of the Central New York region, on Aug. 9 addressed the gathering on the patio outside the Tech Garden in downtown Syracuse. He spoke during the groundbreaking event for the \$32 million expansion project that is now underway. Robert Simpson, president and CEO of CenterState CEO, stands near the video monitor and looks on during Kolinski’s remarks.

“one of the hardest projects that we’ve ever worked on,” citing the COVID-19 pandemic and the rising cost of construction materials. At the same time, he also acknowledged that the Tech Garden has

deep personal meaning as well.

“It’s really been ... one of the most rewarding parts of my job over my career to watch the evolution of the innovation ecosystem,” Simpson said. ■



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Miss Prissy's targeting early 2024 for move to new location

Headed for South Warren Street

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — The co-owner of Miss Prissy's says the restaurant is targeting the first quarter of 2024 to move into its new space at 431 S. Warren St. in Syracuse.

Miss Prissy's, one of the eight original tenants of the Salt City Market, in mid-April announced it had signed a lease for its future storefront. The Salt City Market is located at 484 S. Salina St. in Syracuse.

The eatery in mid-August applied for a building permit so it can have a contractor begin renovation work on the space, Dreamer Glen tells CNYBJ in an Aug. 22 phone interview.

Miss Prissy's is still operating in the Salt City Market every

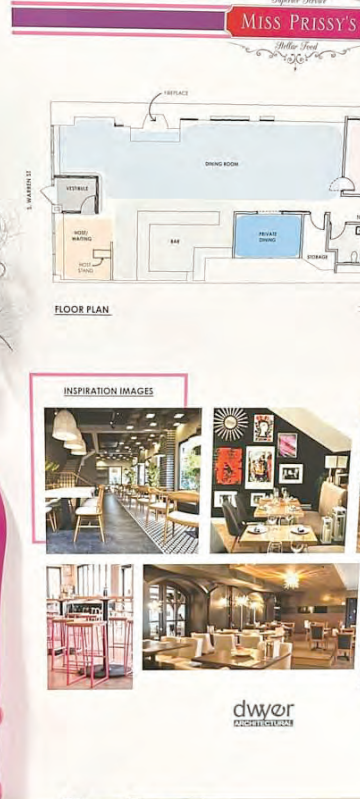


PHOTO CREDIT: MISS PRISSY'S

Dreamer Glen, co-owner of Miss Prissy's, stands next to a poster detailing the layout of the restaurant's upcoming larger space.

day except Tuesdays, she notes.

Glen believes the eatery's time inside the Salt City Market has accomplished what she hoped it would, as the location was "always meant to be a starting point."

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“We’ve outgrown it, to be honest ... We can’t keep enough food in stock. We’re catering for upwards of 400 people out of a 460-something-square-foot stall. We’ve just outgrown the space,” she stresses.

Customers have been “clamoring” for the business to move and “showcase” more of its menu. “With a larger space, we’ll be able to do that,” Glen says.

Glen and co-owner Cyrus Thornton heard about the 3,500-square-foot space on South Warren Street through some friends, and it fit their needs.

“We’re excited about it,” Glen tells CNYBJ.

Shalimar Properties 407 LLC owns the property, per its profile on the website of the Onondaga County Department of Real Property Services.

Miss Prissy’s currently has six employees and will need a staff of between 20 and 24 people as it plans to offer breakfast, lunch, and dinner service in its new space.

The new home for Miss Prissy’s will include 3,000 square feet with table and lounge seating for about 70 guests, bar and counter seating for 12, and a private meeting room for special engagements and mealtime meetings.

To prepare the space for operation, Glen has enlisted the services of Jenn Mullane, managing partner of Redev CNY at 451 S. Warren St. in Syracuse, as the contractor for the project. In addition, Dwyer Architectural of Syracuse is space designer, and Shawni Davis of Luminary Electrical

Contractor, LLC is the electrician for the project.

Besides the upcoming move, Miss Prissy’s also used its initial April 18 announcement to promote its involvement in the Mainvest platform for fundraising.

When asked about the effort, Glen tells CNYBJ that they exceeded their fundraising goal through the platform. They amassed a total of \$63,000 through community investors and community support, says Glen. The original goal was at least \$50,000, per their April announcement.

“The campaign has closed,” she says, noting they’ll use the funding to help fund the move to the new space.

In their April announcement, Glen and Thornton provide an explanation on why they chose Mainvest instead of GoFundMe for fundraising.

“Mainvest is an investment platform that allows community members, local businesses, and fans to invest in us. So instead of using a donation-based system, we chose to reward our investors, believers, and supporters using Mainvest, which offers opportunities for revenue-sharing notes. This is a way for us to say thanks for believing in Miss Prissy’s and to share in our growth,” the owners stated.

When asked about the business got its name, Glen tells CNYBJ that Thornton named the business Miss Prissy’s in a nod to the way Glen approaches a project.

“I’m very particular and very detail oriented,” she says in explaining the origin of the business’s name. ■



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PHOTO CREDIT: CIARA FELTHEM
Customers enjoy the rooftop bar at Emerald Cocktail Kitchen, located at 1331 W. Fayette St. in Syracuse.

Emerald Cocktail Kitchen brings new offerings to Tipp Hill

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — For nearly 20 years, her father Jerry Roesch ran George O’Dea’s Pub in Syracuse’s Tipperary Hill area, but when Michele Roesch bought the business from him in 2019, she knew she wanted to put her own stamp on the place. Initially, she even tried to sell the building, located at 1331 W. Fayette St., but the sales never went through.

“Something just told me I was supposed to stay and vamp up the building,” Roesch says. Knowing the building’s history, and that it used to have two more floors before they burned down many years ago, she started thinking.

“My dad’s customers always used to say it was the best view in the city,” from the roof of the pub, she says, so she began investigating whether the building could support a rooftop bar.

Roesch worked with in-ARCHITECTS to design her vision and Smith Structures, Inc., to bring it to life. “I can’t say enough positive things about either of them,” she

says of the two companies.

Over the next two and a half years, the existing space was renovated and two new floors were added. Work included installing new plumbing and electric,



PHOTO CREDIT: CIARA FELTHEM
Nora Roesch (left) and Michele Roesch (right), co-owners of Emerald Cocktail Kitchen in Syracuse’s Tipperary Hill area.

structurally reinforcing the building, and adding an elevator. Roesch worked with M&T Bank on financing for the more than \$2 million project and praised the Onondaga Small Business Development Center for its help along the way.

On June 18, Roesch’s vision was realized when Emerald Cocktail Kitchen opened for business.

The bar, which Roesch co-owns with her mother Nora Roesch, is 9,000 feet spread over the four floors and can accommodate 200 people. Each floor has its own theme, with a stone wall uncovered during renovations now highlighted on the first floor. The second floor, in a nod to redoing the entire building, features secondhand items as part of the design, Roesch says.

Then there is the crowning piece, literally — the rooftop bar. It features a covered bar, some covered seating, and plenty of tables and umbrellas.

Some might question a rooftop bar in a city known for its snowy winters, but “I

▶ SEE EMERALD COCKTAIL KITCHEN, PAGE 46



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Syracuse Community Health (SCH) is preparing for operations in this new facility at 930 S. Salina St., as seen in this photo from Aug. 27. It's located just south of SCH's current location at 819 S. Salina St. The health-care organization hopes to start seeing patients in the new building in October.

ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ

SCH readies for operations in new building near existing location

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Syracuse Community Health (SCH) anticipates it'll be able to see patients in its new building at 930 S. Salina St. in October.

The vast majority of the work on the outside is complete, says Keith Cuttler, COO of SCH, who spoke with CNYBJ on Aug. 23.

As for the interior, the work is at "the 11th hour," he adds.

The interior work still includes painting on the second floor, and the organization has already started moving some furniture in.



ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ

The existing Syracuse Community Health Center building is located at 819 S. Salina St.

Syracuse Community Health is the rebranded name of the Syracuse Community Health Center, located at 819 S. Salina St. in Syracuse.

As of the Aug. 23 interview, SCH hadn't received the certificate of occupancy from the City of Syracuse, according to Cuttler.

SCH has also been submitting required paperwork to the New York State Department of Health, so it can conduct final site inspection and approve the organization as an Article 28 license diagnostic-treatment center.

"Due to some delays, particularly with manufacturing, it's not going to happen when we wanted it to," Cuttler tells CNYBJ. "We had really hoped that we would be seeing patients on Monday, Sept. 18. We're talking now about October."

The project cost will come in at about \$23 million, he notes. Future plans for the existing building nearby at 819 S. Salina St. are still to be determined.

Hueber-Breuer Construction Co. Inc. of Syracuse is the general contractor on the project, and King + King Architects, also of Syracuse, designed the facility. Cuttler says the construction effort "has gone very well," especially coming off

the pandemic.

In speaking at the August 2022 groundbreaking event, Mark Hall, president and CEO of Syracuse Community Health, said the new building will be a 56,000-square-foot structure, which he described as a "downsize" compared to the 78,000 square feet available at the current location.

SCH in August 2022 said its new brand identity, logo design, and website reflect "our deep roots in the community and our long-term commitment to serve them. The new tagline, 'healthy happens here,' offers a promise that people can get the patient care they need from Syracuse Community Health."

The new facility also joins the organization's already established SCH offices at 1938 E. Fayette St. and 603 Oswego St. in Syracuse.

Syracuse Community Health is a federally qualified health center (FQHC) serving the Syracuse area and Onondaga County. Founded in 1978, SCH serves about 30,000 patients each year. As an FQHC, the nonprofit SCH is a community-based health center providing primary care and dental and mental-health

▶ SEE SCH, PAGE 46

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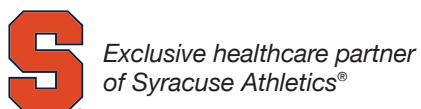




IMAGE CREDIT: TAURUS DEVELOPMENT GROUP

A rendering of the Salina 1st project at 1081 S. Salina St., where site work is continuing ahead of construction. It's a 52,000-square-foot mixed-use, community-development project that is expected to be completed in 2024.

Interest-rate hikes impact Salina 1st project

2024 completion still targeted

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — A partner in the Salina 1st project the effort is now working on an updated schedule prompted by all the recent interest-rate increases.

The Salina 1st project site is located south of downtown Syracuse at 1081 S. Salina St., across from the JMA Wireless campus. Salina 1st describes itself as Syracuse's first minority and woman-led commercial development.



Gail Montplaisir is one of the partners in the Salina 1st project. She is a real-estate developer from Washington, D.C., working with Taurus Development Group.

PHOTO CREDIT: TAURUS DEVELOPMENT GROUP WEBSITE

In an Aug. 29 phone interview, Gail Montplaisir tells CNYBJ she updated the schedule a day earlier on

Aug. 28. Project completion is still targeted for late 2024.

"With the interest rate [hikes] that started in 2022 and just kind of kept going up ... I think they were a real challenge for us as well as most other developers," says Montplaisir.

Montplaisir is president of the Washington, D.C.-based Taurus Development Group and a partner in the project.

Even a half a point increase in rates creates another "\$200,000 gap," meaning the partners have been working with supporters in raising more funding, bringing more sources and more capital in, and "getting all of our loans lined up," she says.

"We're in a really good place now, and we're very very excited about it," Montplaisir adds.

As she explains it, site work was scheduled to continue around the middle of September with some foundation drilling work set for October. Additional footings and foundations work is set for November and December.

"We anticipate actually starting to do the vertical construction probably around

Jan. 15 or so, maybe the beginning of February," she notes.

Besides Montplaisir, Emanuel Henderson of JHP Industrial Supply Co., and Eli Smith of E. Smith Contractors are spearheading the Salina 1st project.

The partners describe Salina 1st as a "catalytic," mixed-use, community-development project. The 52,000-square-foot facility will include residential, retail, light industrial, and incubator/shared-office space, per a project news release.

JF Real Estate partnership

Salina 1st on June 20 said JF Real Estate of Syracuse would serve as its commercial broker to help with leasing the property's commercial real estate.

Salina 1st signed a one-year agreement with JF Real Estate to spread the word about the project both within the community and to potential tenants as the project gets closer to vertical construction, Montplaisir tells CNYBJ.

JF Real Estate is communicating with Black real-estate agents throughout the community who've been very supportive of the project and attended a lot of real-estate networking receptions.

"If people don't really know that the project is there, it makes it a little bit difficult, obviously, to find good, long-term tenants. They're working within the community as well as all of their own sources to bring in new people," says Montplaisir.

JF Real Estate is a real-estate brokerage company that provides services such as brokerage, development, tenant and owner representation, site selection, space planning, architecture, design, construction, financing, and building management. The company currently exclusively represents about 3 million square feet of commercial space and over 175 apartments, all in the greater Syracuse area.

"We look forward to working with the Salina 1st team," Matt Funicello and Tom Schneider, representatives with JF Real Estate, said in a news release. "We anticipate transformative, inclusive growth in the city's Southside, and we are embracing the opportunity to find commercial tenants to finalize the development of Salina 1st."

Commercial tenants that have committed to occupying the property so far include JHP Industrial Supply Company, Inc., Ebony, SGTR, and E. Smith Contractors.



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This rendering shows part of the multi-site Creekside Landing project by Housing Visions. NBT is financing the project.

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NBT helps finance growth of housing in Syracuse

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — With housing a top concern in Syracuse now and looking ahead to when Micron arrives, NBT Bank is working with organizations to do its part to alleviate the housing strain.

The latest such project, in partnership with Housing Visions Unlimited, Inc., is the Creekside Landing project, which will bring about 200 new homes to south and southwest Syracuse.

For NBT, the banking subsidiary of NBT Bancorp, Inc. (NASDAQ: NBTB), its commitment to the communities it serves goes well beyond just having a branch in town, says David Kavney, senior VP and regional president for the Mohawk Valley and Central New York for NBT.

“We remain very focused on the communities where we exist,” he says, and the ability to help finance beneficial projects is important. “This project just makes sense.”

Creekside Landing, using existing vacant lots and abandoned properties from the Greater Syracuse Land Bank, will create 32 three-bedroom and four-bedroom duplexes and 20 apartments in a rehabilitated commercial building at 414-416 W. Onondaga St.

The entire project, slated at \$31 million, will include multiple sites and is on point with Housing Visions’ mission to promote neighborhood revitalization, Housing Visions

President/CEO Ben Lockwood says.

“We need housing across the board in Syracuse,” he says. Even more importantly, the city needs affordable housing. Creekside Landing rents will range from \$520 to \$1,400 a month, according to Lockwood.

The project will also include 5,000 square feet of consumer space that Jubilee Homes, a nonprofit community and workforce-development organization, will use as a workforce-development and construction-trade training center.

While NBT is the primary bank financing the project, there are numerous funding sources including the city, private investors, and state funding. Gov. Kathy Hochul announced in May the project is one of 27 around the state that will share in \$875 million.

All those funding sources, which also includes tax credits and grants, have to work together, says Richard Driscoll, NBT senior commercial-banking relationship manager. “You really have to understand how it all fits together,” he says.

Fortunately, NBT has experience after working on other projects with Housing Visions include a scattered-site project on East Genesee Street and the \$16.6 million Butternut Crossing project, completed in 2020, that brought 53 housing units around St. Joseph’s Hospital.

Such projects are important to NBT, Kavney says, as it works to strengthen

the communities it serves. The bank also recently financed a new position with OnPoint for College to help drive interest in careers in the semiconductor industry.

As the area prepares for the arrival of Micron, it’s an exciting time, Kavney adds. “What we’ve got in front of us is surely transformational.”

For his part, Lockwood says, “Our goal is really to be the catalyst.” His hope is that this latest housing project will provide the spark in that area that spurs more community development and investment.

Housing Visions, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit is a neighborhood-preservation company and a community-housing-development organization. It operates more than 1,600 housing units and developments in 16 communities around the northeast.

Lockwood says Housing Visions expects to close on the property for Creekside Landing sometime between Halloween and Thanksgiving, with construction to start soon after with an 18-month timeline.

“And then we go to work on the next one with NBT,” he adds. ■



David Kavney, NBT Bank's regional president.

PHOTO CREDIT: NBT BANK



Ben Lockwood, president and CEO of Housing Visions Unlimited.

PHOTO CREDIT: HOUSING VISIONS WEBSITE

Tardiff named city director of neighborhood & business data and evaluation

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh recently announced the appointment of Rose Tardiff as director of neighborhood and business data and evaluation.

In this post, Tardiff oversees data evaluation and analysis of programs and policies administered by the city’s Department of Neighborhood and Business Development (NBD). She is responsible for managing data collection, along with reporting and analysis in accordance with city-data governance policies and digital-service priorities, Walsh’s office said in an Aug. 4 release.

Tardiff most recently worked as a neighborhood planner in NBD, providing data support to the division of code enforcement and serving the city’s Westside neighborhoods. In that position, she improved reporting on code-enforcement activities that increased overall compliance with inspection programs. The activities also resulted in a 65-percent increase in the average number of rental-registry applications received each month, Walsh’s office noted.

Tardiff also supported the implementation of the city’s lead ordinance, along with other initiatives including the Cities RISE



PHOTO CREDIT: CITY OF SYRACUSE

Rose Tardiff is the director of neighborhood and business data and evaluation for the City of Syracuse.

Community Ambassador program; city/county lead enforcement working group; and the vacant property task force.

Her work “exemplifies how the City of Syracuse is using data to improve services and engage residents,” Walsh’s office contended.

Tardiff brings to this role a strong knowledge of geospatial analysis and design using geographic information systems (GIS), as well as community-based research. In her previous roles, she produced maps and graphics for TIG Environmental’s work on Superfund investigations, the National Geographic Society’s education division, and the Syracuse Community Geography program.

Tardiff received a bachelor’s degree in geography from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University in 2015, according to her LinkedIn profile. ■



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Willow Street restoration project was a labor of love

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelore@cnybj.com



PHOTO CREDIT: WILLOW 123 LOFTS

Joseph Crabbe and Rosario Amato, who operate eight Original Italian Pizza (OIP) locations, renovated the former Howard & Jennings pump factory building into four luxury apartments — Willow 123 Lofts. The development also offers 3,000 square feet of commercial space for lease.

SYRACUSE — When Joseph Crabbe and his business partner, Rosario Amato, first purchased the old Howard & Jennings pump factory building at 123-129 E. Willow St. in downtown Syracuse several years ago, the plan was to open a restaurant there.

The pair already operate eight Original Italian Pizza (OIP) restaurants, but ultimately steered away from their restaurant plans for the building with the nearby I-81 viaduct project and increasing costs as key factors.

“We ended up switching gears,” Crabbe says of their plans. “It became too overwhelming to do what we wanted to do.” They pivoted and opted to renovate the 1879 building into four apartments upstairs.

Once home to the Colella Galleries antique store, the building has quite a history, according to a collection of newspaper clippings and information amassed by Crabbe. Designed by architect Charles E. Colton, the building became a concern to the city in 1971 when bricks fell from the front of the building. Nicholas Collela renovated the building in the early 1970s, and then renovated it again after a 1975 explosion on the 200 block of North Salina Street damaged the building. The building’s fourth floor was destroyed in the blast and wasn’t rebuilt.

Crabbe says they needed to make sure the building, which still boasts two of its original three rooftop gargoyles, was historically restored when they started the project.

“We ended up gutting the entire place,” he says. The business partners spent a total of \$1.9 million to purchase



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Read more of the Mannions’ story by scanning the QR code or visiting link cnycf.org/2023mannion



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New club brings song, dance, comedy, and more to Syracuse

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Couldn't get tickets for Taylor Swift's The Eras Tour?

The city's new nightclub, The Song & Dance, has you covered.

Do you love metal, emo, pop? Whatever the genre, they've got you covered there, too.

The club, which opened in early August,



PHOTO CREDIT: THE SONG & DANCE

The band thoughtcrimes performs on Aug. 17 at The Song & Dance in Syracuse. The new club opened in early August.

is a venue for everyone, co-owner and co-founder Eric Binion says.

"You could go there one night and see a bluegrass show, and the next night see a heavy-metal show," he says.

Binion and his business partner, Dennis Ferry, both work as talent buyers at After Dark Entertainment, Inc., a Buffalo-based independent concert promoter bringing shows to Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, and the Finger Lakes.

"Opening our own venue in Syracuse was the next logical step," Binion says. Syracuse makes sense, not just because he lives here, but because the city lacks smaller venues like The Song & Dance.

At about 3,700 square feet, the club can hold just under 400 people, which is exactly the size they were seeking, Binion says.

The idea to open their own club first started about five years ago, and it was

a process to find just the right location. "Then we found this spot at the Acropolis Center," he says.

Located at 115 E. Jefferson St., the building is just around the corner from The Landmark Theatre and has both office and retail space for lease. The Song & Dance is located in the basement, which provides ideal acoustics for musical performances, Binion says.

The pair worked with Ryan Benz of Acropolis Realty Group to find the space and began work at the beginning of this year to get it ready. Unique Development Companies of Syracuse was the general contractor on the project, which included building a stage, green room, bathrooms (including separate bathrooms for performers), and a bar.

"We were able to build the space exactly how we wanted it to be," Binion says. The interior of the club was intentionally left without any specific theming, he notes, so that all types of acts feel right at home.

The Song & Dance is right in the sweet-spot capacity-wise, he says, for club-sized acts. "It's that nice in-between spot," he says. "Not too big, not too small." More importantly, it means acts looking for venues that size no longer have to bypass Syracuse when setting up their tours.

▶ SEE SONG AND DANCE, PAGE 46

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The Allyn Family Foundation hopes to begin renovation work inside the Chimes building at 500 S. Salina St. in the first quarter of 2024. The organization bought the building for \$8.2 million in July and plans to renovate it for mixed-income apartments with retail and office space on the first floor. The foundation also operates the Salt City Market, across the street from the Chimes building.

ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ

Renovation work on Chimes building slated to start in early 2024

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — The Allyn Family Foundation hopes to begin renovation work inside the Chimes building at 500 S. Salina St. in Syracuse during the first quarter of 2024 and complete the project in about 15 months.

That's according to Meg O'Connell, executive director of the Allyn Family Foundation, who spoke with CNYBJ in an Aug. 7 telephone interview.

The foundation, which is made up of members of the Allyn family, awarded a grant of \$8.2 million to a nonprofit it set up, called SEED Syracuse, that handled the purchase. SEED is short for Social Equity Economic Development. The building acquisition closed on July 14.

Plans call for renovating the Chimes building into 150 mixed-income units with additional retail and office space on the first and second floors.

"Our work with the Salt City Market's 26 mixed-income apartments showed us that there is a major need for quality, afford-

able housing in Downtown Syracuse," the Allyn Family Foundation said in a July 19 Facebook post.

The 152,000-square-foot structure has 12 floors. O'Connell also notes that the building does have a 13th floor on the top, which basically functions as an office and nothing more.

The Chimes building is listed on the *National Registry of Historic Buildings*. The previous owner had secured some historical tax credits and started work on completing two phases of renovation work. Even though the owner was awarded the credits, they were never used, according to O'Connell.

"The time has lapsed now. We're new owners, so we have to go through this whole process [to secure the credits again]," says O'Connell. "We have already put out an RFP [request for proposals] for architectural services and we hope to have an architect on board by mid-September."

The Allyn Family Foundation will also issue an RFP for a general contractor later this fall, she adds.

O'Connell went on to say that in the time that the Salt City Market has had operations, the foundation has looked

at the Chimes building with "increased frustration" that the previous owner, 500 Salina Enterprises, LLC, wasn't finishing the planned renovation work.

Chimes building interest

O'Connell thinks buying the Chimes building made "logical sense."

The Allyn Family Foundation has invested "a lot" into the southern end of downtown, including the creation of the Salt City Market.

She also noted additional activity in the area, including the rebirth of the Hotel Syracuse as the Marriott Syracuse Downtown, the renovation work at the Symphony Towers building next to the Marriott and across from the Salt City Market, the Centro bus hub, and the upcoming STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) school.

In her mind, it's time to add the Chimes building to that list.

"The Chimes building was just this iconic, beautiful, historic building that really was the anchor for downtown, the southern end," O'Connell says. ■

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Cake Bar, operated by Duyen Nguyen, an immigrant from Vietnam, opened its first location at The Salt City Market at 484 South Salina St. in early 2021.

PHOTO CREDIT: CAKE BAR FACEBOOK PAGE

Cake Bar brings Vietnamese flavors to downtown Syracuse

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — When Duyen Nguyen immigrated in 2012 from Vietnam to the United States, she thought she would end up working in New York City as a designer. Instead, she ended up working at a tea room in Syracuse.

Fate, it seems, had other plans for her, and Nguyen soon realized the need for places in Syracuse for young people to hang out that weren't bars. Couple that with missing the coffee shops of Vietnam,

Nguyen put the two together to open Cake Bar, a local bakery and bubble tea shop.

"The whole business plan is to bring a whole Vietnamese coffee culture to Syracuse," she says. Many coffee shops in Vietnam are open around the clock, and they serve much more than coffee. "You go there to eat a dessert, hang out with friends, and drink a coffee," Nguyen says.

With an idea and a business plan in hand, she knew Salt City Market would be a great place to test the waters. Cake

Bar opened there in January 2021, serving up treats that Nguyen first whipped up for friends and family after missing her favorite treats from home.

"We bring a lot of Asian flavors," she says. Many of her desserts are less sweet than their American counterparts and feature flavors such as taro, fresh fruits, and seasonal flavors such as persimmon.

The response to Cake Bar was a bit more positive than Nguyen expected, and it wasn't long before she felt the confines of the small space in Salt City Market, where vendors rent stalls.

She had plans to open a larger location down the road but ended up revamping her plans and opening a 2,400-square-foot second café at 252 West Genesee St. in August 2022.

The second, larger location allowed Nguyen to expand her menu to include some savory items in her menu. She pairs the treats with various teas and Vietnamese coffee in flavors beyond the traditional strong coffee lightened with condensed milk that people might be familiar with. Other options include taro, coconut, frozen, and even egg coffee. She's already at work expanding her menu even more in the West Genesee Street café and has equipment on order that will allow the business to serve breakfast sandwiches.

"That was a surprise for me," Nguyen says of having to open a second site a little over a year after opening the first. Her original plan was to use the first year to learn all the ins and outs of running her business and begin marketing it more in the second year. However, with the additional location, the second year in business became a second year of learning in the new café.

"Now this year, we try to advertise for the store," she quips.

Another surprise for Nguyen was realizing she now employs 17 people — and she's still hiring more. Adding more staff members is a bit of a dilemma though, she says, because if she adds any more employees to the kitchen, she may need a third, even larger location.

Her kitchen is full right now of team members baking treats and cooking food for the café and with others baking catering orders.

"I'm kind of happy that customers love our stuff," Nguyen says. And it's not just young people like she originally expected. At both locations, her customers span generations, and it's not



ADAM ROMBEL / CNYBJ

The second location of Cake Bar at 252 West Genesee St. in downtown Syracuse, which opened in August 2022.

uncommon to have whole families stop in.

Putting it all together is a labor of love for Nguyen. "Everything I want to do for my business is to represent Vietnam," she says. "It actually makes me love my country more."

Cake Bar's Salt City Market location is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. offering a limited menu of bubble tea, cakes, cookies, and cupcakes.

The West Genesee Street café is open daily from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. with a full menu of coffee, bubble tea, pastries, dessert, and breakfast items. ■

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The Byrne Square Building at 308 W. Genesee St. in Syracuse.

PHOTO CREDIT: CARMEN CESTA

Carm's Doghouse heads downtown to Byrne Square Building

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo_e@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Carm's Doghouse is heading downtown.

The dog daycare and grooming business will open its fourth location this fall in the Byrne Square Building, at 308 West Genesee St. in Syracuse.

But the plans don't stop there, business and building owner Carmen Cesta says. Cesta, who opened the first Carm's Doghouse in 2010, purchased the Byrne Square Building for \$650,000 in March. His plans include the newest daycare location along with a retail pet store, plus three luxury two-bedroom apartments on the upper floors.

The Cicero native has always had a passion for animals. After graduating from high school in 2008, he spent a few years

working for the family towing business before opening his first Carm's Doghouse location. Two more locations followed after that, and the business currently operates facilities in Cicero, Baldwinsville, and Liverpool.

"This will be number four downtown," Cesta says. His plans call for 7,000 square feet of daycare, boarding, and grooming space in the building's basement. That includes a 20-foot by 10-foot inground pool for his canine guests to enjoy.

His entry into the retail pet store business is a natural evolution since his daycare locations already sell pet supplies and his website includes an online store. Cesta says he was able to purchase the assets of a now defunct pet store and is excited to open a full retail location.

The idea for a downtown dog daycare first began percolating about four

years ago when the City of Syracuse approached him with the idea as it sought out potential reuse for the Byrne Square Building. The only problem was that the building wasn't zoned for that type of business, Cesta says. Then the pandemic struck, and the entire process slowed down. The city finally rezoned the building about two months ago, he adds.

"It was about a four-year battle," Cesta says, adding that the city has been great to work with on the project. He also worked with Pathfinder Bank to finance the purchase.

Cesta's research showed that the Franklin Square area, with about 450 registered dogs, was a prime market for a Carm's Doghouse. The area is also home to many offices, which means workers

▶ SEE CARM'S DOGHOUSE, PAGE 44

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OCWA water-treatment exhibit appears at the MOST

Available through late November

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — The OCWA exhibit about the treatment and transmission of water in Central New York will be available through late November at the Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science & Technology (MOST) in Syracuse.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony on the morning of Aug. 31 acknowledged the opening of the exhibit, OCWA announced. OCWA employees, authority members, and various community supporters, including elected officials, participated in the event.

OCWA, located at 200 Northern Concourse in the town of Salina, describes itself as “Central New York’s Water Authority.” The acronym OCWA is short for Onondaga County Water Authority.

OCWA’s educational exhibit, called “How Your Water Works,” is on display now through Nov. 26, part of the Syracuse Innovation Station located on the first floor of the MOST. It includes a water-pipe display, historical timeline, photo cutout banner, fun facts about OCWA, and an interactive water table for children to enjoy.

“We often get questions from the community about how our water gets from point A to point B,” Jeff Brown, OCWA executive director, said in an OCWA announcement. “We hope many individuals and families will enjoy our exhibit, and we sincerely thank the MOST for providing us with this unique opportunity to highlight what we do at OCWA and how we serve customers with fresh, safe, and reliable drinking water.”

Lauren Kochian, president of the MOST, also commented on the OCWA

exhibit.

“Water infrastructure is such an important part of our world, and this exhibit gives visitors the chance to better understand how water — one of our most valuable resources — is managed sustainably,” she said.

The Syracuse Innovation Station features innovations, industries, and inventions that are “exclusive” to the Syracuse area, providing families with an opportunity to discuss the technology and new advancements in our region. New displays and demonstrations are added regularly, OCWA noted.

About OCWA

OCWA was established by act of the New York State Legislature in 1951 and currently serves about 500,000 residents in Onondaga, Oswego, Madison, Cayuga, and Oneida counties.

The authority says it is among the 125 largest public drinking-water systems in the country, operating two major water-treatment facilities, more than 2,150 miles of main, over 13,300 fire hydrants, more than 60 storage facilities, and 47 pump stations.

About the MOST

The Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science & Technology (MOST) is a hands-on science and technology museum for all ages located at 500 S. Franklin St. in the Armory Square area of Syracuse.

The MOST hosts numerous STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) education programs and community outreach events annually. It is home to 35,000 square feet of interactive permanent and traveling exhibits.

The organization says its vision is to be a “preeminent science and technology center, inspiring all generations through hands-on education and entertainment.” ■

The OCWA exhibit, “How Your Water Works,” is on display at the Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science & Technology (MOST) in Syracuse through late November.

PHOTO CREDIT: OCWA WEBSITE



City of Syracuse converts Clinton Street into two ways

BY JOURNAL STAFF
news@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh on Aug. 1 announced the completion of a road reconstruction project on South Clinton Street, converting the street from one way to two ways between West Jefferson and Taylor Streets.

The conversion makes it easier to get around downtown Syracuse and improves safety for pedestrians and drivers, the mayor contends.

The project involved milling and paving five blocks of Clinton Street from West Jefferson to Taylor Streets. The conversion included the restriping of crosswalks to try to increase pedestrian safety, and the addition of bike lanes on both sides of the street. The project also introduced narrower north and southbound lanes as well as on-street parking in an attempt to reduce traffic speeds.

“The completion of the Clinton Street two-way conversion is welcomed by people living and working in the southern end of Downtown. By better connecting the central business district to our neighborhoods, we are continuing to activate the renaissance of Downtown Syracuse,” Walsh said in a release. “The conversion is also consistent with our Vision Zero commitment



ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ

The converted two-way South Clinton Street in downtown Syracuse, as seen in this photo from Aug. 27. The City of Syracuse on Aug. 1 announced the completion of the two-way conversion between West Jefferson and Taylor Streets.

to make Syracuse a safer city for all forms of transportation.”

Mayor Walsh, in his 2023 State of the City address, outlined his commitment to making Syracuse a Vision Zero city.

The Vision Zero Network is a collaborative, nonprofit campaign helping communities set and reach the goal of Vision Zero — eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries among all road users — while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable mobility, according to the Vision Zero Network website.

The Vision Zero strategy is “a comprehensive approach to traffic safety that considers everything from lane widths to land use to lower speed limits,” the mayor’s release stated. ■

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Snapshot of Vital Statistics for Syracuse

BY VANCE MARRINER

Journal Staff | vmarrine@cnybj.com

City of Syracuse Population by Age

Under 5 years	6.1%
Under 18 years	21.7%
65 years and older	12.6%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

City of Syracuse Population by Race & Ethnicity

White alone	53.0%
Black or African American alone	29.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.9%
Asian alone	7.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.0%
Two or more races	7.2%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	9.5%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

POPULATION

144,451

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU 2022 ESTIMATE

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

57,153

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2017-2021 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$40,490

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2017-2021 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: PERCENT HIGH-SCHOOL GRADUATE OR HIGHER

84%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2017-2021 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE

\$99,200

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2017-2021 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

NUMBER OF VETERANS

5,471

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2017-2021 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



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City of Syracuse moves offices to One Park Place

BY JOURNAL STAFF
news@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — The City of Syracuse recently completed the move of numerous offices from City Hall Commons to One Park Place.

The move was part of the city's initiative to rehabilitate and redevelop the historic flatiron-style City Hall Commons building.

The following City of Syracuse departments and divisions relocated to floor 7 at One Park Place (located at 300 South State St.) and reopened to the public on Aug. 29, after being temporarily closed to walk-in visitors for one week:

- Citizen Review Board
- Code Enforcement
- Mayor's Office to Reduce Gun Violence
- Neighborhood and Business Development
- Neighborhood Watch
- Planning and Sustainability
- Syracuse Fire Department: Bureau of Fire Prevention
- Syracuse Police Department: Ordinance Enforcement
- Syracuse Police Department: Office of Professional Standards

The new city offices at One Park Place will “provide a collaborative and efficient workspace designed to improve staff work environment and enhance constituent services,” according to a news release from Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh's office.

Visitors need to check in with the building-security attendant on floor 1 before they can access the elevator to reach city offices, per the mayor's office. The main entrance to One Park Place should be accessed from South State Street.

The City's Central Permit Office reopened on Aug. 25 and has a separate entrance located on the south side of the building, on East Onondaga Street. Limited off-street parking is available for visitors at the One Park Place parking lot, located at 343 E. Onondaga St.

“I am excited about what this move means to the people we



ADAM ROMBEL/CNYBJ

Numerous City of Syracuse offices, including the Central Permit Office and Neighborhood and Business Development, have recently moved to One Park Place, from City Hall Commons, which the city is redeveloping.

serve,” Mayor Walsh said in the release. “The new Central Permit Office is more easily accessible and offers a one-stop shop for anyone needing assistance with permits, licenses, and inspections. All other departments and divisions are now located on the same floor, with a central reception and waiting area. The change allows us to deliver more efficient services and improves the overall experience for visitors.” ■

CARM'S DOGHOUSE

continued from page 38

who might not like leaving their dog home alone all day, he adds.

Since he started working on the building, Cesta has already noticed a growing interest, stating that about 200 to 300 people have inquired about the business.

“I think it's going to do extremely well,” he says.

Plans are still fluid, but Cesta is target-

ing an Oct. 1 opening for the pet store, followed by the daycare about a month later.

He hopes to begin work on the upstairs apartments by next spring. “By this time next year, the building will be 100 percent complete,” he says.

Cesta, who is doing all the remodeling work himself with a small crew, says the apartments will lease for \$2,500 a month and include doggy-daycare services. He says that's a \$600-a-month value, plus offers the convenience of having it located

right downstairs.

He is currently hiring for both the daycare and retail operations.

Along with Carm's Doghouse, Cesta owns several rental properties in the region and is also working with a solar company to open a 150-acre solar farm on 214 acres near Central Square. Cesta purchased the former North Country Plaza, located on the corner of State Route 11 and County Route 4 in the town of Hastings, in 2021 and plans to renovate the plaza. ■

Pallo fills city communications role for neighborhood and business development

BY JOURNAL STAFF
news@cnybj.com

SYRACUSE — Sarah Pallo has recently begun serving as public information officer for neighborhood and business development for the City of Syracuse.

As part of the city Communications Office, Pallo is responsible for a wide range of public information and communication activities supporting neighborhood development, business development, code enforcement, and planning and sustainability, according to a Sept. 1 release from the office of Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh.

Pallo is tasked with providing information to businesses and neighborhoods by producing communications and content for web, print, and social media. She will develop and distribute public information to educate and engage businesses, residents, and media on ongoing and upcoming projects and initiatives related to housing, neighborhood health and safety, property development, business opportunities, historic preservation, and land use. Pallo will also work with the public to answer questions and receive recommendations to help inform and improve agency programs, the release stated.

A Syracuse native, Pallo has spent the last 15 years involved in



Sarah Pallo

PHOTO CREDIT: CITY OF SYRACUSE

support and development of local businesses in the city of Syracuse. Most recently, she was the general manager at Otro Cinco, where she led the reopening of the restaurant's new concept and design. She directed restaurant branding and developed a comprehensive marketing strategy to drive business, while working to ensure customers enjoyed their dining experience, the mayor's office said.

Pallo also worked for the Northside Urban Partnership as a program coordinator for business development. In this role, she shaped the creation and launch of Up Start, a collaborative business-development program that connects local, service-based businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs to the tools and networks that help them thrive, per the release. She also strengthened the local business community by providing engagement opportunities, marketing assistance, and support to Northside businesses and members of SyracuseFirst, a nonprofit that encourages citizens to "think local first".

Pallo received a bachelor's degree in environmental science and communications at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, or ESF. ■

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think our city is beautiful in all seasons,” Roesch says. “A lot of people have said to us they just don’t feel like they are in Syracuse” when they are on the rooftop.

With the word right in the name, Emerald focuses on cocktails, bringing a new element to the area’s nightlife, she says. While there are several other drinking establishments in the area, each one has its own focus. It all adds to the

nightlife scene, helping draw people to the area, she adds.

Emerald is also a nod to Tipperary Hill’s Irish history and Roesch’s own Irish ancestry.

Along with classic and custom cocktails, Emerald Cocktail Kitchen also serves up sharable plates and treats. The bar currently employs between 40 and 50 people.

Roesch also just launched the 1331 Food Truck, a take-out area in the bar offering grab-and-go foods. The name is a nod to Emerald’s 1331 W. Fayette St.

address.

“I would love to open more places in the future,” Roesch says of her future plans in Syracuse. Roesch and her mother have also operated The Brasserie Bar & Bistro in Township 5 in Camillus for about eight years.

“I really do love Syracuse,” she says. “I think there’s so much potential for growth. I think Syracuse is really blossoming.”

Emerald Cocktail Kitchen is open Wednesday through Monday from noon until 1 a.m. It’s closed on Tuesdays. ■

services to area residents, “especially to those who might have limited access to health care,” per an SCH news release.

Plan for existing space

As Cuttler explains it, SCH had plans for the existing building at 819 S. Salina St., but they were all predicated on the receipt of a New York State Capital Transformation grant in round three. It’s a grant intended for health-care organizations with capital projects.

SCH had combined the grants it was awarded from the first and second Transformation grant rollouts to pay for the new building, Cuttler notes.

“We had submitted an application under round three of the Transformation grants and did not receive an award,” he says. “We had about \$20 million in that

grant application for renovating the current building.”

He went on to say that SCH will apply again in the fourth round of the Transformation grant process. Until then, SCH is working with a consultant to identify the “best” use of the space that will be available.

He figures SCH will have about 40,000 square feet of space available in the existing building after those moving to the new building begin operations there.

“It’s quite a bit, but we want to know what’s going to best serve the community around us,” he says.

Moving forward

When SCH begins operations in the new facility, Cuttler says mostly administrative-support staff will remain at the existing building. That includes information-technology staff, the entire finance department, medical records, and human

resources.

“The design and the intent of building a new building was to make ... as much clinical space for the patients as possible ... and not fill the brand new space with a lot administrative-support services. That [new] building is for the patients,” says Cuttler.

Services in the new structure will include the optometry office, podiatry, OBGYN, pediatrics, family medicine, dental services, and optician and pharmacy vendors as well.

Cuttler says SCH provides services for those who are underinsured, uninsured, and are of a lower socioeconomic status.

“We feel very strongly that it doesn’t matter how much money you make or where you live, you deserve the very best [in health care], so that’s what we did with this building. It’s not just a new building. Everything in it is top of the line,” says Cuttler. ■

and renovate the building. The end result is Willow 123 Lofts — four luxury apartments and 3,000 square feet of commercial space.

The apartments range from about 1,450 square feet to just over 1,600 square feet for the penthouse unit. Each unit has two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and 12-foot ceilings. Three units showcase the original

wood-support beams of the building. The penthouse includes a mezzanine level and a rooftop terrace. All of the units feature granite countertops and stainless-steel appliances, and parking is available.

The goal, Crabbe says, was to build the kind of apartment he would want to live in. “I fell in love with the project,” he adds.

While leasing the apartments was fairly easy, Crabbe says he’s having a harder time leasing the commercial space. It isn’t due to lack of interest, he notes, but

because he’s being picky about what type of business goes into the space.

“I think it would make a great café,” he says. An office or even retail space would also be a good fit, considering the tenants up above.

Crabbe is ok being patient and waiting for the right tenant for the space, especially with the I-81 project looming.

“When the 81 project is done, that building is going to be on a great corner,” he notes. ■

As talent buyers, Binion and Ferry can now offer their venue up to artists and have been busy booking events including various musical acts and themed nights devoted to artists like Taylor Swift or themes like disco, anime, and gamers.

And while ticket prices are set by the artists, most average around \$20, making The Song & Dance an affordable option for a night out.

Along with bringing more performances to Syracuse, the club also helps bring people out in the community when they come to see events, Binion says. He hopes those crowds benefit other area business-

es like restaurants. The Song & Dance also sets every performer up with an advance package that includes local business information such as restaurants they may wish to visit while in town.

The nightclub includes a bar and limited food options. The Song & Dance is only open on event nights and employs as many as 10 people per event. ■

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Hanover Real Estate Development plans to convert City Hall Commons into a mix of residential and commercial uses, “bringing density to Hanover Square,” per the report.

In Armory Square, a new six-story mixed-use building is planned to transform the existing Armory Parking Garage into THE CLINTON at Armory Square. Developed by Tony Fiorito, John Funciello, and Andrew Larew, this \$18 million investment will bring new vibrancy to the neighborhood and is scheduled to begin construction in the first quarter of 2024, the Downtown Committee says. A 100-car parking garage on the lower levels, with residential and commercial space above, will “energize” a key downtown location. An open courtyard on the second level will overlook Clinton and Walton Streets.

One block away, Jeff Appel is converting the 128-year-old Bentley Settle Building into 30 residential units. A new restaurant, The Whiskey Coop, was also slated to open soon in the lower level.

Following its completion of the Treasury project, Douglas Development has purchased two buildings fronting Fayette

Firefighters Memorial Park, with plans for a new mixed-use development.

Downtown-office employers

Several large-scale commercial development projects are underway with downtown Syracuse welcoming seven new Class A office headquarters this year, with another two headquarters also coming.

At Clinton Square, VIP Structures completed its \$32 million renovation of The Post, adding employer density and new headquarters locations for Chase Design and VIP. NBT Bank also announced it will move its Central New York regional headquarters to the building.

At Columbus Circle, the Carnegie building has entered a new phase. The neighborhood has been revitalized with the move of the county’s economic development, community development, and planning offices, along with CNY Arts, into the property, thanks to a \$4 million renovation by Onondaga County.

In addition, FustCharles relocated to the Merchants Commons on South Warren Street earlier this spring.

Two blocks away, Hayner Hoyt’s \$37 million conversion of the former Sibley’s Department Store into “City Center” has “transformed the feel” of South Salina Street, the Downtown Committee said.

The building’s roster includes office headquarters for the Hayner Hoyt Corporation, Huntington Ingalls Industries, CXtec, and Impel.

Work has also started on an expansion to the Tech Garden as CenterState CEO adds a two-story addition, more than doubling the incubator’s space. The additional 46,000 square feet will create a “new and improved campus to reimagine who is served and how and drive more equity and inclusivity through programs offered,” the organization said.


New businesses

This last year, the Downtown Committee welcomed 29 new ground-floor businesses to downtown Syracuse, with eight more expected to open before the end of 2023.


Of these 29 new downtown businesses, 41 percent are owned by entrepreneurs of color and 48 percent are owned by women.

In June, vintage-clothing store Black Citizens Brigade formally opened at 140 Bank Alley. Downtown’s newest businesses also include Flynnstoned, Syracuse’s first licensed cannabis dispensary, which formally opened on Walton Street in June. ■

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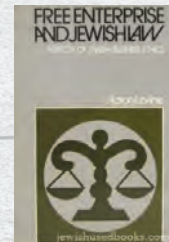
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preparations for a newly constructed interchange that will connect future Business Loop 81 southbound to the redesignated I-81 northbound, the NYSDOT said.

Outreach centers

Earlier in the month, NYSDOT on Aug. 16 announced the availability of the Syracuse outreach centers. They're located at Tucker Missionary Baptist Church at 515 Oakwood Ave. in Syracuse and at the Hills Building at 217 Montgomery St., near Syracuse City Hall.

The center at Tucker Missionary Baptist Church is open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-6 p.m., while the one at the Hills Building (first floor) is available Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., per an Aug. 16 announcement from the office of Gov. Kathy Hochul.

The centers are part of the community-engagement process for the project, David Smith, NYSDOT regional director, told the gathering at the announcement at Tucker Missionary Baptist Church.

"The outreach centers continue that effort. [They'll] enable us to continue to engage with the community, enable the community to come in, share any concerns that they have with us, and we can talk about those concerns," Smith said in his remarks.

He added that the project represents an "historic opportunity for the community in terms of jobs." Members of the Urban Jobs Task Force were among those attending the announcement.

The community outreach centers are a "crucial component" to fulfilling the local-hire goal as they'll provide direct access to the necessary information get trained and hired for the project, Dekha Dancil, president of the board of directors of the Urban Jobs Task Force, said in her remarks.

She also noted the department's commitment to a 15 percent local hiring goal for the I-81 project.

"That's about 4,000 of the 26,000 jobs that are going to be available on the project. These are not just jobs but rather opportunities for life-changing careers as skill tradesmen and women, so it's a big win for Syracuse," Dancil said.

I-81 work underway

Major construction has started on the first of multiple contracts planned for the I-81 project, Hochul's office said. Work on the first contract consists of reconstructing the existing Interstate 481/I-81 northern interchange to the re-designated I-81 and Business Loop 81, while also converting portions of I-481 to the new I-81 and making several road and bridge improvements along the corridor.

The second contract will begin the conversion of the southern interchange of I-481/I-81. Together, these two contracts are "essential" to maintaining a high-speed interstate connection with national and international north-south trade routes from Tennessee to the Canadian border, the governor's office stated.

The announcement of the outreach centers happened nearly



ERIC REINHARDT / CNYBJ

The Interstate 81 viaduct as seen from Wilson Park in Syracuse in November 2022. The New York State Department of Transportation says work on the viaduct-replacement project has started on interchanges, both north and south of the city.

a month after federal, state, and local officials on July 21 held a groundbreaking ceremony for the project that remains the subject of ongoing litigation.

Officials spoke before a packed gymnasium inside STEAM at Dr. King Elementary School at 416 E. Raynor Ave. in Syracuse.

Those speaking at the groundbreaking event included New York Gov. Kathy Hochul; U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.); U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.); White House Senior Advisor & Infrastructure Implementation Coordinator Mitch Landrieu; Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh; and Lanessa Owens-Chaplin, director of racial justice with the NYCLU.

In a news release about the event, Schumer's office described the groundbreaking as "formally launching one of the largest and most ambitious construction projects ever undertaken in Upstate New York."

After the speaking portion inside the school, the officials involved then held shovels and tossed dirt from a mound assembled at the intersection of Martin Luther King East and Leon streets outside the school, which is just below the elevated viaduct and not far from the JMA Wireless Dome on the Syracuse University campus.

In speaking with reporters in the elementary school's library after the ceremony, Hochul was asked about holding the groundbreaking event with the issue still in the courts. The governor replied, "We're making great progress. We understand the litigation. I won't comment on litigation, but this is an important milestone to move ahead on this element. The lower court judge allowed for this movement and we're not going to wait."

Overseen by NYSDOT, the \$2.25 billion project will create a community grid to "reconnect downtown neighborhoods severed by the I-81 viaduct's construction and correct an enduring injustice that has disproportionately impacted residents of color in the City of Syracuse for decades," Hochul's office said. ■

CITY CENTER

continued from page 6

feet total. Its space will include 30,000 feet on the fourth floor and 20,000 on the ground floor, Thurston says.

CXtec moved into City Center in early July, occupying about 30,000 square feet on the second floor.

Another tenant, the Redhouse Performing Arts Center, has occupied part of the building since 2018.

Besides those building tenants, Tompkins Community Bank was scheduled to open a branch in early September, Thurston told CNYBJ. "They have about 6,000 square feet on the first floor on the corner of Jefferson and [South] Salina

[Streets]," he added.

Hayner Hoyt has also had conversations with other possible tenants, but as of the Aug. 29 interview, no additional leases had been signed, according to Thurston.

"We still have a little bit of space left for class-A office ... If anyone's looking to move downtown with a parking garage," he adds. ■

new chapter. The neighborhood has been reinvigorated with the move of Onondaga County’s economic development, community development, and planning offices, along with CNY Arts, into the property, thanks to a \$4 million renovation by the county.

FustCharles relocated to downtown Syracuse and into Merchants Commons on South Warren Street this past spring, bringing its employees to shop, dine, and enjoy downtown’s offerings.

Two blocks away, Hayner Hoyt’s \$37 million conversion of the former Sibley’s Department Store into “City Center” has transformed the feel of South Salina Street. The building’s roster includes office headquarters for:

- Huntington Ingalls Industries
- The Hayner Hoyt Corporation
- CXtec
- And Impel

At Equitable Towers, renovations have created fresh, new office space. Next door, work is underway on an expansion to The Tech Garden as CenterState CEO adds a two-story addition, more than doubling the incubator’s space. The additional 46,000 square feet will create a new and improved campus to reimagine who is served and how and drive more equity and inclusivity through programs it offers. A new façade will also better reflect the innovation system supported by the building.

These are transformational projects that not only activate underutilized spaces, but also call attention to the power of downtown as a destination. Earlier this year, downtown Syracuse welcomed its first e-sports arena, ELITE Gaming, located in the historic Armory Building. This facility has put Syracuse on the map for the gaming industry and helps boost year-round tourism. Working with nearby partners, this anchor will broaden opportunities for students through educational programs, team competitions, and exposure to career opportunities.

Partners like Famous Artists present major Broadway shows downtown, enlivening the Civic Center and Landmark Theatre.

The Redhouse Arts Center announced its upcoming season, which will take our community on a journey through the arts. With timeless classics, family shows, and a thriller, the season’s lineup has something for everyone.

The Onondaga Historical Association’s new exhibit, “Come in from the Cold,” puts our community’s unique winter fashions on full display. At the Everson Museum, exhibits by Frank Buffalo Hyde and Doug Muir are drawing national attention and acclaim.

Recognizing the important role arts and culture play in fostering our community’s identity and attracting visitors, the City of Syracuse and Common Council established the Syracuse Festival Fund. Over 12 months, this fund supported the recovery of 26 events. The Syracuse Festival Fund continues to support the important role arts and culture play in our community with a new \$135,000 budget for the year ahead.

Continued investment will be the key to transforming how we experience our city center. In late 2022, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) projects for awarded cities across New York state, including the city of Syracuse. The \$10 million grant will focus on projects that improve walkability, connectivity, housing, and business opportunities between the Southwest Gateway and downtown Syracuse.



ADAM ROMBEL / CNYBJ

Work continues at the Mizpah Towers where new apartments, along with commercial and retail space are being added through a \$6.7 million investment.



ADAM ROMBEL / CNYBJ

The Carnegie Building at 335 Montgomery St., near Columbus Circle in downtown Syracuse, has entered a new chapter, thanks to a \$4 million renovation by Onondaga County.

Later this fall, you will start to see enhancements associated with downtown’s \$100,000 grant from the City of Syracuse’s Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund. These funds, matched with funding from our Downtown Syracuse Foundation, will support seven blocks of LED street tree lighting and over the next year, up to nine new gateway signs.

All of these incremental projects and investments have created a critical mass that can be seen and felt when you are in downtown Syracuse. Companies and people now see downtown as an asset — a place to be and explore, and as the heart of the community. We continue to make progress because our partners share a long-term vision for vibrancy. Thank you for your continued partnership. ■

Merike Treier is executive director of the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc. In this role, she leads a team to support a dynamic, vibrant downtown and promote future growth through economic development and revitalization initiatives, marketing and events, security, and environmental maintenance. Treier is also president of the Downtown Syracuse Foundation, Inc. Contact her at MTreier@DowntownSyracuse.com.

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