

# New redevelopment plan in works for Syracuse's round church







The First Church of Christ, Scientist, at 728 E. Genesee St., Syracuse, circa 1970s. (Onondaga Historical Association)  
[Rick Moriarty | rmoriarty@syracuse.com](mailto:rmoriarty@syracuse.com)



PrintEmail



By Rick Moriarty | [rmoriarty@syracuse.com](mailto:rmoriarty@syracuse.com)

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Syracuse, N.Y. — The new owner of a former Christian Science church known for its unusual round shape is planning to turn the historic building into retail space or a restaurant and build an apartment building next to it.

An entity named 728 EGSU LLC presented preliminary plans for the redevelopment of the former [First Church of Christ, Scientist](#), at 728 E. Genesee St., a few blocks from Syracuse University, to the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board in November.

The limited liability corporation, which lists as its address a home in Roslyn Heights on Long Island, bought the property for \$1.54 million from Justin Nappi and the Nappi Family Foundation in February.

Nappi, a Jamesville-DeWitt High School graduate who filmed the indie movie "Adult World" in Syracuse in 2012, announced plans in January 2015 to [convert the former Christian Science church](#) into a venue for film screenings, lectures, music, theater and dance. Those plans were dropped and Nappi sold the building for a quick half-million-dollar profit.

At the preservation board's Nov. 17 meeting, representatives of Ashley McGraw Architects, which had also worked on plans for the arts cinema, presented design concepts for an eight- to 10-story building of market-rate apartments to be constructed on on the site. The apartments would be built immediately adjacent to and behind the church, according to [minutes of the meeting](#).

The ground floor of the new building would include retail space fronting East Genesee St., with a parking garage behind it. The church would be incorporated into the development with retail or restaurant uses. However, no significant interior or exterior alterations to the church are planned.

The former church is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Its cornerstone was laid in 1921, and the building was completed in 1923.

In 2002, Second Church of Christ, Scientist, dissolved its membership and donated its building at 3827 E. Genesee St. in DeWitt to the First Church of Christ, Scientist. In April 2003, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, relocated to 3827 E. Genesee St. and sold its former home to Summit Federal Credit Union.

The credit union moved out and sold the building to Nappi for \$990,000 in December 2014.

An addition built onto the west side of the church for its Sunday school classes around 1950 would be demolished for the apartment project. Architect Andrew Schuster told the landmark board that the addition was thoroughly remodeled when it was converted into a credit union and there is little or no historic material remaining in it.

Contact Rick Moriarty anytime: [Email](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | 315-470-3148