

Downtown Living Tour includes three new projects

Published: Saturday, May 05, 2012, 2:00 AM



Gloria Wright

By



A drawing of what Merchants Commons, 220 S. Warren St., which is still under construction, will look like when completed. Courtesy Washington Street Partners Inc.

This year's Downtown Living Tour -- the sixth -- will offer peeks into three new projects.

Downtown's newest apartments at The 319 at South Salina will be on the May 19 tour, as will two projects still under construction.

Representatives of those two projects will be on hand with drawings and floor plans for people to get a sense of what Merchants Commons, 220 S. Warren St., and the Pike Block, 300-306 S. Salina St., will look like, said Merike Treier, executive director of Downtown Committee of Syracuse Inc., a nonprofit downtown management organization.

Downtown has a 99 percent occupancy rate, she said.

"As fast as they can build, they're leased out," she said.

Also new to the tour this year is a condominium at Mission Landing, 429 N. Franklin St.

Although shuttles will be available from Dinosaur Bar-B-Que, the headquarters of this year's tour, Treier hopes people will take advantage of the new Onondaga Creekwalk, a 2.6-mile greenway from Armory Square to Onondaga Lake.

"We really want them to use the Creekwalk to Mission Landing," Treier said. "It's such a great amenity that we want to draw people's attention to."

Both the Erie Canal Museum, 318 Erie Blvd. E., and the Onondaga Historical Association, 321 Montgomery St., are part of this year's tour and will have exhibits on downtown living through history, she said.

A record 1,900 people bought tickets to last year's self-guided tour. Until May 17, \$10 advance tickets will be available through PayPal or credit card on the committee's website, downtownsyracuse.com. Tickets can also be purchased at the committee's offices at 572 S. Salina St..

Tickets are \$12 on the day of the tour. All tickets must be picked up at the Dinosaur, 246 W. Willow St., between 11:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. The tour runs noon to 6 p.m.

Admission is free for children younger than 10.

Parking in a lot across Franklin street from the Dinosaur will be \$2. On-street parking will be free in the Central Business District for the tour.

The view from one of the fifth floor apartments in the former Label Shopper clothing store building, 319 S. Salina St.
Photo by Peter Chen / The Post-Standard.

The residential tour stops are:

The 319 at South Salina, 319 S. Salina St.

Known as the Label Shopper building and former home of Economy Book & Stationary, the five-story brick commercial building will house 12 apartments, ranging in size from 1,300 to 1,600 square feet..

On the ground floor is the sneaker store Villa, and each floor in the rest of the building will have three apartments.

Each apartment has two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a laundry room.

Apartment 3 will be open for the tour.

Monthly rents will range from \$1,199 to \$1,899.

The ceiling detail above the kitchen in one of the fifth floor apartments in the former Label Shopper clothing store building, 319 S. Salina St.
Photo by Peter Chen / The Post-Standard.

The building was built in the early 1900s and has a structural steel frame. The facade was extensively remodeled by local architects Archimedes Russell and Melvin King in 1913.

Renovations to the building, owned by Peter Elitzer, began in September 2011.

Merchants Commons, 220 S. Warren St.

Still under construction, the building will house both commercial space and 66 apartments, ranging from 600 to 1,200 square feet.

Roof top view.JPG

Both one- and two-bedroom apartments, some

with two bathrooms, will be built. The building will also house a fitness center, covered parking in a garage below the building, a private club/entertainment room and a rooftop deck with expansive views.

A roof-top deck at Merchants Commons, 200 S. Warren St., will have expansive views.
Courtesy Washington Street Partners Inc.

Merchants Commons is made up of two buildings: the former Merchants Bank Building and the Snow Building. The Snow Building is an eight-story Romanesque revival building designed by Archimedes Russell in 1888. The 102-foot-high building was Syracuse's first skyscraper.

In 1911, Russell and architect Melvin King added two stories to the existing eight of the Snow Building in order to conform to the height of the adjoining University Block, which had replaced the old Remington Block in 1898.

Washington Street Partners took control of the building in 2011 and announced plans for Merchants Commons.

Pike Block, 300 S. Salina St.

The project in the 300 block of South Salina street includes four historic buildings: the Witherill, Wilson, Bond and Chamberlin buildings. Plans are for 25,000 square feet of retail space at street level as well as 78 apartments: 22 one-bedroom, 52 two-bedroom and four three-bedroom units.

Living Room 2.JPG

Plans also include garage parking, a ground-level residential courtyard, a multipurpose room and a green roof with outdoor seating for tenants.

A pedestrian walkthrough will connect Armory Square and S. Salina Street.

The project is being called the Pike Block, named for Henry Pike, the original developer and builder of the Witherill building.

A rendering shows what an apartment in the Pike Block will look like.
Courtesy VIP Structures.

Construction of the four buildings spanned decades and styles from Italianate to Beaux Arts.

Living Room.JPG

CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity's predecessor, the Metropolitan

Development Association, selected VIP Structures to develop the four buildings in January 2010. The project is expected to be completed in 2013.

A rendering of an apartment in the Pike Block.
Courtesy VIP Structures.

Lofts at 243, 243 E. Water St.

The last time this building was on the tour in 2010, the six two-bedroom apartments, ranging in size

from 1,000 to 1,500 square feet, were under construction.

The apartments, located in Hanover Square, have original hardwoods, new custom kitchens, exposed brick walls and original tin ceilings. Each apartment has eight windows.

Each unit has a washer and dryer, and parking is available at the nearby State Tower Garage for \$90 a month.

Unit 4A will be shown on the tour.

The details

WHAT: Downtown Living Tour.

WHEN: Noon to 6 p.m. May 19.

COST: \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door.

MORE INFORMATION: downtownsyracuse.com.

cooler.

Rents range from \$675 to \$2,300 per month.

The building was constructed in 1940, and has housed a restaurant, dance studio, art gallery, community support offices and other businesses.

Loew's Landmark Suites, 108 W. Jefferson St.

The building has 24 condominiums ranging from 975 to 1,700 square feet. The three-bedroom condo on the tour is

Rents range from \$1,275 to \$1,400 a month. The building was rehabilitated by R.F. Esposito Inc. to include residential living on the upper floors along with renovations to its ground floor commercial storefront. **218 W. Genesee St.**

The four-story building has six apartments, ranging from 600 to 2,800 square feet.

The apartment on the tour, Unit 4A, was renovated in 2011 and has two bedrooms, one bathroom and 1,075 square feet of living space.

The living room and both bedrooms have views of Clinton Square. The apartment has bamboo floors, ceramic tile in the bathroom and a built-in wine

Unit 708, which is for sale for \$255,000. The condo has 1,573 square feet and views of Armory Square.

The Loew's Landmark Building was designed by architect Thomas Lamb as one of a series of "Beaux Art Entertainment Palaces" built by the Loew's family, which paired a cinema theater with an office building. Completed in 1928, the office building consisted of eight stories with approximately 70,000 square feet, including 10,000 square feet of retail space wrapping around both the office building and the theater.

Eventually, the property was abandoned and scheduled for demolition. In 1977, however, the property was spared from the wrecking ball, and the office building and the theater were legally and mechanically separated.

The property was purchased in 2000 by Robert Doucette and Richard DeVito with the intention of redeveloping a portion of the building into 15 residential units. The owners developed an additional nine units in 2006.

Mission Landing, 429 N. Franklin St.

Mission Landing in Franklin Square has 47 condominiums, a community roof deck, tennis courts and a fitness center.

0206fhowex.JPG

Condominium No. 112 is the tour stop. The two-story condo, which is not for sale, has two bedrooms, 2 1/2 bathrooms and 2,100 square feet of living space.

The condo is on the first floor, and has exposed beams, oak floors and exposed brick walls. A private patio across from the Creekwalk is located off the living room. The second floor has two bedrooms with hardwood floors, exposed brick walls and en suite bathrooms.

Mission Landing condominiums are new to the Downtown Living Tour this year.
Gloria Wright, 2010

The building once housed the Monarch Typewriter Company factory. In the early 1900s, Syracuse became known as "the typewriter capital of the

world," because three large, well-equipped and new factories were located within the city.

The Monarch Typewriter factory was shut down and sold in 1915.

Dey's Plaza, 401 S. Salina St.

Once home to Dey Brothers department store, the building has 45 one- and two-bedroom apartments on the upper three floors of the building.

The apartments range in age from 660 to 2,350 square feet, with rents ranging from \$800 to \$1,800.

Unit 615 will be the tour stop. It has two bedrooms, two bathrooms and more than 1,900 square feet.

All the apartments have marble master bathrooms, Brazilian hardwood floors, washer and dryer and garage parking.

The building is five interconnected buildings constructed and connected over 76 years to house the Dey Brothers & Co. Department Store. The original building was constructed in 1893, and designed by Archimedes Russell in the Italian Renaissance Revival style using post and beam construction.

In October 2010, Paramount Realty Group began construction to turn the upper floors of the building into high-end residential units. Renovation was completed in March 2011.

Nonresidential stops on the tour include:

Dinosaur Bar-B-Que, 246 W. Willow St.

A downtown anchor, the Dinosaur Bar-B-Que was started in 1983 by three bikers. It is the headquarters of this year's tour.

In 1988, the Dinosaur settled into downtown Syracuse and opened up as a takeout BBQ joint. In 1990, it doubled its space and added a full bar and waitress service.

Over the last decade, the Dinosaur has been nationally acclaimed, and its blues club rated as one of the best in the country. The Dinosaur also manufactures and distributes an award-winning line of specialty sauces and spice rubs.

Onondaga Historical Association, 321 Montgomery St.

The Onondaga Historical Association Museum & Research Center will have an exhibit on the history of downtown residential living.

From the neighborhood of Montgomery Street, lined with the Federal and Italianate homes, to the mansions surrounding Fayette Park, to the diversity of the 15th Ward, downtown Syracuse was predominantly residential well into the 20th century.

Erie Canal Museum, 318 Erie Blvd. E.

Housed in the only existing weighlock building in the United States, the museum will show visitors what life was like on the Erie Canal. Docents will be giving short talks.

© 2012 syracuse.com. All rights reserved.