

# **Apartments planned for century-old factory building in Syracuse lakefront (photos)**





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The Easy Washing Machine factory in Syracuse circa 1930s. ([Onondaga Historical Association](#))  
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## SYRACUSE LAKEFRONT DEVELOPMENT

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Syracuse, N.Y. — Developer Mark Congel is planning to turn a 109-year-old former washing machine factory into apartments near the Syracuse Inner Harbor, adding to the construction activity suddenly taking place in the city's lakefront area.

Congel said he will convert the former [Easy Washing Machine Co.](#) factory at 800 N. Clinton St. into approximately 60 market-rate apartments, with some ground-floor retail or commercial space.

Apartments in the four-story building will range from 750 square feet to 1,000 square feet, with monthly leases of \$800 to \$1,200. They will have an industrial look, featuring exposed-brick walls. Those on the upper floors will have impressive views of the lakefront area, the city's North Side and downtown's skyline.

Congel, whose family built the Destiny USA mall three blocks away, said the project will follow [universal design standards](#) for accessibility but will not be limited to people with physical challenges.

"They'll be built for accessibility for all, and they'll be high quality," he said.

The building is eligible for, but not on, the National Register of Historic Places. The original portion of the building went up at the northeast corner of North Clinton and Spencer streets in 1905 to house the Hotaling-Warner Macaroni Co., according to Dennis Connors, curator of history for the Onondaga Historical Association.

At the time, the lakefront area, which includes nearby Franklin Square, was quickly developing into an industrial center. The Hotaling-Warner factory was one of about a half-dozen macaroni producers that were based at one time in Syracuse, Connors said.

The building was later expanded and taken over by Easy Washing, which opened a factory a block away at the northeast corner of Solar and Spencer streets in 1920.

Formerly the Syracuse Washing Machine Co., the company closed in 1963. The building where Congel plans to build apartments was later used as a furniture warehouse, but it has been vacant for approximately 20 years.

Congel presented his plans to city officials last week. He said he hopes to start construction in the spring on the \$5 million to \$6 million project.

He said he will apply for property tax exemptions available for non-residential properties that are converted to a mix of residential and commercial uses. Under those exemptions, the property's tax assessment would be frozen for eight years. The exemption would be phased out over the next four years so that the project would be paying full taxes after 12 years.

The lakefront area — named for its proximity to Onondaga Lake — is drawing increasing interest from developers.

Nearby, developer Cosimo Zavaglia just completed the 75-unit [Clinton Street Commons](#) apartments. Directly across Spencer Street, developers J. Andrew Breuer and Joshua Podkaminer have begun transforming the former [National Biscuit Co. building](#) into offices.

And just a block away at the Syracuse Inner Harbor, COR Development Co. has started construction on a [134-room Aloft Hotel](#), the first of a \$350 million development that is to include hotels, apartments, restaurants and stores.

The former Easy Washing Machine building will be the second historic building that Congel has redeveloped. He and business partner Dan Queri turned the Amos building overlooking Clinton Square into 19 upscale apartments and street-level retail space in 2006. Congel and Queri have been seeking approval from the city to [expand the Amos building](#) with 16 more apartments.

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