

Memories of Partially Collapsed Building Shared

By Elizabeth Jeneault

Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at 10:45 PM EDT

Although the former cold storage warehouse that partially collapsed Tuesday has been vacant for years, it once bustled with people and goods. Elizabeth Jeneault breaks down the history of the building and tells us what was once made inside its walls.

SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- The site of the now partially collapsed cold storage warehouse once bordered the Erie Canal and was at the heart of Syracuse's industrial district. The Onondaga Historical Association says the building was first put on the map by a manufacturer of a sweet treat in the early 1900s.

"The ice cream company seemed to be really in its heyday in the 1920s, maybe into the 1930s," said Dennis Connors, of the association. "But certainly by the 1960s, it appears that it was gone."

Even after the manufacturing of ice cream came to a halt, business at the building continued to flourish.

"Because it was set up with loading docks and the railroad line was still there, so they could pull up a freight car right up to the building and unload," said Connors.

Some remember it as having been a place to purchase meat.

"I remember when I was a little guy, eight or nine years old, my mom used to bring me here and we used to get meat," said Thomas Thompson, a Syracuse resident. "It was a slaughterhouse, I would say."

While the Onondaga Historical Association says it's unlikely a slaughterhouse was ever housed within the building's walls, Connors does say that it would have made sense for meat to have at least been sold there.

"But, it wasn't a slaughterhouse in the sense of them bringing in live cattle and killing them and processing there," said Connors. "But, I'm sure there was meat stored there at various times and they could have been rather large pieces of meat or sides of beef that would lead people to believe it was a slaughterhouse."

Memories of a building that surely won't die, once more of it is forced to come down.

Crews Inspect Part of Collapsed Historical Building

By Iris St. Meran

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The future of a longstanding building in Syracuse is now uncertain after part of it collapsed and then crumbled. No one was hurt, but as Iris St. Meran explains, work is underway to ensure the safety of the rest of the structure.

SYRACUSE, N.Y.-- The former Cold Storage Building has been in the Syracuse community since the early 1900s. A combination of water, ice and heavy snow is what is believed to have caused part of it to collapse, early Tuesday morning.

"This time of year there's a lot of snow up there. As it starts to melt, water starts to shift, if the roof drains in frozen, it pools and ponds and creates additional weight. It finally gets to the point where these old buildings can't handle it anymore," said Deputy Fire Chief Steve Cavuto.

The building was vacant, but on the market. Cavuto said being unoccupied could have also been factor.

"These buildings haven't been used lately. There isn't somebody in there looking at roof leaks or where water damage might be occurring. Call it neglected for lack of a better word. These buildings just aren't maintained like someone's here every day and they tend to be the first to go," said Cavuto.

As a precaution Plum Street was closed as crews monitored the integrity of the building. And the fire department will determine if the section that crumbled will need to come down.

"The fire department looks for emergent safety. In other words, there's a section here that may fall. We want that down. Then structural engineers and the codes division will review the building to see how much can be salvaged," said Cavuto.

The Chief said firefighters regularly inspect vacant buildings in the city checking for illegal activity as well as structural issues. If they find any concerns, they start a process to eliminate the hazard.

Time Warner Cable News reached out to the building's owner for comment but he has not returned calls.

Century-Old Building Collapses Along Erie Boulevard West

By Brad Vivacqua

Updated Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at 11:30 AM EDT

SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- A century old building in the city of Syracuse started to crumble this morning. A section of this vacant property at the corner of Erie Boulevard West and Plum Street partially collapsed around 5:00 a.m.

Police closed down a portion of Plum Street as a precaution, and fire officials were brought in to inspect the building and determine if it needed to be knocked down.

The seven-story structure was more than a hundred years old and was built in 1903. According to real estate documents it was the old Syracuse Cold Storage Building.

Fire officials expected to have a better idea later Tuesday of whether it will need to be knocked down.