

A former grain warehouse, built in 1885 on North Warren Street in Syracuse, has managed to survive for 130 years. The building is for sale.

(Photos by Rick Moriarty / r-moriarty@syracuse.com)



LONELY loft

A LOOK INSIDE CANAL-ERA SYRACUSE WAREHOUSE TRANSFORMED INTO OFFICE, APARTMENT

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A 130-year-old Erie Canal-era warehouse transformed into a loft apartment and office is up for sale.

Built in 1885, the Grainery building looks lonely sitting in the 100 block of North Warren Street in Syracuse. But that wasn't always the case.

It was once surrounded by other buildings, including the Durston Block building built in 1883 and designed by famed Syracuse architect Archimedes Russell.

The Oswego Canal flowed behind the building and joined with the Erie just a block to the south.

The Grainery is the block's only survi-

vor. That makes it North Warren Street's only remaining building because the street consists of only one block.

Its neighbors to the left and right are now parking lots, the buildings that once stood there victims of the urban decay of the 1960s and 1970s. Just a few feet behind the building, where the Oswego Canal once flowed, thousands of cars and trucks whiz by daily on Interstates 690 and 81.

In 1887, Daniel Leary, an architect and a member of the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board, turned the building's first two floors into his office and the top two floors into a three-bedroom loft apartment for himself. Leary left many of the building's original wooden beams exposed.

Leary sold the building to Benjamin Ogden in 2006. Bart Feinberg, a real estate agent with The Sutton Cos., said Ogden used it as an artist loft. Ogden moved to Manlius last year and has put the 6,000-square-foot building up for sale for \$725,000.

The property includes a 17-car, fenced parking lot. Feinberg said the building is best suited for a single tenant who could use the first two floors for an office and the top two as living quarters. An elevator serves the building's first three floors.

The building comes with 130 years of history. Leary named it The Grainery (an alteration of granary) because it originally was used to store grain, likely transported on the nearby canals.

The building started out with three stories. The fourth floor, with its mansard roof, was likely added early in the 20th century, said Dennis Connors, curator of history for the Onondaga Historical Association.

The owner in 1896 appears to have been John Surbeck, a native of Switzerland, who was running a flour and feed business and made Swiss and Limburger cheese, Connors said.

Starting around 1914, the building became the home of Paul deLima Coffee, which is now headquartered in Liverpool.

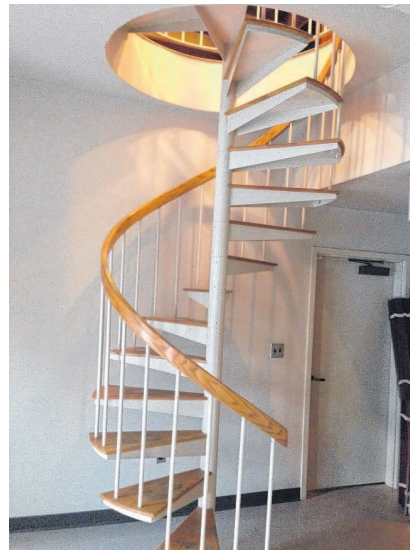
A heating and plumbing contractor used it as its headquarters from the 1930s to the 1960s, according to Connors.

Its bigger neighbor, the Durston Block, became mostly vacant by the late 1960s. Connors said it was acquired by the city for back taxes in 1970 and sold the following year to a private developer, who tore it down for a parking lot.

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The kitchen is located in the building's third-floor apartment.



Above: A spiral staircase was added in a 1987 renovation.



Left: The third-floor apartment has a breakfast bar.