

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



City of Belleville Sells Property Formerly Known as Hotel Belleville/Meredith Home

Belleville, Ill. – April 24, 2020 – The City of Belleville today announced that it has closed on the sale of the property at 16 S. Illinois St., the former site of Hotel Belleville and later, the Meredith Home to the Southwestern Illinois Development Authority (SWIDA) and St. Louis-based Bywater Development Group.

“This has been a long process and we’re looking very forward to progressing on this project as it is huge for Belleville,” said Mayor Mark Eckert.

The City of Belleville acquired the property in 2010 after the Diocese of Belleville closed the Meredith Home, a retirement facility that it operated since 1962. In 2016, SWIDA along with Bywater Development submitted a proposal for Lofts on the Square, a senior living development with 47 independent living units open to senior citizens who meet income restrictions.

In 2017, the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 2018, the project was awarded federal tax credits by the Illinois Housing Development Authority in the amount of about \$7.5 million. Then in 2019, the project was awarded State Historic Tax Credits in the amount of \$2.1 million. The developers said the renovation would not be possible without the tax credits.

“It’s incredible to see that a building that was once slated for demolition will be back on the tax roll,” said Eckert. “This is a big win for Belleville. This project will invest nearly \$14 million into our downtown.”

Lofts on the Square could bring as many as 60 new residents to downtown Belleville, generating an estimated \$30,000 of property taxes annually. Eligible residents include those who are 55 and older and who earn less than 60 percent of the area’s median income. The senior apartments will be on the second through sixth floors and the first floor will be open as commercial space.

“This project will create about 150 construction jobs for more than a year’s time,” said Eckert. “This will create a strong economic boost for the region.”

“We couldn’t be more pleased about the closing of the financing and commencement of rehabilitation of Lofts on the Square,” said Jim Nations, chairman of the board of SWIDA. “This day has been a long time coming. Our team has worked hard to finalize a difficult financing, but

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we would not be here today but for the amazing and patient support of Mayor Eckert, the City Council, City Development staff—and the Belleville community which has worked diligently to save this important historic landmark.”

Despite the Great Depression, the building which was originally Hotel Belleville opened in 1931, spearheaded by the Belleville Chamber of Commerce to provide modern accommodations for business people and travelers. The architecture boasts a strong Art-Deco style, highlighted by the geometrical patterns created by brick and terra cotta. The hotel’s architect was Walter P. Manske, of the St. Louis firm of Manske and Bartling.

Construction on the renovation of the building is slated to begin in the next few weeks.

To learn more, visit www.Belleville.net.

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