

MassLive.com
Tuesday, March 28, 2017

'SAVE ME' message projected onto Notre Dame church in downtown Worcester



Preservation Worcester commissioned this projection of the words "Save Me" onto the Notre Dame church, which is being targeted for demolition.

By Alban Murtishi, MassLive.com
on March 28, 2017 at 9:03 PM, updated March 28, 2017 at 9:07 PM

A desperate plea was emblazoned upon the Notre Dame church for all of downtown Worcester to see Tuesday night.

Two words glowed in the rainy night's sky: "SAVE ME."

It was a projection commissioned by Preservation Worcester as part of their down-to-the-wire bid to save the historic church before the demolition delay on the property expires in April. The light show was made possible by Tortorelli's Sound & Lights company, specifically by Joe Tortorelli, lighting technician and history-buff.

The light show was made possible by Tortorelli's Sound & Lights company, specifically by Joe Tortorelli, lighting technician and history-buff.

"My dad being a history buff, and this being a two-generation family business, it must have rubbed off," Tortorelli said.

He agreed to help the group because of his passion for preserving history and finding new uses for old things.

"You can't bring history back," Tortorelli said. "We're using a modern \$20,000 image projector to protect this church, and we should be applying that same principle to all of our old buildings."

CitySquare II, the owners of the church, filed to have the building demolished last April, but failed to receive a demolition delay waiver from Worcester's Historical Commission, meaning they had to wait at least a year to bring the church down.

Last week, the company announced that it had entered an agreement to sell the building to an unknown buyer.



[Owners of Notre Dame church enter agreement to sell building](#)

The Notre Dame church may soon have a new owner after CitySquare II Development Co. entered into an agreement to sell the building this month.

CitySquare II released a statement commenting on their decision to sell the building.

"After more than six years of active effort on our part, in addition to the prior efforts by the Diocese, City Square II has made the realistic and most economically feasible choice to sell the property," a section of the statement reads.

Deborah Packard of Preservation Worcester worries that the new owners, whomever they may be, might also want to tear down the church.

"They won't tell us who they sold it to and they won't tell us if they sold it to someone intending to demolish it," Packard said.

Tuesday night, she representatives of Preservation Worcester presented a report to city council that proposes reimagined uses for the Notre Dame church, such as reconfiguring the interior of the church into a large entertainment and retail marketplace.

That same night, just outside of City Hall, Tortorelli stood in the rain projecting a more simple message, chosen specifically to create a call to action

"They just wanted to keep it simple to let people know that there's something that can be done," Tortorelli said.