

Worcester Business Journal
November 6, 2017

Notre Dame sale falls through, but demolition still slated



Grant Welker

The Notre Dame des Canadiens church is still slated for demolition with the hopes that the site will be more attractive to developers.



Courtesy

A rendering showing what the facade of the planned Residences at Salem Square would look like.

[by Grant Welker](#)

A sale of the Notre Dame des Canadiens church in downtown Worcester has fallen through, but the owner says it still plans to demolish the church to make it more attractive to a buyer.

The developer that owns the long-vacant church, CitySquare II, said late Friday an agreement to sell to Roseland Residential Trust expired.

Still, a planned demolition will move forward to enable the parcel to be unencumbered by the church and be more marketable, CitySquare II said.

City Square II bought the church in 2010 from the Diocese of Worcester, two years after the church was closed. The group Preservation Worcester has led a fight to save the church, but it appears likely to lose.

A city ordinance requiring a delay of one year before demolishing a historic structure -- meant to help find alternatives to demolition -- has lapsed, and the church can be legally knocked down at any time.

A permit that allows for the demolition expires next April.

In August, CitySquare II won approval for a \$30-million development at the site called the Residences at Salem Square, with 84 apartments and 2,025 square feet of retail.

Roseland Residential Trust said at the time that Notre Dame had fallen so far into disrepair that any reuse of the building was not feasible.

Roseland is the builders of the nearby \$100-million 145 Front at City Square project, which includes 365 residential units and 12,000 square feet of commercial space.

A sale to Roseland is still possible, CitySquare II said.

"The lines of communication remain open with Roseland, and our decision not to further extend the closing does not necessarily preclude the prospect of a future transaction with them," CitySquare II said in a statement.