

Arcade sells, buyer tells plans

By KEN BECK
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An architectural marvel, the Lebanon Arcade may be getting a makeover in the near future if the dreams of two local businessmen come to fruition.

Mike Manous of Manous Design and Hal Bone, president and owner of Horizon Construction & Development, are imagining the possibilities for the 101-year-old structure in the southeast corner of the Square. A few weeks ago, the pair purchased the property from Jimmy and Phyllis McCullough.

“When we lost a dear friend in the MacFadden Auditorium (that building on the former Castle Heights Military Academy campus was demolished in mid-2010), I was not going to let this opportunity slip by when it came up,” said architect Manous, who restored the main building on the ex-Heights campus into Lebanon City Hall, as well as the D.E. Mitchell House.

“We’re working on the development model. It’s gonna be touch and go with the current economic climate, but I feel confident we can bring the Arcade back to life if we find the right people who share in this communitywide dream.

“I think we can make the Square a really special place in the next 10 years,” said Manous, who, with Bone, envisions retail shops and, ideally, a restaurant coming to the historic corner—a two-story, 23,400-square-foot, brick building.

Among the many treasures of the Arcade, which opened Nov. 1, 1909, are its skylights in a vaulted ceiling and a large, upstairs room that served as a banquet hall for a variety of Lebanon social and civic clubs across six decades.

“The Arcade used to be the center of entertainment of everything that went on,” Phyllis McCullough said. “The 1930s and ’40s, those were the golden years. It was the only place large enough to serve meals to a large crowd and host banquets. The Arcade just belonged to the community.”

Throughout the 1900s the upstairs provided office space for doctors, lawyers, insurance agents, seamstresses and the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce. The ground floor saw such business as Kuhn’s 5-10-25-cent store, McAdoo’s clothing store and Goodwill Industries.

“That was an inside shopping mall before we had inside shopping malls. It was the place to go and be seen, too,”

said Jimmy McCullough, who operated McCullough’s Office Supply from 1964 to 2008.

The McCulloughs owned the building since mid-1996 until they sold it to Bone and Manous. From 1996-2008, Phyllis operated McCullough’s Art Gallery in the structure. The couple spent countless hours cleaning and preserving the Arcade over the past 14 years.

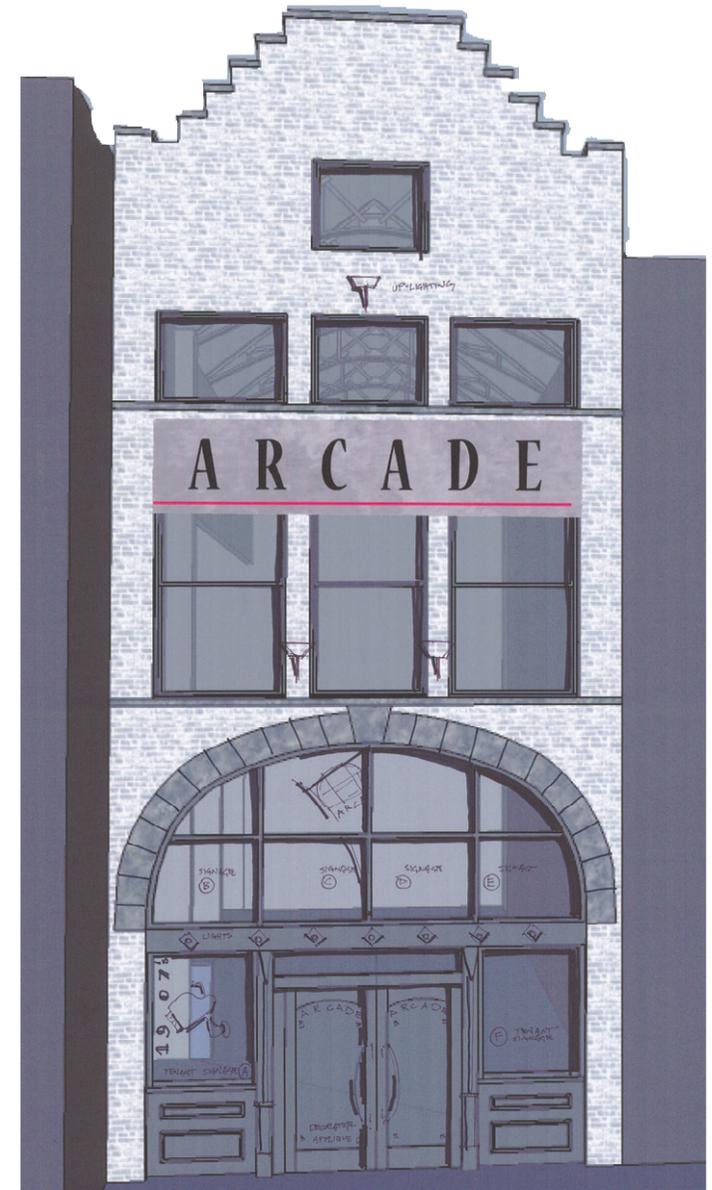
“We got in there and started cleaning it up, and it was filthy. We worked and worked and just fixed it up with a big dream,” recalled Phyllis, who has passionately researched the history of the Arcade.

“We’ve enjoyed it very much—doing business and preserving the building,” Jimmy said. “But we’re glad it’s going on to the next level, to restore one of the most important buildings in Lebanon.”

Bone and Manous plan to put a small office in the Arcade shortly so that they can meet face to face with contractors, city officials and potential clients.

“If we are successful,” Manous said, “I think it’s gonna be a win for the community and everybody involved.”

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The planned new face to the Lebanon Arcade will expose its original stone arch, while front windows provide a glimpse inside to the structure’s vaulted ceiling and skylights.

Courtesy of Manous Design