
Redevelopment authority begins work to restore historic Waynesburg building



By Bob Niedbala March 30, 2016



Greene County Redevelopment Authority has begun a project to preserve and restore the J.H. Ganiear Building in downtown Waynesburg. - Bob Niedbala/Observer-Reporter [Order a Print](#)

WAYNESBURG – The Greene County Redevelopment Authority is beginning a project to preserve and restore a historic building in downtown Waynesburg.

Workers are removing asbestos from the interior of the J.H. Ganiear Building at 146 E. High St. Within the next two weeks, a contractor is expected to start demolishing the rear two-thirds of the structure.

The building, which last housed Waynesburg Floral, stretches from High Street back to Cherry Alley and looks to have been built in sections.

It is “way too big” and in too poor of condition to restore in its entirety, authority Executive Director David Calvario said.

“We’re going to tear off the rear, put a roof on it to secure (the front section), let it dry out and then figure out where we can go from there,” he said.

The goal is eventually to restore the building to house a retail business on the first floor and apartments upstairs.

The building is more than 100 years old and, as indicated in a picture of it in the book “Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful,” published in 1907, once housed furniture and undertaker businesses.

The first floor on High Street was last occupied by Waynesburg Floral, which closed a number of years ago.

The building is severely deteriorated. The roof “is shot” and over the years the interior has suffered “significant weather damage,” Calvario said. As part of the restoration, the entire interior will probably have to be gutted, he said.

“It’s just a massive project,” Calvario said.

The authority purchased the property for \$4,500 at a county judicial sale, which removed any liens or judgements filed against it. The demolition is expected to cost about \$100,000.

The preservation work is being completed with grant money the authority received from the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement Act.

The grant, combined with contributions from the county and several municipalities, has been used by the authority for a program to eliminate blight, return properties to the tax rolls, and provide housing for those who need places to live.

Under the program, the authority obtains dilapidated houses or buildings through donation or by purchasing them in foreclosure or at tax or judicial sales.

It rehabilitates buildings that can be rehabilitated and demolishes those beyond repair to make room for new housing.

The houses and other buildings that are repaired are then sold with the proceeds going to cover the costs of the repairs and possibly to make money to continue the program.

Once the building has a new roof to prevent further damage, the interior can then be restored, Calvario said. How that will be done has not yet been decided.

The authority could do the work itself, partner with a private developer to complete the project or sell the building, as long as the buyer included a housing component as required by the state grant, he said.

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