New life for a long-faded gem

Former Lowell bank building will house senior-care company

By Grant Walker

Since 1959, there has been a bank at the corner of Cross and Appleton streets in the heart of Lowell. And since then, the facility has undergone a transformation to provide elder-care services.

The former Appleton National Bank, now transformed into a senior-care facility, is a testament to the city's rich history and ongoing development. This building, once a symbol of financial activity, is now being repurposed to meet the needs of the elderly population.

The facility is undergoing major renovations, including the transformation of a café into a café that will cater to seniors. The ground floor of the building will be completely renovated, providing aspacious and comfortable environment for those in need of elder-care services.

The project has been described as a major undertaking, with a focus on providing high-quality care to the elderly residents of Lowell. The facility is expected to open soon, offering a range of services to meet the needs of its residents.

Anthony Pope, the new superintendent of Lowell Public Schools, is looking forward to the completion of the project. "I am very excited about the transformation of this building and its potential to provide much-needed elder-care services," he said.

The building, which was once a symbol of the city's financial district, is now being reimagined as a place of care and support for the elderly. The transformation is expected to not only benefit the residents but also revitalize the surrounding area, providing a new source of employment and economic activity.

Overall, the transformation of the former Appleton National Bank into a senior-care facility is a positive development for the city of Lowell, offering a new chapter in the city's history and a new way to support its elderly population.
Neglected for decades, the former Appleton National Bank is a beehive of activity these days as construction crews transform the once-grand building on Lowell’s Central Street for Element Care, a senior-services company. SUN PHOTOS / RYAN MCBRIDE

Element Care, a senior services company that provides what’s called integrated care for the elderly, known as IHC, which includes home care. The company has seven existing centers in Middlesex County, including one in Methuen. “We’re fortunate to be able to do it,” Wakefield said.

The fourth floor is in some ways the most impressive, with 15,000 square feet of space, equipped with a kitchen, exercise room, occupational therapy area that can be closed to form a 15-foot by 30-foot space, and more. The second floor will have an in-hospital rehab area that will have 16 rooms, heightened security, and state-of-the-art equipment. The first floor of the old bank will be turned into a 20,000-square-foot retail space, including more than 300 radiators and nearly 15,000 square feet of space.

This was the level of commitment you’re talking about,” said Arthur “Chip” Gonsalves, a Lowell resident and vascular surgeon who bought the building two years ago without any knowledge of the project. “This was the level of commitment you’re talking about,” said Arthur “Chip” Gonsalves, a Lowell resident and vascular surgeon who bought the building two years ago without any knowledge of the project.

The ground floor, which will remain, will be stripped away. A 35,000-pound forklift had to be brought in to put the door on a flatbed to be carried away. “You figure that getting that door in was just as hard as taking it out,” said Brian Auger, the supervising contractor. Gonsalves bought the building in 1879. Crews have been returning the High Victorian Gothic style to its glory since last fall.

Element Care Marketing Director Rachel Kestner, left, and Cynthia Aliberti, project manager for Element Care, showing prototype designs for the exterior of the former Appleton National Bank. It will be used as an outpatient medical-care center for senior citizens. It will be used as an outpatient medical-care center for senior citizens.

This building has been neglected for decades, and the project is part of Element Care’s expansion plans for Greater Lowell. Element Care provides what’s called integrated care for the elderly, known as IHC, which includes home care. The company has seven existing centers in Middlesex County, including one in Methuen. “We’re fortunate to be able to do it,” Wakefield said.

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Neglected for decades, the former Appleton National Bank is a beehive of activity these days as construction crews transform the once-grand building on Lowell’s Central Street for Element Care, a senior services company.

Workers tweak a job on the exterior of the former Appleton National Bank, built in 1879. Crews have been returning the High Victorian Gothic style to its glory since last fall.