

Business

Developers to turn polluted South Side property into mixed-use facility

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From left, Emanuel Henderson, Gail Montplaisir and Eli Smith pose at the site of their planned Salina 1st retail, office, residential and light manufacturing facility at 1081 S. Salina St. in Syracuse. (Rick Moriarty | rmoriarty@syracuse.com) Rick Moriarty

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By [Rick Moriarty | rmoriarty@syracuse.com](mailto:rmoriarty@syracuse.com)

Syracuse, N.Y. -- Construction of a nearly \$7 million building containing apartments, offices, retail and light manufacturing is scheduled to start this fall in a South Side neighborhood that has not seen significant private investment in many years.

Salina 1st developers Emanuel Henderson, Gail Montplaisir and Eli Smith held a ceremonial groundbreaking with state and local officials last week.

Montplaisir said they expect to begin site work in early fall, with the building ready for occupancy in late 2020.

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Plans for the \$6.8 million project call for a five-story, 52,000-square-foot building on a little less than two acres of vacant land at 1081 S. Salina St. The state is providing a \$1.3 million grant through Gov. Andrew Cuomo's [regional economic development council initiative](#).

The site is in a low-income area three blocks south of downtown.

The Syracuse Industrial Development Agency has agreed to sell the land to

Salina 1st LLC for \$75,000. It also has granted the project \$2.23 million in tax exemptions, consisting of \$1.94 million in property tax discounts over 15 years, \$147,200 in exemptions on sales taxes on construction materials and a \$40,444 exemption from the state mortgage recording tax.

Montplaisir said the project would not be possible without the grant and tax exemptions.

While downtown has seen a surge of development -- mostly expensive apartments geared toward young professionals -- the South Side has seen no such investment. Henderson, Montplaisir and Smith are hoping to change that.

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“This is kind of the point of the arrow,” said Montplaisir, Salina 1st’s managing partner and majority owner of [Taurus Development Group](#), which has offices in Washington, D.C., and Syracuse. “This is the first private development in this area in decades.”

The land once was the site of a natural gas storage facility and its soil likely contains some petroleum and chemicals that will be cleaned up under an agreement with the state Department of Environmental Conservation, she said.



Rendering shows what the Salina 1st mixed-use facility at 1081 S. Salina St. in Syracuse will look like. Norman Smith Architecture

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Plans are for the ground floor to contain 23,400 square feet of commercial space consisting of a startup dental laboratory named Access Global, the new headquarters of Henderson's family-owned JHP Industrial Supply Co. and the new headquarters of Smith's contracting business, [E. Smith Contractors LLC](#) and his [SGTR](#) demolition company. Approximately 4,500 square feet on the ground floor will be available for rent.

The ground floor also will contain 5,700 square feet of retail space.

A total of 11,250 square feet of office space will occupy the second and third

floors. The fourth and fifth floors will have 16 mixed-income one- and two-bedroom apartments. Monthly rents will be in the low \$900's, considerably less than the rents charged at many of the new apartments downtown.

"A lot of professionals can't afford downtown's prices," Montplaisir said. "Ours will be significantly more attainable."

The property, which is on a Centro route, will have 55 onsite parking spaces.

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Plans also include solar panels to generate electricity for the building.

Montplaisir has been building single-family to large mixed-use projects in underdeveloped areas of Washington, D.C., for 30 years. She said she met Smith at a small-business conference at Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts, in 2016. Smith asked her to join him and Henderson in developing the project in Syracuse.

They came up with the name Salina 1st because it will be the first private development on South Salina Street on the city's South Side in a long time.

Henderson said they are hoping the project spurs more private investment in

the neighborhood, providing jobs for local residents.

“We’ve got to do something,” he said. “It’s just that simple.”

*Rick Moriarty covers business news and consumer issues. Contact him
anytime: [Email](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | 315-470-3148*

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