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Whoa! Call to landmark White Horse interior

March 13, 2019 | Filed under: News, Real Estate | Posted by: lincoln

BY GABE HERMAN | There is a push to landmark the interior of the White Horse Tavern, after the iconic bar was recently sold to a new owner. Raising locals' alarm, the new owners include notorious landlord Steve Croman.

In a letter to Sarah Carroll, chairperson of the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission, Andrew Berman, executive director of the Society for Historic Preservation, strongly urged the commission to immediately consider landmarking the interior of the tavern at 100 W. 11th St.



The exterior of the White Horse Tavern, at Hudson and W. 11th Sts., is landmarked as part of the Greenwich Village Historic District. (Photo by Gabe Herman)

The tavern dates back to 1880 and is famous as a gathering place for literary greats. In its earliest days, it served the local Irish immigrant and Irish-American community.

“Its cultural significance cannot be overstated,” Berman wrote in the letter, “and the potential loss of the interior of this tavern from a recent change in ownership would be a devastating loss, not only to New York City, but to the country and the world.”

The building housing the tavern is an early 19th-century wood-frame house, according to the letter. The pub’s interior includes tin ceiling, a bar and dark wood walls that look mostly the same as they appeared in mid-20th-century photos.

Among the many legendary writers and poets who were regulars were Dylan Thomas, James Baldwin, Anais Nin, Allen Ginsberg and Jane Jacobs lived on the same block and wrote of the tavern’s positive neighborhood effects in her famous work “The Death and Life of Great American Cities.”

“On a cold winter’s night, as you pass the White Horse, and the doors open, a solid wave of conversation and animation surges out and warms you,” she wrote.

The building’s exterior is landmarked as part of the Greenwich Village Historic District, but the designation does not apply to the interior.

“There are few more historic locations in New York than the White Horse Tavern, a legendary gathering spot for some of the great writers of the 20th century,” said Berman in a statement about the push to landmark the inside of the place. “One can still go to the White Horse Tavern and see intact the place where these great writers and thinkers gathered, and that should never change.”

“With the building sold and the bar coming under new ownership and management,” Berman stressed, “it’s critical the Landmarks Commission ensure that treasured piece of New York and world history is protected, and won’t be going anywhere, regardless of what happens next.”



The interior of the history-soaked White Horse Tavern has not been landmarked by the city's Landmarks Preservation Commission. There are far fewer interior-landmarked spaces than exterior landmarks in the city.

The tavern and nearby apartment buildings have been sold for \$14 million to a group of investors, according to the Commercial Observer.

That group reportedly includes notorious landlord Croman. Croman was released from jail just last June after serving eight months sentence for mortgage and tax fraud.

Meanwhile, Eytan Sugarman — who runs several restaurants in the city, including the Hunt & Fish Club and a pizza place called Ma which was accused of copying Prince Street Pizza — is set to run the White Horse Tavern. Sugarman's partner in the Hunt & Fish Club Midtown steakhouse, is none other than Anthony Scaramucci, who briefly served as President Trump's White House communication director.

There were rumors that Scaramucci was involved in the White Horse deal, but he will have no involvement, one of the deal's negotiators told the Commercial Observer. In addition, Scaramucci tweeted on March 7 that he is not involved with the White Horse in any way.

A retail broker, who did the deal for the new owners and Sugarman, said of the White Horse to the Commercial Observer, "Eytan Sugarman is running the White Horse exactly as it's been for the past 140 years."

The new lease for the bar is 15 years, according to the Commercial Observer, and sellers Eddie Brennan and James Munson said the deal was on the condition that the White Horse Tavern and its bar would remain on the tavern being kept in its current state.

According to the New York Post, Brennan and Munson, the bar's operators, bought the buildings in the 1950s and are now retiring.

38

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Veronica Marino · 55 minutes ago

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Having worked at The White Horse for 5 years in the 1980s I can tell you that those walls have treasured stories, and not only the walls but floors as well! One of my favorite stories was from the 70s when the assistant night porter had a crash pad in the basement which was only accessible by an outdoor metal entrance, locked at night, or the trap behind the bar and there were wonderful impersonations of the storied characters and the aplomb the bartender offered as he waved the porter and his lady friends down the steps as all activity by the taps came to a standstill, a full bar of waiting patrons notwithstanding. The various shenanigans are just a humorous sidebar to

the resonant beauty of the tap room's hollow echoing floor. The Emerald Society's bagpipers ballads have made the most of its amplification for their yearly St. Patrick's Day visit for decades, and if this is already something else lost to time, we can mourn now. Please landmark The White Horse interior, if not the added rooms, at least the original pair that includes the corner taproom -- once New York's historical gems are tossed away, the whole island will just be another nameless anonymous stripmall.

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