

REAL ESTATE

'Bernie Madoff of landlords' to buy fabled White Horse Tavern

By [Steve Cuzzo](#)

March 7, 2019 | 9:35pm | Updated



The White Horse Tavern.

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The city's "worst landlord" and a business partner of fired Donald Trump aide Anthony Scaramucci are poised to take over the fabled White Horse Tavern in Greenwich Village.

The vintage saloon was a home away from home for scores of hard-drinking artists, writers and musicians — including Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, who reputedly downed 18 shots of whiskey before he collapsed on the sidewalk and later died.

The building that houses the popular corner pub at 567 Hudson St. and adjacent buildings 561 Hudson and 304 W. 11th St. are in contract to be sold for \$14 million to Steve Croman, who's been called the "Bernie Madoff of landlords."

The buildings also have 17 market-rate apartments.

Croman spent eight months in prison for tax and loan fraud. He was released last year. He was also required to pay \$8 million in restitution to rent-stabilized tenants he was accused of harassing and coercing to give up their apartments.

But Croman will have no involvement in the White Horse. If the sale goes through as scheduled on April 9, the Tavern will be leased for 15 years to veteran Manhattan restaurateur Eytan Sugarman. The lease is now in escrow.

Sugarman is partners with Scaramucci in Midtown steakhouse Hunt & Fish Club. But Scaramucci won't be going from the White House to the White Horse — neither he nor other Hunt & Fish partners are involved at the tavern, Sugarman's rep said

Sugarman also owns barbecue spot Southern Hospitality and Made In Pizza.

The White Horse was founded in 1880. Its atmospheric confines were a favorite haunt of 20th-Century writers Jack Kerouac, James Baldwin, Norman Mailer and musicians Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison.

Current White Horse operators Eddie Brennan and James Munson bought the buildings in the 1950s and are now retiring.

Their sale contract with Croman stipulated that the White Horse must be leased to operators who would operate it as in the past. Sugarman vows to run it "exactly as it is," according to Meridian Capital Group broker James Famularo, who negotiated the lease.

Famularo wouldn't identify the new landlord, but multiple sources confirmed it was Croman.