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March 18, 2013, 5:21 pm **Housing**

Amato Opera House May Go Residential With Added Penthouse

By [DANIEL MAURER](#)



Paul Wagtuicz



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After sitting vacant for nearly four years, the Amato Opera House may finally be getting an encore.

Real-estate heavyweight Steven Croman, a member of the LLC that bought the iconic building in 2009, has filed an application to convert the jewel-box theater at 319 Bowery into a commercial and residential building, with a penthouse addition above the fourth floor.

The change of use would heighten the building by 10 feet and add three residential units, according to an application for a construction permit filed

last week and currently being reviewed by the department of buildings.

The Amato Opera, a onetime fixture of the Bowery art scene, closed in 2009 after Anthony Amato sold it for \$3.7 million amidst a heated inner-family [legal dispute](#). It had served as “[The Smallest Grand Opera in the World](#)” for more than 60 years. After Mr. Amato [died at 91](#) in December of 2011, The Local got an extraordinary [look inside](#) the opera house, then on sale for \$6.5 million. At the time, prospective buyers had considered the space for a one-family home, a nightclub, restaurant or bar.

The building’s property manager was not immediately available for comment.

Update | 6:30 p.m. Lauren Muss, the broker of 319 Bowery and Senior Vice President at Corcoran, confirmed that “the owner is keeping” the building.

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10:45 pm 1. April 18, 2013 [Link](#)

not an ‘encore’ if Steve Croman is involved, it’s the erasure of history, beauty & creativity; all for the sake of \$\$\$ & his entertainment—he has a long history since the 70s of gutting out neighborhoods & locals, in Little Italy, LES, EV, etc (anywhere w/ the 228-9300 for rent signs)—by any means... beginning of the end—you should make a map of Steve & Harriet (sometimes uses her maiden name) Croman owned buildings... you may be surprised

— *she*

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