

Building housing iconic White Horse Tavern to be sold

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NEW YORK'S VERY OWN

WEST VILLAGE, Manhattan — To say the White horse Tavern is an iconic landmark of the West Village is an understatement and now the building that houses it and adjacent buildings are reportedly under a contract to be sold for \$14 million to a group of investors.

Now many fans of the tavern are worried, especially because the group of investors includes Steve Croman, who's been called the "Bernie Madoff of landlords. He completed an eight-month prison sentence for tax fraud and tenant harassment.

"It's a beautiful, beautiful tavern," Sheryl Canter, a Village resident, told PIX11 News. "I am heartbroken. Why did they have to sell it?"

Included in the deal are the 17 apartments above the tavern, most of them rent stabilized. Many tenants were afraid to talk on camera about their new, notorious landlord.

But a spokesman for the group of investors reportedly says Croman will have no involvement. Some are still worried.

"I'm concerned that the integrity of the history will be compromised," Casey Walsh said. "Going upscale, perhaps the history of the tavern and its writers will not be preserved."

Poet Dylan Thomas was said to have his last round of drinks at the tavern on the night he died in 1953.

Part of the deal Eytan Sugarman of Hunt And Fish Club NYC has reportedly signed is a 15-year lease promising that the bar will be maintained as is. But neighbors are still concerned that a slice of New York City history may eventually be forgotten.

"It's such a beautiful, beautiful building," Canter said. "Fifteen years will pass in a moment."

PIX11 tried to reach Steve Croman, NYC Management and Eytan Sugarman, but they have not responded.