Written by CAROL POMEDAY
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New owners plan to lease building; unsuccessful bidder wanted a theater

The former Belgium Village Market grocery store on Highway LL, which has been vacant since it closed in November 2008, has been bought by Bobi and David Schultz, former owners of Memories Ballroom in the Town of Port Washington.

The Schultzes' bid for the property was higher than one submitted by Rolland Roebuck, who with Lynn and Bob Klemm, bought Memories in 2003.

Roebuck had envisioned turning the building into a theater operation. Currently, dinner-theater productions are held at Memories, but the structure limits the types of shows that can be done, he said.

Roebuck said he's pursuing other options for a theater, including building on the Memories property.

Bobi Schultz said she and her husband were looking for a place to move items that had been stored in a 77,000-square-foot warehouse they sold in Milwaukee.

Shortly after they bought the former grocery store Oct. 30, the Schultzes moved five semi-trailer loads of items — ranging from real forklifts to toy ones — to the building. Many of the items are from businesses they previously owned.

A sale will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 9, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 10, at the former grocery store. A preview showing will be from 5 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 8.

Schultz said she and her husband are not sure what they will do with the building once the items are sold, but they are seeking possible tenants.

"It's a nice space," she said. "It's a beautiful building, a great location. We've been tossing around all these ideas. We would like to retire and lease it."

After they sold Memories, Schultz said, they were silent partners in a trucking company, intending to retire, but ended up running the company for a couple of years.

"We sold the trucking company, sold the warehouse and now we would like to retire," Schultz said.

Roebuck said he knew someone else was interested in the property, but was shocked when

he learned it was the Schultzes.

“It’s just the most bizarre coincidence,” he said. “There were a lot of things I wanted to do to that building. I think it would have been good for the village and
for me, but I’ve moved on.

“I’m not interested in renting. I’m not putting tens of thousands of dollars into a building I don’t own.”

Schultz said she and her husband didn’t know who was putting in the other bid and were surprised when they learned it was Roebuck.

Former owner Nancy Eiseman planned to develop a strip mall on the site with the grocery store as the anchor. The store closed a little more than a year after it opened in October 2007.

Eiseman blamed area residents for not supporting the store and village officials for not reducing a $2.5 million property assessment and imposing excessive permit and impact fees during construction.

The Schultzes would not disclose the purchase price, but said it was considerably less than the $3 million Eiseman originally sought for the property.

The building, which is 22,000 square feet, and 11.3 acres were acquired by BMO Harris Bank and sold through Seigel-Gallagher of Milwaukee.

NEW OWNERS Bobi and David Schultz stood in front of the former Belgium Village Market, which they purchased Oct. 30. Photo by Sam Arendt