

Closed doors signal uncertain fate of restaurant

Written by MICHAEL LoCICERO
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Landlord says he has been unable to contact owners of Belgium House

Less than two years after opening, the Belgium House has closed its doors, leaving the restaurant's future uncertain.

Grant Smith, who opened the restaurant in 2012, with partner Esthimios "Tim" Triantafillou, owner of Prime Minister Restaurant in Thiensville, did not respond to numerous calls on the status of the restaurant.

But building owner Mike Speas said the restaurant has been closed for about a week and a half. He said he has not been able to reach Smith.

"I'm not really sure what's going on," Speas said. "I've had a lot of calls from people who are wondering what's going on. They seemed to like the food."

The restaurant, on Main Street in Belgium, was the former site of Chrissy's Restaurant and was called the Belgium House in the late 1800s, according to its web site.

The building served as a saloon for locals and a hotel for travelers passing through northern Ozaukee County.

The site was also Curly's Tavern from the 1940s until 1969.

The current business has a banquet hall that hosted weddings and the restaurant offered catering services.

Original plans called for the restaurant to be open seven nights a week for dinner, but was not open on Mondays and Tuesdays, according to its web site.

Speas and his son Matt also purchased two adjacent storefronts that they turned into apartments.

"We couldn't be happier," Mike Speas said when Smith and Triantafillou opened the restaurant two years ago. "They have a great name and great experience. That's who we were looking for."

Smith used to bus tables, tend bar and work in the retail store at Smith Bros. restaurant in Port Washington before joining the family's fisheries business.

He said when he opened the restaurant that his wife Carla and their four daughters would also work at the restaurant.

"We looked at a couple other restaurants in the area. This one just stood out," Smith said in 2012.

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The menu featured all-you-can eat fish specials every day and traditional specials like broasted chicken on Thursdays and Sundays and prime rib on Saturdays.

Smith said when the restaurant opened that he wanted to forge a relationship with the Luxembourg American Cultural Center in Belgium. It was unclear if that relationship ever panned out.