



South Shore Neurologic Associates buys Czech Castle in Islip for \$1.6 million; Deal handled by All Island Realty

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According to All Island Realty, the Czech Castle, located along Montauk Hwy., across from Town Hall, was sold recently to a professional practice that will be renovating this historic structure with a projected completion date of early spring, 2012.

Situated on a 2.3 acre site at 712 Montauk Hwy. (a/k/a Main St.), the castle dates back 140 years and was reportedly constructed by a wealthy American. Many historical details are found throughout with multiple grand rooms utilized in recent years for entertaining, as well as intimate dining and meeting places.

A group of doctors has paid \$1.6 million for the two-acre property. The South Shore Neurologic Associates plans to preserve the history and art of the three-story building.

Built around 1871, according to Charles Burke, the company's COO. The medical business has four Long Island locations but had searched nine months for larger quarters for its Bay Shore operation.

"It's an amazing building," Burke said. "I have a vision for it to be beautified."

The deal closed recently, and the office move is expected in a year or so.

With a round wing topped by a dome, the house was built by a wealthy American for his Czech mistress and later used as a hotel, speakeasy and in recent times, two restaurants, said Bill Collins, who researched his listing as the broker owner of All Island Realty in Bay Shore.

When it was last occupied, the property was Nico At The Gatsby Mansion restaurant, but it's been vacant for a year and a half, vandalized and dirt-covered.

The family that owned it for decades tried to find buyers that would suit Islip Town officials, which saw historic value in the house and did not want "radical reconstruction," Collins said: "We had so many people with specific plans with what to do with it, and most of them would not fly with the town."

Burke saw the value too: stained glass windows, seven fireplaces, three-floor mahogany staircase, stained glass ceiling over the bar, mahogany wainscoting and more. The purchase seemed like fate, because he and the doctors sometimes dined there for business meetings, and the first time Burke saw the place, he said, he thought "spectacular."

Burke said it'll be difficult balancing preservation with medical needs, such as privacy and floors that must be easy-cleaning, not the wood floors in much of the house.

For now, there's little certainty on what's original and what's not, but for the chief operating officer, that's the fun part of rehabbing.

He said the new owners plan to hire artisans to restore the interior, including the hand-painted, mosaic tiles in the entrance.

"There's two years of dirt on it," Burke said. "I can't even tell the pattern." But, he added, "It'll make a grand entrance to our facility."

