

From the Orlando Business Journal:

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## Longtime woman's club near downtown to convert to event venue – and maybe homes

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When Scott Crossman was a kid, his father was a pastor at Broadway Methodist Church in the downtown Orlando neighborhood of Lake Eola Heights.

Decades later, Crossman and high school classmate Daryl Carter became owners of the Sorosis of Orlando Woman's Club building, a block away from the church. The pair's immediate plan is to upgrade the building and make it a full-time event space.

It is one of many real estate investments by Carter and Crossman, two prominent players in Orlando's real estate community, and it will start a new chapter for a property in a desirable Orlando neighborhood.

The local woman's club was founded in 1893, but it did not move into the Lake Eola Heights building at 501 E. Livingston St. until until 1972. The building was constructed that same year.

Members of Sorosis of Orlando could not be reached for comment.



ALEX SODERSTROM/OBJ

The Sorosis of Orlando building was constructed in 1972.



In June, a firm registered to Carter and Crossman bought the 0.9-acre site from Sorosis of Orlando for \$1.1 million, according to Orange County records. The pair view it as a long-term real estate investment, with plans to operate the building as an events venue with an emphasis on weddings and receptions, said Carter, president of Orlando-based Maury Carter & Associates.

In the meantime, the two businessmen are working with the city of Orlando to develop a plan to renovate and upgrade the interior, said Crossman, founder and CEO of Orlando-based Crossman & Co. The building was used for wedding receptions pre-pandemic, but a minor remodel can turn the building into an “upscale” venue, Crossman added.

While Carter and Crossman have no other concrete plans for the property, they already are being contacted by firms interested in the site for residential development, including a national homebuilder, Carter said.

Such interest in a small piece of land speaks to the hectic residential real estate market in Central Florida, said Brad Parker, land expert with Longwood-based [Southern Realty Enterprises](#) who is not involved with the property. “That shows excitement is still in the marketplace. There’s no end in sight.”

Indeed, local home demand is at an all-time high. There were 4,414 existing homes sold in June, the most of any month in the [Orlando](#) Regional Realtor Association's records.

Specifically, the 32803 ZIP code where the Sorosis building sits, and home to popular downtown neighborhoods like Thornton Park and Colonialtown, has experienced climbing home sales and prices. There were 58 home sales in the ZIP code in June for an average price of \$423,808. That was up 18.6% from an average price of \$357,390 in January, according to the Orlando Regional Realtor Association.

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