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Business

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'Living above the store' went out of vogue when the country's urban landscape changed, but a Mount Joy chiropractor got a zoning variance to turn back time with the Suites of La Tourelle.



Jeff Ruppenthal/SUNDAY NEWS PHOTOS

The turret at the Suites of LaTourelle provides the primary entrance to the Weinhold Chiropractic Clinic and other commercial spaces.

Suite life, short commute

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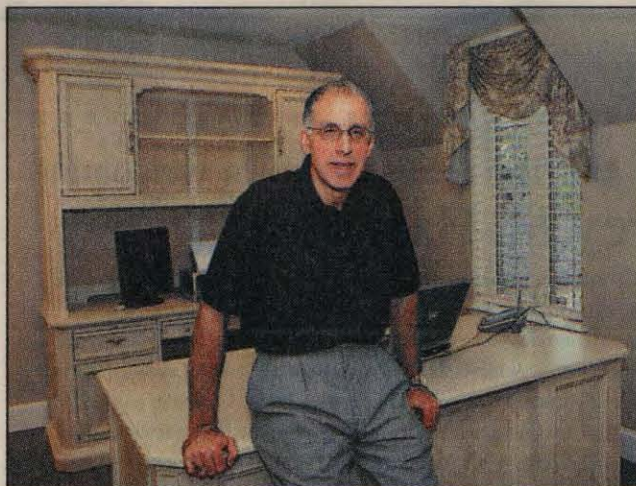
Flash back to the early 1900s, when small-business owners living above their stores were a vital part of America's urban landscape.

Those days, of course, are long gone, but not for Mount Joy chiropractor Dr. Ralph Weinhold.

Weinhold and his wife, Sandra, are putting the finishing touches on a 5,200-square-foot, French-country-style building in East Donegal Township that houses their expanding chiropractic clinic on the first floor and their residence on the second floor.

The structure originally was expected to be commercial only. But having lived above the chiropractic business at its previous site in Mount Joy Borough, the couple decided to recreate that arrangement.

Called the Suites of La Tourelle (meaning "Suites of the Turret" in French), the building will eventually include two



Dr. Ralph Weinhold relaxes in his office in the second-floor residence over his clinic. Zoning regulations that limit the roof height dictated the dormer windows in the second floor.

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Suite: Couple lived over clinic before

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1,000-square-foot commercial rental spaces attached to the main building.

The Weinholds bought the 1¼-acre lot on Farmview Lane from developer Bill Melhorn several years ago. It's part of The Orchards subdivision, Ralph Weinhold said.

Weinhold Chiropractic Clinic, which was in an 800-square-foot space on Park Avenue since 1992, needed a lot more room, he said.

Living above the store

After first being told a combined home/business wouldn't be allowed at the Farmview Lane site, Weinhold said he and his wife ended up getting a variance from the township to allow it.

They enjoyed living above the clinic when it was on Park Avenue and wanted that convenience again, he said. Both Weinholds are county natives who graduated from Manheim Central High School.

The architects for the project are Charlie Yohe and Jim Lewis of Lewis & Associates Architects, and MCA Construction is the general contractor.

Weinhold said he wanted the stone-and-stucco building to feature a French country, Mediterranean-type look "with steep roof lines and long, tall windows."

Housing a business and residence together "was common in the earlier parts of last century," Jim Lewis said.

People "often lived above the store," he said. "This is a suburban version of what used to happen in a town or a city."



The interior of the reception area in the chiropractic clinic echoes the French country look of the building's exterior.

Jeff Ruppenthal/SUNDAY

Building vertically also saves land and cuts down on sprawl, Lewis said.

The focal point of the Suites of La Tourelle is a two-story turret, which has a door to Weinhold Chiropractic Clinic, as well as entrances to the other commercial spaces. A 1,048-square-foot suite will be leased by Rebman Eye Care, Weinhold said, and the second suite, which will be 1,544 square feet, is for rent.

He declined to reveal the cost of the project but said Community Bank provided the financing.

Expanding the business

An alumnus of Palmer College of Chiropractic, Weinhold expects to bring another chiropractor on board, and the 2,775-square-foot clinic was designed with both doctors in mind. There are six treatment

rooms, three in each half of the building; two physician offices; an office for Sandra Weinhold, who helps run the clinic; an X-ray room; an exercise room; two bathrooms; a kitchen; insurance and file rooms; and a front lobby.

Ralph Weinhold said he hopes to add more support staff, too.

The new clinic, next to Milanof-Schock Library, opened Sept. 24.

The second-floor residence, measuring about 2,500 square feet, can be accessed from a stairway and an elevator.

Because of zoning height restrictions, there were structural challenges, such as fitting everything under the roofline, Lewis said, including a deck.

So the Weinholds' living space has sloped ceilings and dormers, mimicking a Cape Cod house.

The height limitations stem

from the Suites of La Tourelle being in a residential area, Lewis said.

In fact, many of his patients live in the neighborhood, Weinhold said.

The residence, which is not quite finished, has an open design, with a living room, dining room and kitchen flowing together. There also are two bedrooms, two baths, an office, a double-sided fireplace, oak floors throughout, a second staircase to the backyard, and a two-car garage. The Weinholds will be sharing the home with their two dogs.

"The challenging part," Charlie Yohe said, "was to make the residence feel as residential as possible."

Weinhold said the architects clearly defined the clinic as a public space and the living area as a private one.

"I think they've done a good job." ■