



Vol. CIV, No. 22, 15 Cents

The Outer Cape Newspaper for 104 Years

Thursday, July 5, 1973

Mr. Chrysler Says: 'Tear It Down'



An aerial view of the former United Methodist Church on Commercial Street back when Walter P. Chrysler housed his art collection there. Attorney John Snow calls it "a jewel in the crown of our waterfront." Now Chrysler wants to tear it down.

By William M. Kutik

Walter P. Chrysler is planning to tear down the former United Methodist Church on Commercial Street in Provincetown that once housed his art museum.

Chrysler called his building contractor in North Truro last week and said that when he gets his household goods out of the nineteenth-century structure he wants it torn down. No date has been set for demolition.

The Provincetown Selectmen two weeks ago refused to grant a prospective buyer a liquor license to open a bar-and-restaurant complex in the old museum after the neighbors objected.

The conditional sales agreement that William "Sonny" Tobin, a New York City bar owner, had with Chrysler depended on the license being granted. Tobin's attorney John Snow said the sale has been cancelled.

Contractor Sabastian E. Rose emphasized in an interview that the demolition order is tentative and that no definite starting time has been set.

"I've worked for Walter Chrysler for 14 or 15 years," Rose said, "and he could change his mind in 14 minutes. A lot of things could happen. Someone could make him an offer tomorrow. But I do have the go-ahead tentative on a couple of items."

Rose said demolition could not start until the fall as summer crowds make it impossible to bring cranes onto the site.

Other buyers are interested in the property. Realtor Roslyn Garfield said that she had several but no offer has been accepted yet. None of her clients, she added, is interested in tearing down the building.

Real estate broker John Quinn, who was handling the sale to Tobin, said another buyer has made an offer. Quinn said he was startled to hear of Chrysler's plans.

"It's not good business sense to tear it down," Quinn said. "The building goes right up to the property lines on two sides. Any new building would have to be set back from the boundaries, losing a lot of valuable footage."

Attempts to contact Chrysler at his new art museum in Norfolk, Virginia, were unsuccessful. His secretary said he could not be reached for comment.