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## 'We need this pizzazz': The Canopic gets a makeover

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Just three years ago, the Canopic Apartments building had been tagged by the city building commissioner's office as a prime candidate for the wrecking ball.

After a \$3.2 million makeover, the Canopic debuted last week as downtown Muncie's newest historic apartment building, offering restored vintage fixtures and -- thanks to provisions necessary to get state tax credits -- affordable housing.

"I think it's wonderful," Muncie City Council member Linda Gregory said at an open house last week. "We need this punch and pizzazz on our streetscape all over town."

Indianapolis-based developer Flaherty and Collins began the Canopic project in late 2008 and completed it on time, even while a parallel project -- Bloomington businessman Peter Dvorak's efforts to turn the former Roberts Hotel into luxury apartments -- floundered.

Muncie Building Commissioner Jerry Friend, who also attended last week's open house, said he was particularly pleased with the Canopic.

"I think this is one of the best projects ever in downtown Muncie," Friend said. "It's great for the city. It does a majestic old building justice and it will be here for another 100 years."

## 'This close' to the end

Duane Miller, vice president of asset management for Flaherty and Collins, oversaw local projects like Millennium Place and Howard Square before taking on Canopic, which is part of a project that includes nine single-family houses in historic neighborhoods. Overall, the project is called Historic Muncie Downtown Living.

The Canopic, in the 200 block of East Jackson Street adjacent to Carnegie Library, is actually two joined structures, the W.W. Shirk Building, built in 1989, and the Canopic, built in 1906. A popular downtown apartment building in its day, the brick and limestone Italian Renaissance structure -- listed on the National Register of Historic Places -- fell into disrepair by the 1980s and 1990s as commercial tenant spaces on the first floor fell vacant and upstairs apartments emptied.

"The building was this close," Friend said last week as he stood among the crowd in a newly installed courtyard behind the building. "I tagged the building in 2006."

Flaherty and Collins acquired the building -- as well as historic preservation and state tax credits -- and began the renovation process.

The tax credits meant that much of the vintage woodwork -- cabinets, shelves, fireplace mantles, stairways and banisters -- in the building would be maintained. It also meant that rent for the building would be affordable.

Rent for the 24 apartments varies but includes one-bedroom spaces for the mid-\$400s and two bedrooms for less than \$600.

## Downtown investment

Despite the setback for the Roberts project, downtown Muncie has seen an apartment renaissance in the past year. Above many commercial spaces downtown, apartments are in high demand.

Developers Jay Allardt and Scott Boyce recently renovated the Sanders Flats apartment building on Franklin Street. Allardt this week will unveil a luxury apartment he's created in the 200 block of South Walnut Street. At an open house planned for 4:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Allardt will debut the apartment above Restaurant 2(Oh!)4, the sister facility to Blue Bottle, a downtown coffee shop and restaurant.

At last Wednesday's open house, Allardt checked out the renovated Canopic.

"This is really nice what they did here," Allardt said from the dining room of one of the Canopic's apartments.

Miller said he's glad Canopic and his other projects are contributing to what he believes is a steady improvement of downtown Muncie.

Citing the residential projects and commercial development like DeFur Voran's new offices at Charles and Walnut streets, Miller said, "I think we're really seeing the investment and its effect on downtown."

Information: [www.flahertycollins.com](http://www.flahertycollins.com).

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