

## Canterbury House building in Alexandria sold for \$815,000 at bankruptcy auction

The former assisted-living facility Canterbury House was sold at a bankruptcy auction Thursday for \$815,000 to Thomas Cupples, who owns health-care companies in Alexandria.

Cupples said he plans to use the 60-room facility in Alexandria for assisted and unassisted living for the elderly. He said there also could be a wing in the current building or one constructed later to house the elderly suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

The facility will open as soon as possible, he said.

Cupples outbid Greg Thompson, who with others formed Canterbury Senior Apartments LLC for the endeavor.

Canterbury House, formed by St. James Episcopal Church in the mid-1990s, closed its doors after the last resident left Dec. 4. Occupancy at the assisted-living facility had dwindled to the point where the income was not enough to meet expenses.

Attorney Bradley Drell and the board of St. James Housing Corp. decided on an

accelerated bankruptcy process to sell the facility located at the intersection of 16th and Murray streets because they had no money to pay for security and insurance premiums.

"It's not (located) in a horrible neighborhood," said Andrew Texada, a board member of the St. James Housing Corp., "but there is a lot of foot traffic. I'm sure it would be tempting for random acts" of vandalism or break-ins.

Texada said there is a utility bill of about \$8,000 that's past-due, and that he wasn't sure how long the lights would stay on.

St. James Episcopal Church in 1995 borrowed \$2 million from Teche Federal Bank to build Canterbury. The money was borrowed at a 9 percent interest rate, the going price for loans back then. The loan was guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Canterbury owes almost \$700,000 on the loan, which Thursday's cash sale to

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Cupples should pay off.

When Canterbury closed its doors earlier this month, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, which regulates nursing homes, voided Canterbury House's license.

The new owner will have to apply for another license, said Kimberly Humbles of DHH.

The new owner also will have to maintain medical records of those who had lived in Canterbury.

Cupples said his companies have a track record and that he'll be able to obtain a nursing home license.

"We have a history of this," he said. "There are some hoops to jump through, but we're used to it."

Canterbury House was completed in 1996, caring for non-Medicaid and non-Medicare residents who needed help with everyday tasks but who didn't have the money to live in the higher-end assisted-living homes.

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