

**Debbie Duncan**

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**From:** Richard Mize [RichardMize@Oklahoman.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2005 2:50 PM  
**To:** dduncan@ggdevco.com  
**Subject:** Here 'tis

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**Group buys Park Harvey Center with plan to convert to apartments**

By Richard Mize  
Real Estate Editor

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Gardner-Tanenbaum Group's plan to turn Park Harvey Center into high-rise apartments isn't going as smoothly as The Montgomery and The Classen, its other high-profile housing projects in former office buildings.

"No comment," Richard Tanenbaum, the company's usually talkative and gregarious chief executive said Friday by phone from California.

He did acknowledge buying the 17-story Class C office building, which has 50-plus tenants in small spaces.

Tenants apparently were surprised to learn last week that the building had sold — and that they were expected to vacate the premises by Nov. 30 if not sooner. Many, if not most, have month-to-month tenancy.

The 48-year-old building, at 200 N Harvey, has several bail bond companies and numerous criminal defense attorneys among its tenants. It is next door to the Oklahoma County Courthouse.

Park Harvey Center also has several petroleum-related businesses. The Oklahoma Geological Society and Geological Library was in the basement from 1978 until moving into First National Center in 2001.

Geologist Tom Smith, whose Anvil Geosciences Inc. is on the ninth floor, said some tenants "panicked" when they were told of the building's sale.

Smith, whose office occupies 340 square feet, said he had no complaints. He said Gardner-Tanenbaum, by giving him until the end of November to vacate, was being generous, since under a month-to-month tenancy it wasn't required.

Finding a new place, he said, won't be a problem, partly because his is a one-man shop, partly because there is so much other vacant office space downtown.

Smith said he tried to organize other petroleum-related businesses in Park Harvey Center to seek space in some other building as a bloc, figuring they could negotiate a better lease rate that way.

Most, he said, have been paying less than the \$8.50 per square foot per year being sought lately. He said

the group could accommodate 5,000 to 6,000 square feet.

“It’s like trying to herd cats. Everybody just panicked. Why panic? We’ve got 2 1/2 months. There are hundreds of thousands of square feet (open) downtown,” he said.

Another tenant said a few with long-term leases were worried whether the new owners would pay them a fair price to buy them out. Smith said he and other tenants have some questions:

“Why would so many people want to live in downtown Oklahoma City, and where the hell are these people going to park?”

Downtown housing promoters say the reasons are within walking distance — or a short trolley ride — of Park Harvey Center: the city’s shiny arts district, the Ford Center and Bricktown, among other attractions.

In fact, a recent housing study projected growth of between 2,250 and 4,250 downtown housing units — both rented and owned — between now and 2010, and from 4,000 to and 7,750 units between now and 2015.

Where residents of a converted Park Harvey Center would park is another question — one that can be answered only by Tanenbaum. The building has no garage.

Tanenbaum is known for innovation since his conversion of the old Montgomery Ward store and office building (now The Montgomery) and the dilapidated Citizens Tower office building (now The Classen) into housing.

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