

Space available at signalized corner of Broad & Main Streets, Penns Grove NJ.

# TODAY'S SUNBEAM

## Poland Building springs to life

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By **CHRISTOPHER WEIR**  
Staff Writer

PENNS GROVE -- An abandoned building on the corner of East Main and Broad Street is in the midst of a much needed makeover.

Workers are in the process of renovating the two-story Poland Building, in days past a key part of the borough's then-thriving downtown business center, with the hopes of turning it into a home for new businesses.

Contractor and property owner Jamie Jaramillo said he expects construction to be completed by November.

"We're in the process of putting the steel beams in place," said Jaramillo. "We should have the roof up in the next two weeks."

Cranes installing the beams were in place Monday as the sidewalk around the building was cordoned off.

Jaramillo, the owner of the Absolute Barns Construction Company, which is handling the renovations, said they should have the beams in place by today, at which point they'll begin work on the roof and trusses.

Some of the renovations that will be done to the building include gutting the floors and putting new ones in place, adding a roof, putting stucco on the outside walls, putting in new windows and an elevator, and tearing away plaster on the inside walls to expose the brick structure.

The second floor of the building is expected to be occupied by a doctor's office or health care center, according to Jaramillo, while the first floor will be used as a restaurant.

In the past, the building has been used as a jewelry store, barber shop, and news stand, among other things, and also housed apartments on the second floor.

The renovation project, which began about six months ago, is several months behind schedule due to problems with paperwork, according to Jaramillo.

Jaramillo said there are no current issues with the project and that he expects things to move according to plan.

Mayor John Washington said he's pleased that progress is finally being made to the building after months of delays.

"It's good to see the renovations back up and running again," Washington said. "Their operation was down for a while."

"He has until the 1st of June to complete the outside phase of the project," Washington said. "After that, he'll have to start building the suites for his tenants."

Jaramillo said it's been a positive experience working with the borough.

"The mayor and the members of the council have been really good," Jaramillo said. "They've been really positive about the whole thing."

Jaramillo is also the owner of the old bank building across the street from the Poland Building. That building is being converted into The Garden Cafe, a catering business that will also serve as a coffee and bagel shop.

"The community is really going to be changing," Jaramillo said. "That's a good thing."

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