

Father and Son may have to leave downtown Raleigh

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RALEIGH Vintage shop and downtown Raleigh staple Father and Son may soon have to find a new space to call home.

Owners Brian and Kiyomi Ownbey have been tenants at 107 W. Hargett St. for 20 years but say they were told recently that their building is under contract and may be sold. The couple hopes to find a new location in downtown Raleigh but may consider Durham if they can't find something suitable in the City of Oaks.

"I think for the type of shop we like and we have cultivated, downtown Raleigh or downtown Durham is where we would have to go," Kiyomi Ownbey said.

The Father and Son building dates back to 1925 and is popular among shoppers who walk its sprawling three-stories browsing an eclectic, wall-to-wall collection of vintage furniture, clothes, artwork and other oddities.

The 0.12-acre lot sits on the same block as the 3-acre News and Observer site. The company announced a \$20.2 million deal in November 2015 to sell its property to a local development group known as Above The Fold.

The group includes developers Mark Andrews, Michael Sandman and Joe Whitehouse, as well as Russ Jones and Henry Ward of Loden Properties. The first phase of The N&O site's redevelopment calls for an office tower, near the corner of Martin and Salisbury streets.

Whitehouse said he had no comment on whether the Father and Son building was being purchased by Above The Fold, or if the group had plans to include it in the N&O project.

The building is now owned by Albemarle Properties II LLC, according to city records.

Whoever the new buyer might be, Brian Ownbey said, he is sad the business may have to leave the building.

"It's pretty devastating," he said. "It's a lot like grieving for somebody you love."

He said during the first 10 years Father and Son was in business, the shop could have closed a few times but survived by selling items online.

The couple hopes to stay in Raleigh, but wants to find something with reasonable rents that they can stay in for a long time, Kiyomi Ownbey said.

“Of course we would like to stay in Raleigh,” she said. “But downtown Durham would be OK, too.”
