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# Buyer nabs ex-Laurelton Center for \$1M at judicial sale

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Apr 1, 2021



Robert Inglis/The Daily Item The Laurelton Center was purchased by Jay Fulkroad during a judicial sale for Union Coun



The former Laurelton Center in Hartley Township sold Tuesday at judicial sale for \$1,005,000, according to Union County Finance Director Jeffrey McClintock.

Jay Fulkroad, of McAlisterville, who operates a family construction firm, purchased the sprawling 266-acre complex along Route 45 as well as a separate related parcel just shy of 6 acres for an additional \$34,000. He did not return a message seeking comment.

The sale was held in the Union County Courthouse. These were the only two properties available. McClintock said he expects the sale to close and the deed to formally transfer in May or June.

Laurelton Center was the final name of a state-owned mental health institution, which closed in 1998. Its creation as an all-female facility was authorized by the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1913 and in January 1920, it received its first patient. With eye-catching stone buildings and well-groomed grounds cut from lush forestland, the facility has the look of an expensive university.

Bradley Wagner, chair of the Hartley Township Board of Supervisors, said the buyer hasn't contacted the township regarding the property's potential future use. An automotive mechanic opened a business in one building in the past decade, Wagner recalled, but he said he was unaware of any other uses in recent years.

"Nobody's actually really said anything about what they're planning on doing. I don't have a problem with anybody buying it. I hope they do something for the community, bring businesses in," Wagner said.

Laurelton Center was exclusive to females deemed to have mental health issues and didn't receive its first male patients until 1969. The patient population exceeded 1,000 at its height but dropped below 200 before it closed.

The property had been eyed by several developers for multiple uses in the ensuing years: high-end golf course and resort, religious homeless shelter, residential drug and alcohol treatment facility, action sports and camping complex.

Mountain Valley Inc., headed by Maryland businessman Gary Murphy, bought Laurelton Center from the Commonwealth in 2006 for \$1,632,500, according to a deed. It stood mostly dormant thereafter.

McClintock said Mountain Valley owed a combined \$297,077.18 in real estate taxes from 2018, 2019 and 2020 to Hartley Township, Union County and Mifflinburg Area School District. A municipal lien totaling \$34,215.91 was placed on the property by Hartley Township Municipal Sewer Authority.

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### Eric Scicchitano