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Commercial Real Estate

# Small business owner buys Northeast Baltimore storefronts at auction



The bar in Hamilton and its neighbor are moving after damage from a December fire has kept the businesses closed for months.

MELODY SIMMONS/BBJ



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### Story Highlights

- Julie Mosteller bought three fire-damaged Baltimore storefronts for \$392,200.
- Mosteller will launch Her Man Works, a soap manufacturer and workforce development company, in one building.
- Lakein's Jewelers relocated to Nottingham after the December fire damaged the property.

A small business owner bought a set of three fire-damaged storefronts in Northeast Baltimore at auction Wednesday, and already has plans to bring new life to the property.

Julie Mosteller, who owns a manufacturing and workforce development company, acquired the buildings at 5400-5404 Harford Road for \$392,200 during an auction that was held [both online and in-person](#) outside of the properties in Hamilton. Local auction house A.J. Billig & Co. handled the sale. The Hamilton buildings previously held Lakein's Jewelers, Micky's Joint and a rehabilitation health clinic, but a December fire forced all three businesses to close.

A small crowd of onlookers and active bidders gathered in front of the fire-damaged buildings Wednesday afternoon. Two bidders drove up the opening bid of \$250,000 to a closing price of \$370,000, plus a 6% buyer's premium.

Mosteller emerged as the winner and already has initial plans in place for the three buildings. She is starting a company called Her Man Works, a small-batch manufacturer of soaps and lotions that will also offer workforce development programs targeting veterans and formerly incarcerated people. She will move her business into one of the buildings and already has a tenant lined up for another space. Mosteller hopes to work with neighborhood organizations to fill the rest.

"I'm excited," Mosteller said after the auction. "We are coming. We have jobs."

The sale includes the three storefronts and three upper-level unfinished apartments, all of which need renovations. The three adjoining buildings total over 10,000 square feet and are located on one lot. The former Lakein's Jewelers at 5400 Harford Road is a two-story corner building, with a retail store, stockroom and restroom on the first level and a one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment on the second story with a separate entrance. Next door is a three-story building that previously held Micky's Joint on the lower level and two one-bedroom apartments on the upper levels. The last building at 5404 Harford Road is one story and was once home to a medical rehab facility, with eight rooms and two restrooms.

The previous owner, 5400 Harford Road LLC, acquired the properties in 2019 for \$490,000, according to state records.

The businesses that previously occupied those storefronts have been busy making alternate plans since the December fire. Lakein's Jewelers, a fixture on Harford Road for nearly 100 years and a [BBJ Family-Owned Business Awards honoree](#), decided to [leave its longtime home for a space in Nottingham](#) due to the fire damage. Owner Marcia Lakein told the Baltimore Business Journal in February that repairs to the buildings were expected to take anywhere from nine months to a year to complete, prompting her decision to move.

Hamilton bar [Micky's Joint hopes to purchase a permanent location](#) since "rent is not sustainable in Hamilton given our current options," the bar said in March. The bar started a [GoFundMe](#) page after the fire, which has since raised over \$35,000.