

## Law and Associates buy 89-acre Vanderbilt estate for \$8M



A massive, historic estate with direct ties to the Gilded Age in the Northeast has been sold and could be turned into a luxury resort.

Law and Associates bought the sprawling, 89-acre Vanderbilt Berkshires Estate, formerly Elm Court, located in both Stockbridge and Lenox, Massachusetts, from Amstar/Travaasa Experiential Resorts in a direct deal for \$8 million, according to a press release.

Company Principal Linda Law and her business partner, Dr. Rick Peiser, professor of real estate development at the Harvard University School of Design, have not announced formal plans on what they're planning to do with the estate, though the resort is one possibility.

The estate, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, originally listed for \$12.5 million in 2020, before Amstar took it off the market at the end of 2021.

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Built in 1886, the 55,000-square-foot, 106-room mansion — which lays claim to the largest shingled residence in the U.S. — **has 46 bedrooms and 27 bathrooms**, according to Boston.com. The grounds are approved for up to 112 guestrooms, a 15,000-square-foot spa and a 60-seat restaurant.

There's no shortage of history connected with the property, which was originally owned by William Douglas Sloane and Emily Thorn Vanderbilt, a scion of industrialist Cornelius Vanderbilt, and used as a country getaway for family and friends.

The grounds, which include stables and greenhouses, were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the “father of landscape architecture,” as described in the bestseller “**Devil in the White City.**”

The 1919 Elm Court Talks, which took place on the home's terrace, initiated the end of World War I by leading to the drafting of the Treaty of Versailles and the creation of the League of Nations.

Family members turned the living space into an inn — called The Elm Court Club — in 1948. That venture lasted until 1957, when the property was essentially abandoned — though passed down from family member to family member — for 42 years.

In 1999, Robert Berle, great-great-grandson of furniture magnate William Douglas Sloane, and his wife, Sonya, took possession of the estate and invested more than \$5 million to restore and upgrade the property and convert it first into a luxury inn, and then as a wedding venue.

The family put the property up for sale for \$21.5 million in 2005, but was pulled from the market in late 2006.

Amstar bought the estate in 2012 for \$9.8 million and spent more than \$20 million to turn the property into a 5-star wellness resort. The company is winding down, selling Elm Court as well as resorts in Austin and Maui.

