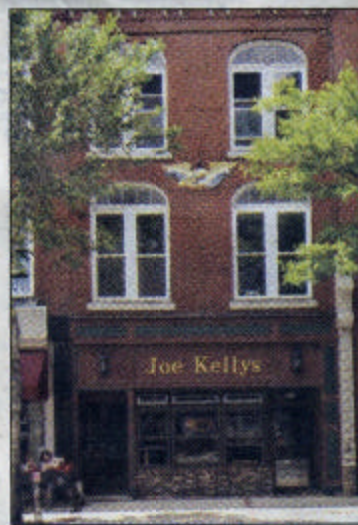




PHOTOS BY JAMES COOK/UNION LEADER

The kitchen features high-end appliances, cabinetry and countertops.



The unit occupies the second floor of 864 Elm St. above Joe Kelly's restaurant.

Manchester

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effort was on the kitchen, which has high-end appliances. The kitchen faucet alone ran \$1,200, according to Barrett.

The open concept plan even extends to the closets — which is to say, there aren't any, although they can be created. All an owner would have to do is strategically place a screen down a narrow hall, and one would have all the closet space one needs.

Then, there's that whole issue of location. It's downtown. It's right on Elm Street. If you love the nightlife, this place is for you.

"It's a block to the theater and to the arena and all the nightlife amenities," Barrett said.

But the unit can also be the calm amidst the storm if one wishes it to be that way. Although the unit is centrally located — and sits above Joe Kelly's restaurant — you wouldn't immediately know it. On a recent tour of the condo, absolutely no noise came from the eatery during its lunch rush. Nor, for that matter, could one detect any food smells.

As for parking, the owner would be able to get a residential parking permit, although that wouldn't be good along Elm Street, Barrett said.

The unit is priced at \$399,900 and condo fees run \$190 per month. However, despite the difficult real-estate market, Bar-



JAMES COOK/UNION LEADER

The living room shows the high ceilings, brick walls and hardwood floors that give the condo its loft charm.

rett said it has attracted plenty of interest — particularly from out-of-town buyers.

"We've had people over the years ask for this type of project in Manchester," Barrett said. "We thought that the time was right to step out of our comfort zone and develop something right on our main street."

That's not to say the market hasn't had some impact. Two years ago, Barrett said, the condo would have sold immediately. Now, it takes a little more effort. But he said that over the last two years, property values in Manchester's historic district near Elm Street have risen 15 to

23 percent.

"It's the only thing I know that has gone up in value — the Manchester historic district," Barrett said. "That bodes well for the city's downtown."

Some of the upper floors of downtown's building stock are unused or in poor condition, Barrett said, and he believes that loft-style condos would be a way to further revitalize downtown. If this project proves successful, he said, others would follow.

"If you can create demand where there was no demand before, we can further enhance and change downtown," Barrett said.

