

# *Normal School* Crowninshield seeks variance to convert Hillside to condos

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NEW BRITAIN — The Hillside Place developers, Crowninshield Corp. of Peabody, Mass., are seeking a special exception from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) this month to develop the former school administration building into condominiums.

The company's application is not unexpected. It is one of the last remaining steps the company must undertake before it can begin its planned renovation of the historic 1883 school administration building into condominiums.

The Common Council last year approved the sale of the building to developers for \$251,500, the high bid. It has been more than 2½ years since that project was put out to bid.

The building, which was built to house the former New Britain Normal School, is now vacant. The school administration moved into One Liberty Square, the Tomasso Brothers Inc. office building at Elm

and Chestnut Street, earlier this year.

According to City Plan officials, the developers are planning to create 26 to 30 residential units with 48 parking spaces on the approximately two-acre site at the edge of Walnut Hill Park.

Paul Gaudet, a spokesperson, said, that assuming they get ZBA approval, work on construction drawings will begin and they hope to begin construction in October, completing work something in June or July, 1989.

The average sale price of the condominiums will be approximately \$125,000, he said.

"We at Crowninshield are absolutely delighted with the potential of the building," he said.

The City Plan Commission this week voted to recommend that the ZBA approve the special exception and said the "appropriate renovation and reuse of historic buildings should be encouraged . . ."

The ZBA will hold a public hearing on the proposal June 28 at 7 p.m. in City Hall.