Big swath of town of Six Mile goes up for auction

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A big chunk of the tiny town of Six Mile went on the auction block this week, with 26 acres, two retail buildings and two homes changing hands after being owned by the same family for nearly a century, town officials and the auctioneer said.

In a town that's only 1.8 square miles, with a downtown that makes up just a fraction of that, it was a the biggest real estate transaction in memory for the rural Pickens County community.

"We had a barn burner auction," said John Johnson of SVN Interstate Auction. "We had 31 registered bidders present, plus another one on the telephone.

"And since it was an absolute auction, everything sold."

The terms of the sale were that the properties would be sold "to the highest bidders, regardless of the prices," the auction announcement said.

The purpose for the auction was to liquidate the assets of Six Mile Properties, LLC in order to settle an estate of one of the LLC's members, according to Johnson.

The town itself got first dibs. It bought 8.5 acres for $125,000 before the sale opened to other bidders, according to Mayor Roy Stoddard.

"Town Council had some ideas of what to do with that land," he said. "We were very fortunate to get it."

The owners of all the property, the descendants of J. Furman Stewart, have allowed the town to use the open area just off Main Street for festivals, parking and events for years, but town leaders thought it would be a good idea to secure it for continued use, he said.

"It just made it a natural fit for us," he said.

The site is right across the street from the town's bank, called Our Bank, which citizens renovated when the previous bank went out of business and recruited

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a financial institution to move in.

The property the town bought includes an old "historical" building that needs some repair and a house, the mayor said.

Johnson said one buyer purchased the two commercial buildings, and two other buyers bought tracts of land.

He said he couldn't disclose the names of the buyers because they have 30 days to close the sale. But the total came to more than $300,000.

Buyers had to put up a 10 percent deposit to secure their purchases, he said.

Stoddard said he didn't know the buyers, but he said they were Pickens County residents.

"One couple that bought a couple of buildings, she already has a dress shop in Clemson," he said.

"I'm anxious to meet with the new owners and see what they've got on their mind."

J. Furman Stewart had passed the property on to his two grandsons when he died, and one of them passed away a little over a year ago in a fire at one of the properties, Johnson said.

James Stewart Pitts, 51, of North Main Street, died in the fire at 105 N. Main Street, in February 2015.

Nearly 100 people turned out to witness the big sale on Wednesday, Stoddard said.

He estimates that the property that sold in the downtown area would amount to 7.5 percent to 8 percent of the total acreage of downtown and about 2 percent of the entire town.

Six Mile had a population of 675 in the 2010 Census, but Stoddard said, "It has grown some since then."



TOM HUNTER/SVN INTERNATIONAL CORP.

An auction gets underway for 26 acres of the tiny town of Six Mile.