

New Steward of Vanderbilt Estate to Redefine Bespoke Hospitality

Inspired future of Elm Court Vanderbilt Berkshires mansion includes a boutique hotel, ballroom, 60-seat restaurant and 48 guest suites.

LENOX, MA, UNITED STATES, October 21, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- When Linda Law of Law & Associates, a real estate developer and investor who formerly owned the Blantyre gilded-age estate in Lenox, purchased the Vanderbilt Berkshires Estate (Elm Court) in December of 2022, she made a commitment to reviving its legacy on a world-class scale.

Now, Law and her business partner, Dr. Richard Peiser, the only chaired professor of real estate development at Harvard University, are sharing their vision for the next incarnation of the historic Vanderbilt “summer cottage,” which includes the involvement of John F. A.V. Cecil, the great grandson of George W. Vanderbilt (Emily Vanderbilt's youngest brother who built the Biltmore Estate).

The inspired future of this national treasure includes The Manor House, a boutique hotel with an emphasis on health and longevity featuring 26 guestrooms, a ballroom, library room, and 60-seat restaurant open to the public. Additionally, twelve lodging buildings housing four guest suites (48 in total) will be developed. At a later date, 38 home sites for single-family custom residences will be phased in.



Elm Court Today



Elm Court Historical Image

"Our team is going to be very deliberate in its thoughtful renovation to restore the vibrancy of this treasured landmark," says Law. "Collectively, we have done a tremendous amount of research on the architecture and design of the Gilded Age and the history of the Vanderbilt family, and we feel a tremendous responsibility to pay homage to its legendary past," she said. "Equally as important, we will pay the utmost attention to the historical importance of Elm Court as its own entity, as well as its position and prominence in the Lenox and Stockbridge communities," she adds.



Grand Fireplace Credit Tricia McCormack

"The presence of a Vanderbilt estate in the Berkshires offers a profound and lasting contribution to the cultural, historical, and educational fabric of the community. As a symbol of America's Gilded Age, the estate not only preserves architectural and artistic excellence but also serves as a living classroom, fostering a deeper appreciation for heritage, craftsmanship, and innovation," says Linda Law. "It provides meaningful opportunities for cultural tourism, economic development, and community engagement, becoming a cornerstone for local pride and identity. By maintaining and celebrating this historic legacy, the region underscores its commitment to preserving the stories and values that shape our shared past and inspire future generations. And I am humbled and honored to be a small part of this," adds Law.

Historical Facts and Anecdotes About Vanderbilt Berkshires Estate (Elm Court)

- It is recognized as the largest shingled residence in the United States.
- It is 55,000 square feet, has approximately 100 rooms, and is set on 89 acres spanning the towns of Lenox and Stockbridge in Massachusetts.
- Its expansive grounds were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, the 'father of landscape architecture' who also designed New York City's Central Park, the U.S. Capitol, and many private estates of the Vanderbilt families.
- In 1919, the 'Elm Court Talks' held at the home ultimately led to the creation of The Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations, which marked the end of World War I.
- The Sloane's are said to have loved having numerous house guests and the estate is believed to have appealed to - and been frequented by - prominent political figures and notables. These include future President Theodore Roosevelt, who would have participated in hunting and outdoor activities; Winston Churchill, who would have enjoyed playing pool in the Manor House; and Grover Cleveland, William Howard Taft, Woodrow Wilson, Thomas Edison, Amelia Earhart, Henry Ford, Mark Twain, Oscar Wilde, Gloria Swanson, and Rudolph Valentino.

- The nexus between Elm Court and Harvard University is quite undeniable. The architects of the estate met at Harvard and created its Graduate School of Design as well as many other buildings on campus. The landscape architect (Olmstead) designed Harvard's magnificent Arboretum. Additionally, football games between Harvard and Yale were also played on the property's grounds.

A Storied History

The 89-acre estate Elm Court was designed in 1885 by premier architects Peabody and Sterns as a summer residence for Emily T. Vanderbilt and her husband, William D. Sloane, with construction being completed in 1887. The Sloanes, who had five children, aimed to build a modest home. However, at the end of 1885, Emily's father, railroad tycoon William Henry Vanderbilt, died suddenly, leaving each of his eight children \$10,000,000, which equates to approximately \$330 M today. With money no longer a factor, the plans for the home changed as the family expanded. The grounds were designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, the "father of landscape architecture" and the landscape architect of New York's Central Park and the U.S. Capitol. It took 13 months, some 70 designs for Olmsted to plan the property's gardens. Additional residences and amenities have remained on the property, including stables and greenhouses. The Inn eventually faltered, and due to overwhelming operational costs, the house was shuttered in 1957, and the property was abandoned for 42 years. During this time the house was passed down through generations and in 2012, the couple sold the estate for \$9,800,000 to Amstar/Travaasa Experiential Resorts, a collection of destinations, resorts, and spas, ending its 137-year history with the family of Emily Vanderbilt Sloane White. Travaasa spent ten years and more than \$20,000,000 procuring land use entitlements for a luxury 5-star wellness resort. During litigation of the Travaasa project, Travaasa sold their Austin and Maui resorts and decided to sell Elm Court and close down the resort arm of the company.

In 2020, Elm Court was marketed for \$12,500,000. It was taken off the market at the end of 2021 and was purchased by Law at the end of 2022.

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Elm Court Vanderbilt Berkshires Estate

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