

Daily Camera, The (Boulder, CO)

June 24, 2006

Builders preserve history, house **Fourth-oldest home in Boulder to be moved, restored**

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Section: News

Page: A01

Article Text:

Owner Steve Burke thought the property at 1227 Broadway was just an old, tattered house.

"I just wanted to demo that old thing out of my lot," Burke said. "I just wanted to bulldoze it outta here."

Then officials told him that the home was built in 1870 - a year before Boulder was incorporated - making it the fourth-oldest house left in the city.

The city's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board soon declared the pioneer-era home a landmark of historical significance, protecting it from being destroyed. So he's moving it, renovating it and selling it, instead.

Friday, Burke began moving the home about 100 feet away to the south end of his plot at Broadway and High Street so he can build the High Street Lofts, a development that will include three townhouses and two two-story homes as well as the renovated historic house.

Burke said it is costing about \$60,000 to move the house, minus tax credits because of its historic significance.

"I invested twice the time I spent anywhere else on this project," Burke said. "But its significance has made it all worth it and that much more fun."

Rocky Mountain Structural Movers, led by Bill Davis, who has been on the History Channel for his work on historic buildings, has been working more than a month to prepare for the house's move.

"I've been moving buildings for about 30 years, and this is probably the hardest project I've ever had to do," he said. "We had to do most of the digging underneath the house by hand."

The house has 16-inch-thick stone walls that needed to be stabilized by cables for the move. Movers also had to dig four to eight feet below the house to make the move securely on "skates" pulled by machinery.

"The walls are basically a pile of rocks with sand in between," Davis said. "It's been tough but will be rewarding. We're getting as dirty as possible."

When James Hewat, historic preservation planner for the city of Boulder, researched the house for a demolition application, he found it on an 1887 map of Boulder! .

"It's just amazing how old it is, and the massive stone construction of it is pretty incredible," he said. "It's of great interest for the citizens of Boulder."

The landmarks board found that most buildings built prior to the mid-1870s were either large houses or commercial buildings, not smaller dwellings, like this one.

"This house, which is purportedly of an early vintage, is representative of the simple vernacular designs used during Boulder's pioneer days," stated a 1988 survey by Front Range Research Associates.

City officials also found a rich history of owners. The house originally was constructed by James Pomery, an early pioneer and real-estate developer.

In 1892, the property was sold to the Cheney family. Lewis Cheney was president of First National Bank for many years and owned the property until 1922. He rented out the residence.

One of the renters was John Ives, a former attorney general of Kansas and Boulder County attorney beginning in 1894. Ives also served as a commander in the Civil War! and lived in Boulder until his death in 1926.

Since 1930, the property has changed ownership 13 times. Burke purchased the house from Charles and Darla Stevens in 2005.

The structure has remained unchanged since the late 19th century, but Burke plans to remodel the inside, building a basement and cathedral ceilings.

"It's going to look exactly the same from the road," said John Hinkelman, real-estate agent for the property. "We're just going to stabilize the structure and bring it to contemporary standards."

The finished house will include a plaque from the city of Boulder, labeling it "Ives' House."

Burke plans to put the house on the market in a few weeks.

The High Street Lofts are expected to be available by next spring. More information can be found at www.highstreetlofts.com.

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Caption:

Left, Bill Davis, center, owner of Rocky Mountain Structural Movers, operates hydraulic lifts placed under Boulder's fourth-oldest house Friday. At left is Zach Ennis; in the doorway is Rory Crosley. Below, Francisco Aguirre and Adam Zelt, of Rocky Mountain Structural Movers, use wood to stabilize hydraulic lifts under Steve Burke's house.

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Record Number: 112A7670F529E8B8