

Daily Camera, The (Boulder, CO)

July 19, 2007

High Street house reborn

Historic Pomeroy-Cheney house moved and preserved

Author: Josie Klemaier, For the Camera

Section: Local

Page: C02

Article Text:

A year ago, the little house at 1227 High St. was crumbling and not up to code, and owner Steve Burke wanted it demolished. On July 11, fresh sandwiches and cool beverages were ready to welcome visitors for the open house at what is now a historic landmark, the Pomeroy-Cheney house at 1227 High St.

"The entire project was unforeseen," said Burke about the relocation and renovation of the house.

Last summer, Burke filed for a permit from the city of Boulder to demolish the house to make way for the High Street Lofts, a group of renovated, loft-style townhouses in the existing 2400 Broadway building and three new townhouses that he planned to build next to his hair salon. When the city came back to tell him that the house could not be demolished - it was built in 1872, making it the eighth-oldest house in Boulder - Burke's plans changed.

"After finding the history of it, I wanted to preserve it," Burke said.

The house was built in 1872 by James Pomeroy, a real estate developer who also laid out the streets for the surrounding subdivision around what was then Bluff Street.

"That was an interesting time in Boulder because as the community came together in the 1860s, it was still a mining town," said Chris Meschuk, a historic preservation planner for Boulder.

It was around the 1870s when the city's founders decided to make a community out of Boulder, setting a high bar for the way they wanted the city's houses to be built, Meschuk said.

"That's why you don't see a lot of 1860s houses anymore," he said, because the standards were raised and the early homes did not last."

James Pomeroy sold the house in 1884 to Sylvester Downer, a Boulder attorney. It is thought he ran his office out of his house but did not occupy it long before selling it to the Cheney family, a prominent Boulder family. Lewis Cheney was the

president of Boulder's First National Bank for many years and his wife was active in Boulder society.

Another notable figure who resided at the house was Gen. John N. Ives. After serving in the Civil War and as the attorney general of Kansas, Ives moved to Boulder in 1884 with mining interests and served as the Boulder County attorney. He stayed in Boulder until his death in 1926.

The house saw little change after the exterior was covered in stucco in 1940. When it was declared a historic landmark by the city and Burke took on the task of renovations, Rocky Mountain Structural Movers dug deep underneath the structure to move it approximately 60 feet, making room for construction of the lofts.

From the front, the house looks the way it did in a picture taken in 1949, save the absence of trees, bushes and the addition of a plaque declaring it the Pomeroy-Cheney house.

On the inside, however, an elegant yet classic transformation has taken place. Burke added a master bedroom to the back of the house, as well as a full attached garage. A basement with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, including an additional master, and 10-foot ceilings drastically increased the size of the house.

Despite all of the modern additions, Burke reused as much of the pre-existing features as he could. Both fireplaces were constructed using original bricks taken from the property at 2400 Broadway. The black walnut mantles and some trim were made from a tree that had to be cut down during construction.

"I helped save a piece of Boulder history and a hundred years from now that house will still be here," said Burke. "It was a lot of work, but we felt it was worth it."

Caption:

Steve Burke stands in the kitchen of the 1872 Pomeroy-Cheney House that he had renovated as part of a residential project he is developing at the intersection of Broadway and High Street in Boulder.

Copyright, 2007, The Daily Camera, Boulder, Colo.
Record Number: 1070175