

✓ OF HISTORIC HOUSES: *North County* Fate of Scotts Valley landmark going to a vote

Evans House demolition sought to make way for street project

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The Scotts Valley City Council will decide tonight if one of the community's three historic landmarks should be razed for road improvements.

The city wants to demolish the century-old Hugh Evans House so traffic improvements can be made at Mount Hermon Road and La Madrona Drive. The 1½-story house, which was designated a historical landmark in 1990, is in a field near the intersection.

The city condemned and bought the home and a sliver of surrounding land in March after it could not persuade the owner to move it.

City Manager Chuck Comstock estimates it would cost about \$29,000 to move the Evans House to the neighboring Bei-Scott Properties. But the owners of that parcel won't allow the

city to move the house there unless the structure is brought up to current building codes. That would add at least \$90,000 to the relocation costs, making the project far too expensive for the city.

The city does not own a suitable site for the house, and Scotts Valley's staff believes the structure is too fragile to survive a long move.

The Scotts Valley Cultural Resource Preservation Commission last month denied the city's application for a permit to demolish the house. Comstock is asking the council to overturn that decision.

The city began planning its Gateway South project more than four years ago to improve safety and traffic at Mount Hermon-La Madrona. All the necessary permits have been secured, and the city is preparing to solicit bids for the construction work, Comstock wrote in the appeal. A delay in accepting bids would extend the project through an additional construction season, he added, and create a substantial hardship for the city.

The Evans House is named for Hugh Evans,

who settled in Scotts Valley in 1894 after buying 162 acres from the descendants of Thomas Kilfoyl. Historians suspect the Gothic revival structure was built originally by the Kilfoyl family, and remodeled extensively by Evans and his wife, Mattie, who died in 1915. Hugh Evans, who died in 1937, lived in the home until 1925.

The structure changed hands several times over the years. According to local legend, the building was used at one time as a house of prostitution. The house has been modified so many times over the years that some feel its historic value has been compromised.

Scotts Valley's other historic structures are the Scott House, which was built by Hiram Scott, who lent his name to the city, and the Polo Ranch stables on the east side of Highway 17.

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED

The Scotts Valley City Council is scheduled to hear the appeal at 7 tonight at City Hall, 1 Civic Center Drive.