

VCF. HISTORIC HOUSE North County SJM JUL 22 1993

Historic house gets 2-week reprieve

BY TERRI MORGAN
Special to the Mercury News

The Scotts Valley City Council voted Wednesday to postpone for two weeks its decision to save or raze one of the community's three historic structures to make way for road improvements.

The council, which had been asked to grant a demolition permit for the century-old Evans house, wanted more time to examine the issue.

Council members will look at possible new sites for the building and examine costs of bringing it up to current building codes.

"I think it's too quick to abandon this," Councilman Joe Miller said. "We need to postpone the decision to gather more information on where it could be moved vs. the cost of demolish-

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ing it."

The city staff had asked the council to overturn an earlier ruling by the cultural resource preservation commission denying a demolition permit for the building, which stands in the way of road improvements at the intersection of Mount Hermon Road and La Madrona Drive.

The Evans house was designated a historic landmark in 1990 because of its age, architectural value and connection

with two of Scotts Valley's earliest settlers.

But the city says the Gothic revival structure is in the path of the Gateway South road-alignment project and has to be removed before road work can begin.

The city condemned and bought the house in March after failing to persuade the former owner, Bei-Scott Properties, to relocate it.

Scotts Valley officials had hoped to move the home to a neighboring Bei-Scott Properties site. But Bei-Scott insisted it first be brought up to current building codes.

Those renovations would have added about \$90,000 to the estimated \$29,000 in relocation costs.

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With no funds available, the city asked the cultural resource preservation commission for a permit to tear it down last month. When permission was denied, City Manager Chuck Comstock appealed to the city council to overturn the commission's ruling.

The city has secured all the necessary permits to begin work on the intersection and rebuild the southbound Highway 17 on-ramp.

The Gateway South Assessment District was established in 1986 to improve traffic safety and extend utilities into the southern end of the city. The project is expected to improve traffic circulation, provide motorists with safer access to Highway 17 and accommodate future development.

Historians have urged the city to save the Evans house, although it is unclear who built the home and when.

The site originally was part of a 600-acre ranch owned by Thomas Kilfoyl, one of Scotts Valley's first settlers. After Kilfoyl died in 1894, his descendants split up the ranch and sold 162 acres to Hugh Evans for \$3,616.

The sale included two horses, four milk cows, one calf, a set of double harnesses, an old spring wagon and "unspecified improvements."

Some historians suspect those improvements included the 1½-story farmhouse, which Evans and his wife, Mattie, extensively remodeled in 1915. Others speculate the Evans family built the home after purchasing the property.

Although the house has a Mount Hermon Road address, it ended up much closer to La Madrona Drive when that road was built years later.