

LIFE

## House moved, history saved

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GREENSBORO — Movers finagled forty tons of house around fire hydrants, utility poles and power lines — all in the name of recycling.

Or restoration. Or new construction, depending on how you look at it.

Either way, crews finally moved the 110-year-old home that stood in the way of building the county's jail along Blandwood Avenue.

On Saturday, the house crept to its new location on Cedar Street.

"We've been out here talking and watching the work," said Suzanne Kenerley, who sat on her porch at Cedar and Bellemeade streets with her son, Potter, and friend Lori Purvis.

"We've made a day of it," she said while watching the neighborhood's newest resident move in.

It took most of the morning to pull the house to an empty lot owned by Mahlon Honeycutt.

Honeycutt got the house for free but plans to spend about \$60,000 restoring the faded, two-story Queen Anne house. The city put up \$400,000 to move it and a duplex that were in the way of the jail complex.

Honeycutt hopes to have the house finished by spring.

"Historic preservation is the ultimate recycling," said Ira Sheldon, who sits on the board of directors for Preservation Greensboro, which also helped move the house. When the county announced that the house had to go to make room for the jail, Preservation Greensboro picked up the effort to save one of downtown's oldest homes.

On Saturday, linemen from Duke Energy, Time Warner and AT&T followed the house to move utility lines as it inched down the road.

"I love the 'wide load' banners on the truck," said

Marsh Prause, another Preservation Greensboro board member.

"When you see that," he said, gesturing toward the irony of the banner on the truck for the enormous house, "you see how unreasonable the banner is."

Mike Blake, a Greensboro resident, had his moving company haul the house. His company helps save 800 tons of potential waste from landfills each year by moving buildings, he said.

A glass of water placed inside a home he moves wouldn't spill during the move, he said — that's how stable it is.

After a close call with some utility lines at the Cedar-Bellemeade intersection, the linemen cleared a path for the home's final turn on a muddy lot.

One foot at a time, workers rolled in the house with a tremendous winch and steel cable that dragged the house, truck and flatbed trailer onto the property.

Neighbors watched the linemen fight angry wasps rustled from under covers on utility lines. They watched the winch truck strain against the load.

Blake's men brought the house within inches of knocking into a utility pole and moved timbers under the wheels of the trailer for traction over each foot of travel it made.

The winch truck's rear wheels dug into Carolina clay.

Blake signaled the start of each move with a hand wave and ended the pull by yelling, "Whoa!"

Gathered neighbors "oohed" and "whoa-ed" while they watched the men work amid the smell of diesel exhaust from trucks.

Their excitement may have caused a little confusion. Hey, it's not everyday that people get to see something with the weight of a humpback whale pulled through their neighborhood.

"Now remember," Blake told the neighbors, "saying 'Whoa!' is my job."



H. Scott Hoffmann (News & Record)

Workers help move utility lines Saturday so a 110-year-old house on Blandwood Avenue could be moved to its new location on Cedar Street. The house, which will be restored, is one of downtown's oldest homes.

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