

# METRO HARTFORD

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## State Expected To Aid Move

Historic Brick House Owned By Aetna Will Inch Its Way To New Site A Half-Mile Away

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One day this spring, the red brick house across Sigourney Street from Aetna's headquarters will be loaded up and carted away.

The move will by no means be stealthy: The two-story

### IN HARTFORD'S NEIGHBORHOODS

1890 home will plod through Hartford streets at a glacial pace, and its relocation will require the rearranging of traffic lights and power lines.

Its travels are a success story in Hartford historic preservation, and the victory is being financed in part by the state. The State Bond Commission today is expected to approve \$50,000 for the costly half-mile move from 47 Sigourney St. to a vacant lot on Ashley Street.

Once there, the house will be renovated and sold as a market-rate single-family home. It will be one of six vacant homes being restored in that tired-looking section of Asylum Hill, a city neighborhood with only a 9 percent homeownership rate.

"I would live in any of these houses in a second," said Gov. John G. Rowland, who stopped by 47 Sigourney on Thursday to announce the state bond funding. "I would want my kids to live in any one of these houses."

The \$50,000 from the state gives a critical financial boost to efforts by city preservationists to save 47 Sigourney from demolition. The neighborhood group spearheading the home relocation, the Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance, estimates the basic cost of relocation — not including the tinkering with power lines and traffic lights — to be \$109,000.

Aetna, which owns the old building and wanted to demolish it to build a parking lot, has pledged \$50,000 for

the move. And the Neighborhood Alliance, made up of six major business in Asylum Hill, including Aetna, has chipped in \$10,000, said Kenneth Johnson, NINA's executive director.

Aetna, which wants to build a surface parking lot for employees, had agreed to delay the demolition of 47 Sigourney and cede the old Queen Anne-style house for free to anyone willing to move it. Aetna also agreed to defray a portion of the moving costs, using the money it would have spent to demolish the building.

The company gave an October deadline to officials at the Hartford Preservation Alliance, which first objected to the building's demolition. But the deadline had been extended indefinitely.

Moving the home will require hoisting it from its foundation and delicately placing the structure atop steel crossing beams, Johnson said. The inside of the building will be reinforced.