

Sunday Is Moving Day On Sigourney Street

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Victorian-Era House Ready To Hit The Road

The brick Victorian-era house at 47 Sigourney St., once scheduled to be demolished for parking, will inch its way through Hartford streets to its new Asylum Hill location Sunday.

The journey to 21 Ashley St., where the Queen Anne-style house is to be relocated and restored, will take about 11 hours, from 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Though the two sites are less than a mile apart, the house will travel farther than that because of the roundabout route chosen by movers.

To prepare for the move, which will cost approximately \$109,000, traffic signals, streetlights, several cable television lines and one electrical line will be

temporarily removed by late Saturday. The city also has trimmed trees on the route, in one case removing an entire tree on Ashley Street.

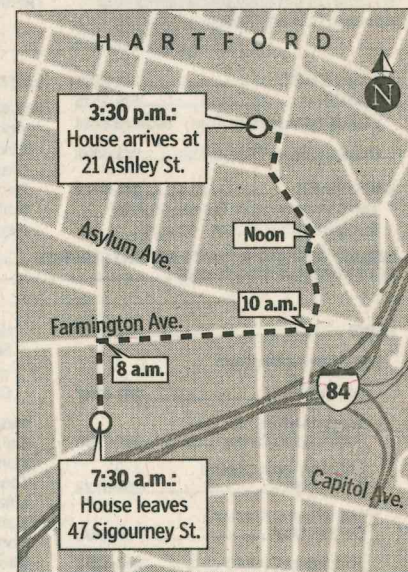
According to Mark Liljedahl of the Corporation for Independent Living, the Wethersfield nonprofit affordable housing development company that is coordinating the move, utility companies will restore lights, signals and wires as soon as the house passes by on Sunday.

Traffic will be diverted to nearby streets as the house makes its way from Sigourney Street to Farmington Avenue and along Cogswell, Garden and Ashley streets. The house is scheduled to pass the Cathedral of St. Joseph on Farming-

ton Avenue about the time 8:30 Mass is starting; Liljedahl said parishioners were notified over the past two weeks and instructed to park at the rear of the cathedral off Asylum Avenue to avoid disruption.

"The only thing the church was concerned about is that people might want to watch the move instead of going to Mass," he said.

And there will be reason to watch. The house will in a fashion be floating along by itself — with no trucks or other vehicles pulling it. Instead it will travel at the pace of a slow walk on four sets of



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wheels.

First the house, now resting on four steel beams in preparation for the move, will be jacked up by eight hydraulic pistons. Timbers will be placed under the house, then the four sets of wheels — two in the rear and two in front.

The wheels are propelled by a bicycle-like chain drive powered by a hydraulic system, Liljedahl said. The entire system is controlled by a console of valves from inside a car, he said. The system is designed for particularly heavy structures, Liljedahl said — a necessity, given the house's brick construction and slate roof. Each set of wheel can support up to 400,000 lbs.

Once the building arrives at Ashley St., the house will be jacked up again and the wheels reversed so the house can be backed onto its new lot. It will take several weeks to prepare and build a new foundation.

The moving process has gone very smoothly so far, Liljedahl said.

"Coordinating the utility companies and traffic control, and working in such a small, confined area as Sigourney Street has been challenging," he said. "But the cooperation we've had from the city has been excellent. Everybody along the route has been able to assist us in the move."

Once at its new site, the house — which over the years has been converted to apartment and office use — will be restored to its original function as a single-family house and sold at market value.