

## YELLOW BRICK ABODE



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**ANTONIO VELAZQUE** of Hartford removes mortar from bricks from the "Perfect Six" apartment building, seen below, on Atwood Street in Hartford. The building is being remade into a two-family duplex using the bricks and facade of the original building.

# 'PERFECT SIX' SENSE

1911 Building's Rebirth Is Huge Recycling Effort Using Original Bricks, Facade

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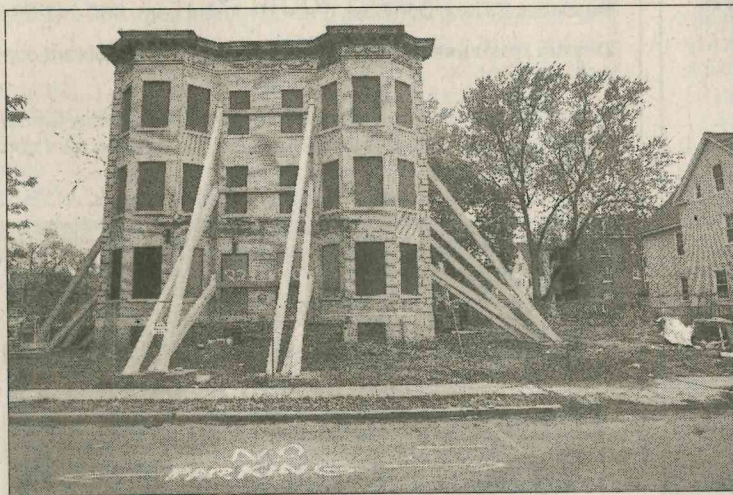
The city of Hartford had all but written off the decaying apartment building at 87-92 Atwood St. on Asylum Hill.

Originally a "Perfect Six," the 1911 structure had last been a rooming house, attracting drug-dealing and prostitution. Vacant for more than a decade, its exterior walls recently began to bow.

Now, a building that was headed for demolition is being reshaped into two row houses, the most ambitious project for a neighborhood group that buys and renovates neglected residential buildings and sells them to owner-occupants.

What sets the Atwood Street project apart from other Perfect Six renovations around the city is that just the facade is being saved. The rest of the building is being demolished and rebuilt. From the street, the building will appear as it always did, and brick from the demolished portion will be used in the reconstruction.

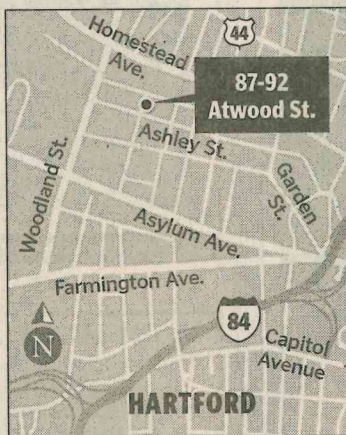
"Our goal is to create more owner-occupied housing," said Kenneth D. Johnson, executive director of the Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance. "We saw this as a nice



opportunity to help accomplish that."

The Atwood Street building is worth all the trouble because of its architecturally significant facade, rendered in the classic style of the Perfect Six. Perfect Sixes were built in a style unique to Hartford and in the early part of the last century often housed factory workers.

The Atwood Street facade was rendered in yellow brick, in vogue when the building was built, and decorated with splayed lintels above the windows and quoins framing both sides. Atop the three-story structure is a sheet metal cornice embellished with garlands and modillions.



Demolition is underway, and the facade and sides of the building are supported with massive wooden buttresses. In the backyard,

volunteers sort through bricks from the demolition, scraping off mortar and piling them neatly on pallets.

Historians praised the project because it will preserve the integrity of the streetscape and avoid an out-of-place building or empty lot.

"To duplicate these things these days is nearly impossible," said Tomas Nenortas, historic resources adviser at the Hartford Preservation Alliance. "It's not only the cost, some of it is just a lost art."

The project, including demolition, is expected to cost about \$580,000. It is hoped the three-story row houses with three bedrooms and two baths will sell for \$190,000 each when they come on the market next spring. The shortfall will be made up by grants from the state, the city and private funding, Johnson said.

The city agreed to work with the northside alliance after the group purchased \$20,000 in tax liens and foreclosed on the property, welcoming the prospect of preserving the character of the street, which has three other renovated Perfect Sixes.

"The last thing you want is a street with a lot of missing teeth," said David Panagore, the city's development services director.

and she was not offered another job at the paper. Teutsch said he chose to leave.

Naedine Hazell, who has held several editing positions at the newspaper, most recently as the top editor of The Courant's website, will be interim editor, said Jeff Levine, senior vice president in charge of news content at The Courant and WTIC-TV, Channel 61. Hazell, 50, will report to Levine, who began in his newly created position last week.

The changes come one month after Tribune Co., which owns The Courant and WTIC-TV, replaced former publisher Stephen D. Carver with Richard Graziano, general manager of WTIC-TV and WTXN-TV, the Chicago company's two Hartford-area television stations.

Under Graziano, who oversees the newspaper and TV stations, The Courant and WTIC-TV Fox 61 are merging into one news operation and will occupy the Broad Street building where The Courant has been located for many years.

Teutsch, 59, of Simsbury, who joined the Courant in 1980 as a reporter, called The Courant "one of the great places to do journalism" but said he no longer felt the job fit him.

"Important work demands to be done here by an editor who is in synch with those above him," Teutsch said in a memo to the staff. "My best assessment is I'm not that editor ... leaving now is my call."

Roessner, 55, of West Hartford, has been with the newspaper since 1978.

"Cliff and Bobbie have been guiding forces here at The Courant for more than two decades. I have known both of them for several years and have always been impressed with their passion for quality journalism," Levine said in a memo to the staff.

Teutsch and Roessner presided over a tumultuous period in The Courant's 245-year history, including deep staff reductions and a wholesale redesign — along with work that gained national recognition. The series "Mentally Unfit, Forced to Fight," showed that the military was sending unfit soldiers into combat and led to reforms in Congress and the Pentagon.

Roessner, a former columnist, said she was not leaving of her own initiative.

"I don't think I'm capable of leaving this place voluntarily," she wrote to the staff. "I'm so invested here on so many levels."

Roessner said in an interview that she considers the integration of the paper, the television stations and their websites "long overdue."

"We've lost so many people," she said of The Courant. "We've been in a long period of contraction. This is going to be a new era of expansion."

Levine said there are no plans for further job cuts at The Courant, which has shed 45 percent of its news employees since the start of 2008. The selection of a permanent editor for The Courant is "still to be worked out," Levine said.

"If we do not create a business model that allows us to succeed and thrive, the important work that journalists do could be in jeopardy," Levine said. "Newspapers haven't adapted well to the Internet, to the way readers use media."