

Elevator move gets OK Plans call for placing historic building on city-owned property

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The Rochester-Avon Historical Society got the go-ahead Monday from Rochester City Council to move a historic landmark to city-owned property.

Council voted 7-0 to allow the Rochester Elevator building to be moved to vacant property just east of Main Street near the Clinton River and Clinton River Trail. Terms of a lease agreement have yet to be worked out.

"They had no plans for that city property," RAHS President Greg Doyle said. The 1880 elevator, located on East University at Water Street, must be moved by the end of the year to make way for senior condominium housing under development by Sunrise Development and local builder Frank Rewold and Son.

An alternate location for the elevator, a public parking lot across from the elevator's current location, was briefly considered, but did not find widespread support, Doyle said.

Now the historical society will gear up to raise the money needed to move the building and put it on a new foundation. Doyle is hoping labor and materials will be donated as well.

"We're looking for not only cash, but cash-in-kind donations, like with the World War II monument," Doyle said. "We had a lot of wonderful businesses in the community, Rewold among them, that donated a lot of labor and materials. ... We're hoping that the word gets out there and we get some folks stepping forward."

The RAHS is working with local architect John Dziurman on the project. Cost of the move and a new foundation are estimated at \$140,000. Adapting it for reuse could cost as much as \$500,000.

Rochester Councilwoman Penny Crissman, whose parents-in-law owned the elevator back in the days when Matilda Wilson's Meadow Brook farmhands traded there, said she's glad it will be saved.

"I'm happy that we've been able to find a location for it and that the city is cooperating in saving a part of our history," she said.

Beyond just saving the building, the preservationists plan to make it accessible to visitors.

"Our interest is going to be to provide it in a way that the public can enjoy it," Doyle said. "The grain elevator is going to be something people will be able to wander into. It's really going to be done in a way that will be very historically accurate."

For more information or to make a donation, visit the Web site <http://holdelevator.ne1.net>.

