

City supports Eells House preservation

■ Council designates structure at 415 Jersey a historic landmark

By Brent Engel
Herald-Whig Staff Writer

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City officials may clear the way for a local preservation group to buy the Dr. Richard Eells House at 415 Jersey.

Aldermen Tuesday named the two-story structure a local historic landmark and asked the Preservation Committee to study a proposal that would let the Friends of the Dr. Richard Eells House buy it for \$43,250 this summer.

The panel meets at 7 p.m. June 4. The group, renting the house for \$210 a month, would pay for the purchase with donations from a fund drive to begin soon.

Assistant Corporation Counsel Chuck Scholz outlined the proposal:

- The city first would use its power of eminent domain to condemn the property. Scholz said a state law enacted recently lets cities condemn properties for historic preservation.

- A judge would set a price for the property based on its value — which now is set at \$43,250.

- State Street Bank and Trust Co. — co-trustee of the estate of the home's last owner, Harry Klene — would turn over the deed to the city, which would transfer it to the Friends group. The city would turn

over the group's money for the purchase to the bank, which would give it to Klene's heirs.

- The Friends group would seek state or federal grants to pay for a restoration. The group doesn't plan to use local money for repairs.

Scholz said the bank and Klene's heirs agree to the proposal. "I think this is a solution to how we can preserve this building," he said. "We believe this house is one of the most significant and historical sites in Quincy."

Klene's relatives hadn't wanted to sell the house unless it would be preserved, officials said.

"This (proposal) is the only way we're going to get this house," said Jane Daniels, president of the 11-member Friends group.

Alderman Steve Duesterhaus, D-2, a Preservation Committee member, said he likes the plan.

"It's not costing us anything," he said. "We're using our status as a government organization to do what everybody wants done."

If the committee endorses the proposal, an ordinance would be drafted setting up the condemnation and ownership transfer. It would require three readings and a final vote. Mayor Verne Hagstrom said he supports the plan.

Local historic landmark status protects buildings from demolition. There are seven other landmark sites in the city.

Eells, one of Quincy's first doctors, was an abolitionist and opened

Council upholds mayor's veto of library payment

By Brent Engel

Herald-Whig Staff Writer

Quincy aldermen voted 9-1 Tuesday to uphold Mayor Verne Hagstrom's veto of a \$77,961 payment to the public library.

Library officials didn't object, but Alderman Gary Sparks, D-1, said the city wasn't treating the agency fairly and cast the sole dissenting vote.

Hagstrom cited:

- Other city departments also are sharing in spending cuts.

- The Library Board already had agreed to do without the money.

- Making the payment would lead to an unbalanced city budget.

Sparks argued the library payment should be made because aldermen agreed May 13 to borrow \$8,352 from the capital expenditures budget for fiscal 1991 payments to six not-for-profit groups. The loan will be repaid by September from tax revenues.

"If you pay one, you should pay them all," Sparks said. "Everybody is entitled to be

treated fairly."

The city finished fiscal 1991 April 30 with about \$900,000 less than it had expected. The library allocation was to be made in April. Hagstrom has proposed a \$17.8 million balanced 1992 budget.

Aldermen voted 8-6 May 20 to borrow the money from the landfill account, but didn't say how they would repay it.

Alderman Bob Brewer, R-6, a Library Board member, said Tuesday agency officials "would like to do our fair share and absorb" the \$77,961 loss in funding.

Voting to uphold the veto were Aldermen Terry Grussenmeyer, D-1; Eugene "Smokey" Mueller, D-2; Steve Duesterhaus, D-2; Bob Klingele, D-3; Roger Schoenkase, D-3; Ray Coleman, R-4; Bill Hoffman, R-5; Richard Reis, D-7; and Kenneth Sparrow, D-7.

Brewer and Alderman Rick Smith, R-4, abstained. Aldermen Dave Hummel, R-5, and Raymond "Skip" Vahlkamp, D-6, were absent.

his home to blacks fleeing north from slavery in the 19th century. He

once was arrested for housing fugitives.