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Salvation lies in relocation

All Saints Chapel finds a new home

TOBY COLEMAN, Staff Writer

RALEIGH - The long, slow procession that bore the All Saints Chapel across downtown Saturday began about dawn with a shake violent enough to awaken the homeless man sleeping inside.

More than 40 men in orange vests and work boots made the seven-block pilgrimage, taking down light poles, adjusting the 52 wheels under the 131-year-old chapel, then cleaning up the mess in a nine-hour ordeal that astonished bystanders.

"That's awesome," said Arthur Jones, 35, a Raleigh landscaper. "I've never seen a building that large being extracted from one place to another."

The 70-foot-long, 40-foot-wide chapel's slow move to 110 S. East Street marked a rebirth for the old worship house with peeling gray paint, best known as the original home of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd. Raleigh developer Greg Hatem and his partners at Empire Properties now plan to restore the building and rent it to a church or use it for weddings and other special functions.

The procession was a long time coming. People have been trying to save the chapel since 2003, when Church of the Good Shepherd leaders first proposed tearing it down. The wooden vestige of post-Civil War Raleigh is one of the state's last examples of Carpenter Gothic Revival architecture.

None of the efforts worked out until Hatem and his partners agreed to take the building.

"I'm a preservationist," said Hatem, who estimates that moving and restoring the chapel will cost Empire Properties about \$1 million.

Hatem watched the procession carefully Saturday. "I'm not worried about the thing falling," he said. "The real issue is mitigating the problems you create along the way."



Blake Moving Co. moves All Saints Chapel down Morgan Street in downtown Raleigh early Saturday morning.

Staff Photo by Ethan Hyman

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Moving a 235,000-pound chapel is no simple task. A small crew of men marched out front to pull down power lines, move fences and trim trees. They were followed by a 550-horsepower truck with 48 gears that slowly pulled the chapel through downtown.

The scene underneath the chapel during the procession was holy in a sweaty way. "It's just tedious work," said Howard Milton, 55, of Greensboro as he helped adjust some of the wheels.

The men ended the procession about 3:30 p.m. after guiding the chapel into a parking lot adjacent to its new home. They expected to resume this morning.

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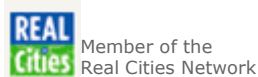
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