

Savings of Slave Quarters Dims

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The deeds to the Ben Lomond Manor property on Sudley Manor Drive were researched, and there is no clause providing for the preservation of the stone outbuilding. That was the report given Tuesday to the Board of County Supervisors by Prince William County Attorney T. A. Emerson.

In the sales contract for the property on which the building is located, there is a clause which allows the seller, Weaver Brothers, the option of moving the structure, Emerson said.

But there is nothing in the deed which included that option, he added, and it could be argued that the clause is no longer valid.

However, the point is not important because the new owner, Westover Baptist Church, has offered the building, which is thought to be a slave quarters, free of charge to any organization that is willing to move it, noted Emerson.

If the stone outbuilding is going to be

saved, it must be moved to another location because it sits in the proposed driveway of the church, which recently broke ground.

A professional building mover has estimated the cost of relocating the structure to be about \$25,000.

The supervisors had thought that deeds might have contained some provision providing for the preservation of the quarters. The late Robert L. Garner, who sold the land to

Weaver Brothers, was thought to be historically minded.

The Prince William County Historical Commission and Park Authority have expressed an interest in saving the building from being demolished, said County Executive Robert S. Noe.

The historical commission has discussed moving it either across the street to the Ben Lomond community center or closer to the manor house.

County seems unable to save slave house

By DARIO F. BERNARDINI

Prince William County is apparently unable to help in stopping the demolition of a 140-year-old building that may have been used as slave quarters in the 19th century.

County Attorney Terrence Emerson said Tuesday that the deeds for neither the present nor former owners of the land the building is located on contain provisions reserving the building for public use.

Emerson looked into the situation after the Board of Supervisors received a request from the Prince William Historical Commission for help in saving the building.

The Westover Baptist Church is planning to build a structure on land near the old building on Sudley Manor Drive.

Anne Flory, the commission vice chairman, told the board last month the church needs a 50-foot right-of-way to build a driveway, and the building is located in that area.

An investigation of the building's history has revealed it may have been a

slave quarters or overseer's house, and may have been lived in by descendants of Robert "King" Carter, one of Virginia's earliest settlers.

The church has been cooperating with the commission in trying to save the structure but has set a June 15 deadline for a decision on its future.

Emerson said the sale agreement for the land between the former owners, Weaver Brothers Inc., and the present owners, the Westover Baptist Church, allows Weaver Brothers to "decide what to do" with the house. He said Weaver Brothers reserved the right to move the structure, but does not want to do so.

Mrs. Flory previously proposed having the structure moved across the street to land near the Ben Lomond Community Center, at an estimated cost of \$20,000.

County Executive Robert S. Noe said the historical commission and the Prince William Park Authority are interested in saving the building.

Also, the church may be asked to consider changing its property lines to save the house.