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Buckhead's Randolph-Lucas House preparing for move

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Buckhead Heritage Society President Wright Mitchell stands in front of the historic Randolph-Lucas House.

(UPDATED AT 6 P.M. WITH QUOTES, MOVING COST INFORMATION FROM CHRISTOPHER JONES)

In a news release, the Buckhead Heritage Society, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving the community's historic resources, Thursday announced the historic Randolph-Lucas House is being prepared for relocation from 2500 Peachtree Road in Buckhead to 78 Peachtree Circle in Ansley Park.

Christopher Jones and Roger Smith, founders of NewTown Partners, an Atlanta-based economic development consulting firm focusing on distressed

historic resources, and owners of the home, have been working with the society, the 2500 Peachtree Condominium Association, the city of Atlanta and other partners to coordinate the logistics of moving the structure, which is a locally designated historic building in the city of Atlanta. Jones and Smith will use the house as their primary residence once it is relocated to Ansley Park.

The historic home will be partially disassembled for its trip down Peachtree Road and will be reassembled on the Peachtree Circle site. The brick veneer will be removed from the building and transported separately to the Ansley Park lot. It will be cleaned and reinstalled after the wood-frame house is set on its new foundation. The slate shingles will also be removed and transported separately to the Peachtree Circle lot. The house will be split above the first floor and the roof will be hinged and lowered so that the house can be transported in two separate pieces. The maximum height of each section of the house will be 19 feet.

Last week, Complete Demolition Services began interior preparations for the relocation, including removing doors and baseboards on the second floor. These features have been systematically numbered to facilitate reinstallation. The contractor anticipates removing the bricks next week.

"Dismantling the structure and moving it in two separate pieces allows the building to avoid the vast majority of aerial conflicts along the Peachtree Road route," Society Executive Director Erica Danylchak said. "Fewer utility lines will need to be temporarily relocated than if the house were moved intact. This approach makes the project economically feasible and will significantly minimize disruption along the corridor."

En route to its new location in Ansley Park, the house will cross over three bridges. A permit application has been submitted to the Georgia Department of Transportation for the project and preliminary approval has been granted based on the house being partially dismantled. The removal of brick and slate significantly reduces the weight of the house. Its weight will be evenly distributed and meet the per-axle weight requirements for transport over the bridges.

"Although moving a historic building intact is always preferred, partial disassembly is a tried and true preservation approach," society President Wright Mitchell said. "Our community benefits from two well-known examples of historic buildings, the Tullie Smith Farm and The Estate, formerly known as Anthony's [Fine Dining], that were dismantled, moved to Buckhead and reassembled. We look forward to seeing the Randolph-Lucas House return to its former appearance within the compatible streetscape of Ansley Park."



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Jones and Smith have agreed to donate a preservation façade easement to the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, ensuring that the house can never be torn down and that all future exterior changes or additions follow preservation standards.

The project was financed by Georgia Commerce Bank.

In a phone interview Thursday, Jones said the cost of moving the home will be “between \$400,000 and \$500,000.” It was originally rumored as being as high as \$1.3 million, if the house was moved in one piece, partly due to the costs of moving utility lines and getting permits. Though a date has not been set yet for the move, Jones said he hopes it takes place by the end of August.

“We’re going to be doing site work soon on the new lot,” he said. “We’re working with the property owner behind us, John Wieland. We may store the house on that property for a few days as the foundation is prepared. The lot allowed us to keep all the historic trees on the lot.

“The original move costs were really unrealistic until we found a mover who was familiar with the process of moving a house.”

Jones thanked all parties involved with the project, including the society, the trust, the city of Atlanta and especially the condo association. He also said he is thrilled about the upcoming move.

“It’s an exciting process to take a historic structure and a love of architecture and move it into our existing neighborhood and save it from potential demolition and have it fit into a neighborhood where it fits in beautifully with the architecture there,” he said. “The architect, Thornton Marye, lived in Ansley Park. He was the architect for the Fox Theatre and the old train terminal here in Atlanta.”

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Julie Sawyer | August 03, 2013

Best of luck with your move! As an Ansley Park resident, we welcome you to the neighborhood. Julie

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