

Critics of builder's plans told he'll sell them heritage house

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If Battery Street residents want to save a heritage-listed house from demolition, they can buy it.

All the conservation-minded group has to do is come up with \$100,000, plus lawyer's fees of about \$500, developer John Hanrahan says.

Hanrahan wants to demolish two houses on Battery Street to build a nursing home. Residents who object to the plan say remaining pockets of single family heritage homes in James Bay must be protected from developers.

Hanrahan has bought 648 Battery St. for \$100,000, the price for which

he is willing to resell it. He has made an offer on the house next door.

"I will give these people an opportunity to buy this house and then I couldn't care less about what they do with it," Hanrahan said.

"They are the ones that want to restore it, but we're so desperate for accommodation for elderly people it's ridiculous."

The house is on the city's heritage list, but is not designated a heritage home. The heritage advisory committee must review the application before a decision is made on the demolition permit.

Two years ago Hanrahan went through a similar exercise on Niag-

ara Street.

Residents there objected to the demolition of two houses to build a 25-unit intermediate care nursing home. Hanrahan offered to sell 655 Niagara St. for \$70,000 — the price he paid for it. However, after the 30-day time limit, there were no takers.

John Adams of 628 Battery St. is spearheading the fight to save the house and was also involved in the Niagara Street battle.

"I have a case of *deja vu*," he said. "We will have a concerted effort to make people aware the place is for sale, although we don't want to act as Mr. Hanrahan's agents."

...but residents are backing him

Bessie Brazil, 89, has a life of independence in the Battery Street house she shared with her husband for 38 years.

Developer John Hanrahan has turned the house into three apartments for elderly people, with meal service and nursing care. Hanrahan now wants to demolish two other Battery Street homes to build a nursing home.

Objections from some of the neighbors to Hanrahan's plans are contrary to the views of long-time residents, according to Brazil and neighbors Dorothy and Josephine Baker of 652 Battery St.

The nursing homes built by Hanrahan in James Bay improve the area, Brazil said.

"It's a miracle I got here. It's a shame to push old people aside. It's as if old people are undesirable. Where do they want to put old people?"

Most of the old homes in the Battery Street area are not worth saving, she said.

The area is ideal for elderly people — close to the ocean, Beacon Hill Park and downtown.

The conversion of her old house allows her to live in her own neigh-

borhood. She's even been able to keep her cat.

Josephine Baker, 69, has lived on Battery Street for 21 years and her sister Dorothy, 72, has lived with her since 1978. Their house backs on to the nursing home on Niagara Street built by Hanrahan.

The nursing home is a great improvement on the rooming house which was there before, they said.

"It's dreamy compared to what was there before," Dorothy Baker said.

"It was a rooming house full of crud. It was a definite nuisance."



■ BESSIE Brazil, flanked by Dorothy and Josephine Baker, is delighted her home became a rest