

**Mayor's column for  
The Beacon  
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At a recent City Council meeting, the Council asked for clarification on their options for moving the house at 555 Main Street to Civic Field, between the bleachers and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, across from the public-safety building. I met with staff to come up with an update for the Council. For those of you following the saga, this is what we came up with.

We (City staff) believe that the south and west setbacks of Civic Field are 20 feet from the property lines. No one knows exactly where the property lines are located without a survey, so we will, for the sake of discussion, use the east side of the sidewalk on the west side and the back of the grandstand on the south side, knowing full well that the line may be a foot or so off.

I personally went out, with Fire Chief Tom Tomberg as my helper, to measure the house with a tape measure. We measured the setbacks and where the house would sit using the setbacks. It extends, depending on where you place the entrance, anywhere from six to ten feet into the running track.

So, if the Council wants to place the house there, they can do it. The location would simply interfere with the use the track.

Or, the Council could pass an ordinance suspending the setback requirements on a temporary basis, allowing them to ignore the setbacks, and place the house against the fences where it would not protrude on the track.

If willing, the Council has the ability to put the house there permanently or temporarily depending on how they choose to use their own codes. Staff will follow their lead and direction and make it happen.

The philosophical questions that they must answer are:

1. Is that location the best one for the house?
2. What will its use be?
3. Who will own and maintain it?

Speaking administratively, we don't need another building for our (the City's) future space needs. We don't believe that Civic Field is the best location long term for the house. We would love to see it remain in the bowl—that seems to be the right fit for it; however, no one appears to be interested in acquiring it. And we don't believe we have the responsibility to save the house for a City use when the City has no need for it.

The City Council can choose to place the house on Civic Field if they wish. We, City staff and I, ask the Council to make a decision, one way or the other. If they don't want it at Civic Field, say so and allow the private sector of real estate to do its work.

City staff, the City Council and many citizens feel it is a worthy cause to save the house. But it's time to make a decision and get on with business.

Oh, and by the way, if you want a free house, now's the time to step up to the plate!