

## Hamden to sell old Maselli farmhouse to Habitat for Humanity

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By Ann DeMatteo, Assistant Metro Editor

[adematteo@nhregister.com](mailto:adematteo@nhregister.com) / Twitter: [@annddematteo](https://twitter.com/annddematteo)

HAMDEN — The town will be selling the old Maselli farmhouse to Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Haven.

The Legislative Council Monday night agreed to the \$15,000 sale. The house was built in 1892 and sits on the 35-acre former farm at 390 Gilbert Ave., opposite Ingleside Drive. William Casey, Habitat's executive director, told the council that the goal is to find a low- to moderate-income Hamden family to live in the house. The family would pay taxes and a mortgage, and the mortgage would be held by Habitat at no interest.

"We're very excited to be working with the town of Hamden again," he said, referencing a house at Goodrich Street and Shelton Avenue that was refurbished, and one on Edgecomb Street last year.

"We'd like to renovate it as closely to its original appearance as possible," he said. And that goal is just fine with members of the Dunbar Hill Civic Association. "I think Habitat will do a great job in restoring the house. It will be a model house for other blighted properties," said Michele Mastropetre of Ingleside Drive.

Association members have been successful in their attempts to block development at the former vegetable farm and apple orchard. And, to keep it out of developers hands forever, the town bought the property several years ago. The town has attempted to bring in agricultural enterprises, but nothing materialized.

However, Mayor Scott D. Jackson approached Habitat in an effort to breathe new life into the house, which has been vacant for several years. Association President Bill Burns said it's a "win-win" because it guarantees taxes to the town, and the house will be "a source of pride" again. Casey predicts that Habitat will be pumping in a lot of money to refurbish the house. Environmental testing also will take place. A sales price for the restored house hasn't been established. "We're not interested in making a profit. It will probably cost us more to rehab it," he said.

The Sleeping Giant Build — volunteers from Hamden and North Haven — has raised \$50,000 for each of the houses in town that were renovated. "We'd like to get going as soon as we can close. We will do preliminary things in the summer, like clean up the yard and do the exploratory work and get permits. We'll be full blown in September," Casey said.