

Benedict buyer changes committee swings into

Eccentric

By JOE MARTUCCI

The Benedict House's new lease on life has expired. The John Whitaker family of Bloomfield Township had hoped to move the old, red brick house and restore it. But the more the Whitakers looked into the project, the costlier it became.

"We've arrived at an impasse," said Mrs. Whitaker. "We've determined that the cost of such a project is inappropriate. The brick portions of the house would have to be dismantled—brick by brick—moved to another site and rebuilt.

"It would have been a matter of reconstructing rather than restoring. By adding on the cost of rebuilding the house, it got to be prohibitive."

The Whitakers had planned to have the house moved in one piece. One mover told them it could be done, but another one—more experienced with old homes—said dismantling would be required.

There's still a chance the house may be saved, however. The Ad Hoc Committee to Save the Benedict House, formed before the Whitakers began negotiating for the building, has sprung back into action.

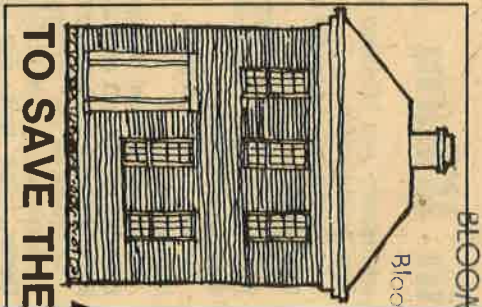
Kay Smith of Bloomfield Township, spokeswoman for the group, said members held a strategy session Sunday.

ONE OF the first steps will be taking legal steps to form a non-profit corporation. That way, contributions would be tax deductible.

A letter has been sent by the committee to Greenfield Village officials. Although no famous person was born or lived in the house, it is believed to be the oldest standing brick building in the state.

"I'm going to do everything I can to save the house. Many people have said they would contribute," Mrs. Smith said.

If nothing else, the committee may be able to come up with enough money to have the house dismantled and stored until a site can be found, she added.



The Ad Hoc Committee gearing up. Here's the group

Mrs. Whitaker, although

restore the house, will support

"There is no question as to

to save this historic building

"We are anxious to cooperate

Smith to accomplish this,"

Mrs. Whitaker said "Thousands

of bricks (after dismantling)

the project was dropped.

"We're really disappointed

in the house and restoring

just no way we could do

saved. I'd hate to see the