

# Tom Kroon's Home

Steve Grifhorst, Co-owner, Rollaway Movers, Inc., of Grand Rapids, Michigan entered the move of a 123 years old Tom Kroon house in downtown Grand Rapids. The brick house, weighing 127 tons, was moved four blocks on 3 October 2003 for under \$30,000.00.

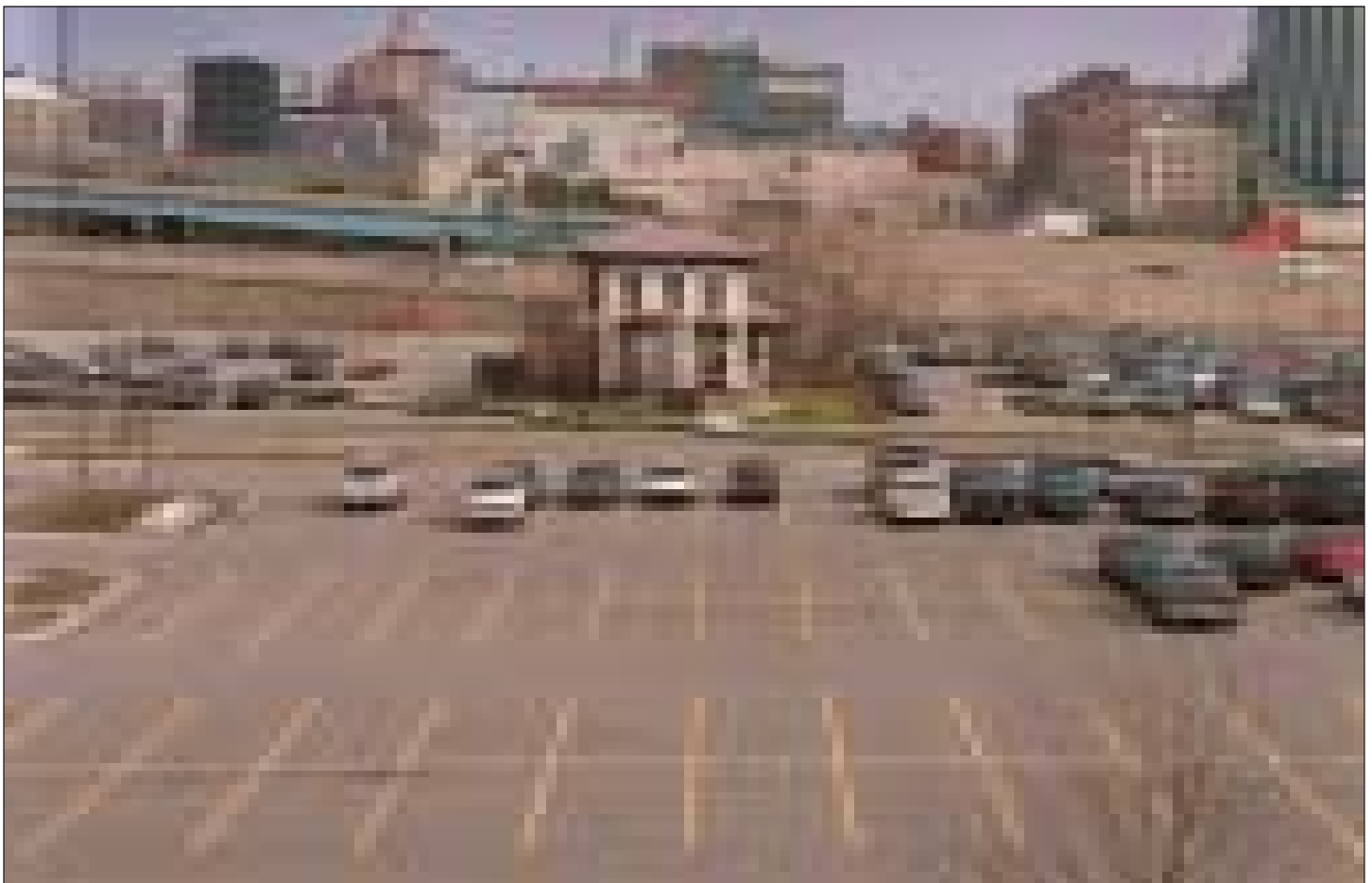
"The house that stands in the middle of a downtown parking lot as a symbol of one man's fight against City Hall will be moved Friday", according to an article in the Grand Rapids Press on Thursday 2 October 2003 by Kyla King.

"Tom Kroon's 123-year-old home will be moved two blocks north from 226 Summer Avenue NW to 424 Broadway Avenue NW, where it will become a museum to local immigrant families. Kroon's supporters say they saved the home to preserve it as symbol of the near West Side's spirit of independence."

"It represents a stand, it represents what America is all about," said Alex Myrhorodsky, who is organizing the project. "It shows how one man can beat the system." Kroon was the lone holdout in the

West Side neighborhood leveled for the project, refusing to leave even when threatened with eviction. His sometimes bitter fight with the City Hall ended in 1997, when he was allowed to stay in the home for 25 years or life—whichever was less."

"He lived in the house that had been surrounded by a parking lot until 2001, when poor health forced him into a group home. Myrhorodsky, who created the non-profit Grand Rapids Historical Organization, said his group was



*Tom Kroon refused to sell his property surrounded by a parking lot, to the City of Grand Rapids and move until 2001 when poor health forced him into a group home.*

Press Photo/Katy Batdorff



**Upon Blocks:** The former home of Tom Kroon has been lifted from its foundation in preparation for the move.

given the home for the project. On Wednesday, crews from Roll Away Movers were expected to lift the home six feet to slide it from its foundation and onto a platform in preparation for the move. The

work was part of a five-day process.”

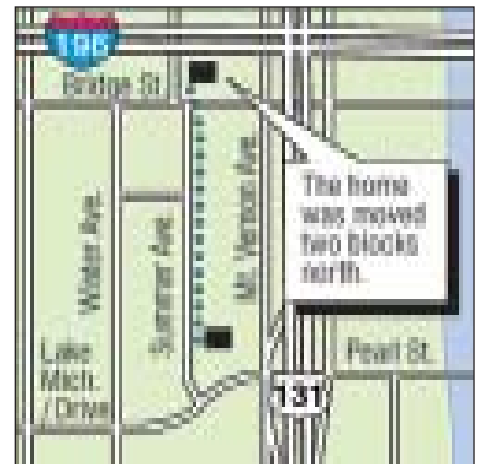
“The land the home will be moved to was donated by local real estate developer Robert Grooters. Grooters and his wife, Sharon, are

out of town but will be represented by workers from his real estate development company, employee Peter Colvin said. “It’s an important piece of Grand Rapids history,” Colvin said. “We think that house in the middle of the parking lot like that is a neat symbol of stand up for people’s rights.” **SM**

Press Photo/Chris Clark



**On the move:** The 123-year-old Kroon House began inching toward its new home on Grand Rapids’ West Side this morning. The house became an emblem of one man’s fight against City Hall during the 1990’s, when owner Tom Kroon refused to sell it to the city for a parking lot. Kroon lived in the home until last year. The 127-ton home is going to move four blocks north to 424 Broadway Avenue NW, where it will become a museum for local immigrant families. City officials said they would convert the Kroon property into 45 parking spaces as soon as possible.



The old house that Grand Rapids resident Tom Kroon refused to move out of to make way for a city parking lot was moved to its new location last October.