

Historic Cobblestone House Seems Doomed by Project

SOMERSET — Advertisements were printed in newspapers all over the country last week, offering a historic cobblestone house for sale and removal. The Morgan Van Wagoner home at the site of the New York State Electric & Gas power plant being built on Hosmer Road will be either removed and rehabilitated or bulldozed, a utility company spokesman said.

Although the two-story building is not listed in the National Registry of Historic places, its cobblestone veneer makes it archaeologically significant. Built around 1847 by the son of a War of 1812 veteran, it is one of two cobblestone houses in the immediate area of the plant. The

other, the former Sprague home, will be untouched in the construction.

Historical records and old newspapers show that the Van Wagoner homesite was known as Lakeview Farm and was situated amid 254 acres of prime fruit land. The house was occupied by the Van Wagoner family from the time it was built until it was purchased in 1929 by Albert Harrington.

The Harrington family lived in the home and farmed the land until the property was bought in 1957 by the utility company as the possible location for a power plant. The house was vacated, boarded up and allowed to sit until a decision could be made how it could

best be utilized by NYSEG.

According to a utility consultant Frederick Doolittle, the house stands in the middle of what will ultimately become the road leading to the 850 megawatt generating station and it must be removed.

Offers to buy the house and relocate it for a private dwelling were made during the 1970's, but engineering studies said the building would never hold up during a transport. At one time it was felt the structure could be used by the utility as a public relations office, but repairs to make it habitable were deemed too costly.

The building has been damaged by vandals and the weather.