

Long Island Now

Careful demolition of La Grange Inn begins in West Islip

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The historic La Grange Inn in West Islip is in the first phase of a plan to carefully move the centuries-old building for a new drugstore.

Bulldozers have started tearing down the inn's newer catering wings and rear addition, part of a compromise between drugstore company CVS and fans of the inn to restore the building and move it to a corner of its lot.

CVS filed an application in 2012 to build a drugstore at the site on Montauk Highway and

Higbie Lane, and move the 2,100-square-foot portion of the original 1750 inn to another part of the site facing Higbie Lane.

There's a number of steps that have to happen first, said Joseph DeCarlo, president of the West Islip Association civic group. The wings have to come off and the back too, to have it come back to the 1900s look. The current first floor doesn't exist, so they're going to lift the second and third floors off the foundation, and build a new first floor.

DeCarlo said CVS officials have estimated the restoration's cost from \$500,000 to a million dollars. He also praised CVS cooperation with the community to change its initial application, including moving the location of an access road and trash container, and reducing the hours of the drive-through.

West Islip Historical Society president Lynn Luttenberger said the demolition is moving right along.

It's pretty exciting, and we're all keeping our fingers crossed, she said.

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