

'The Blue House' to keep original look

BY DOUG HARRISON

The Acton Tanner

Peter Zions is giving the house that has grown to be known as "The Blue House", on the corner of Young and Mill Streets, the second chance he feels it deserves.

The owner of Peter Zions Construction, a family building tradi-

tion in Acton for 28 years, is trying to maintain the original look of the large house that he believes was built in the mid-1890s.

"The real topic in town has been how we're planning to re-build the house. The new roof is on and we're starting to re-build in what will be a three-month project,"

says Zions of the house that has been boarded up more than two years after being set on fire.

"There are not many buildings in town that have its character. It's important to keep the heritage of the town."

Fortunately, a number of components that will help in retaining the original look were salvaged from the blaze. They include: the original moldings of the house, old wood shutters that will be cleaned, re-painted and installed, two cast-iron tubs and the home's front door.

"When the house is finished," he says, "we want people to feel like they're walking into an old home."

The previous owner changed the roof-line to accommodate a balcony and replaced a window with a door leading to the balcony. The window will also be restored.

Zions, whose company builds energy efficient homes, says this home will be certified R-2000.

He adds that the shower heads and toilets will be equipped with water-saving devices. The interior of the house will also sport modern conveniences such as a high efficiency gas furnace and water heater, along with a heat recovery ventilator, which exhausts stale air and brings in fresh air.

Zions expects double glaze windows with low E-Argon gas to arrive in a couple of weeks. They will replace the original single glaze windows, keeping the windows warm and the heat inside.

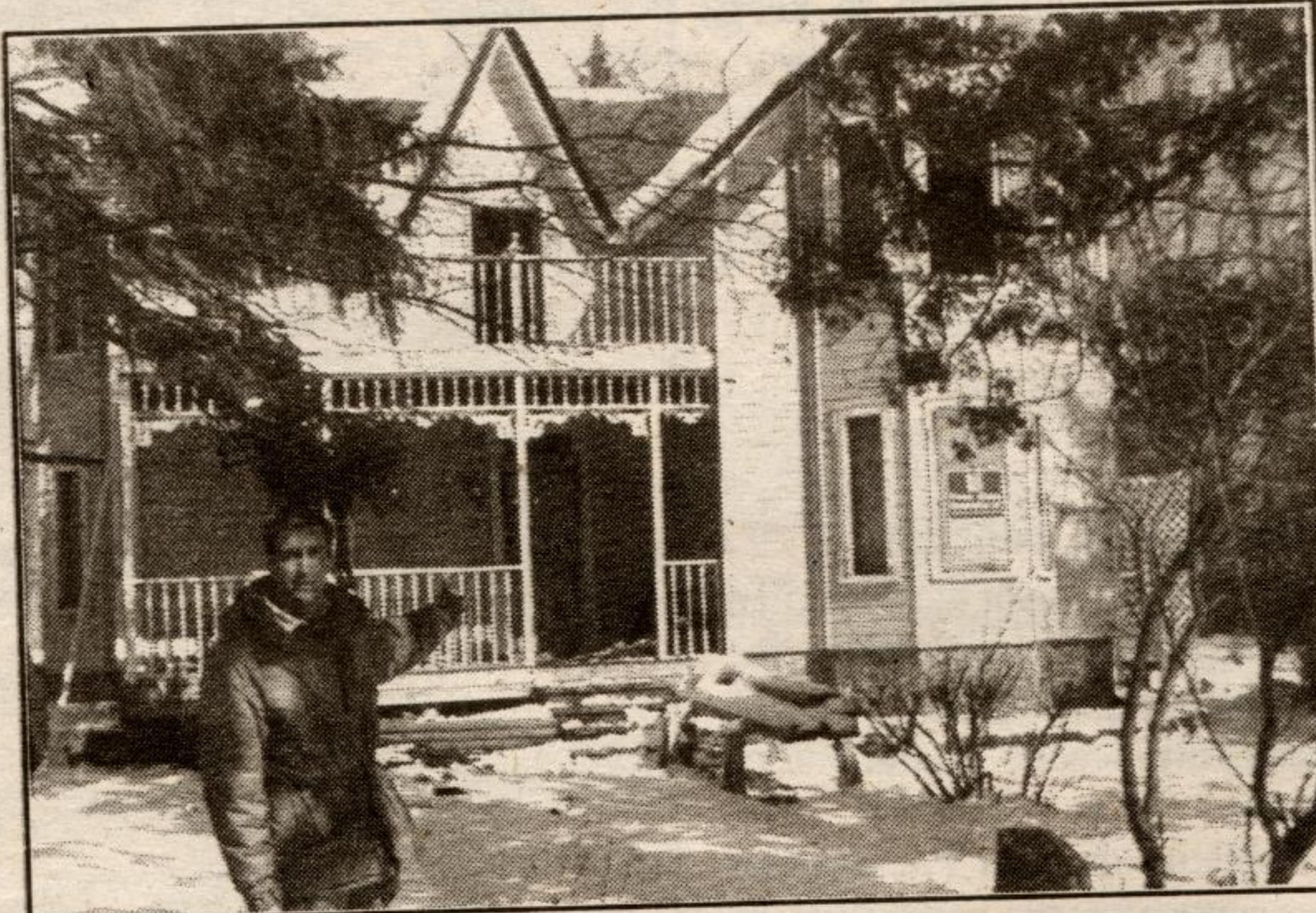
"The framing is good and everything was measured properly. The house has nice Victorian lines, and the foundation walls are two-feet thick in the basement.

"We'll have to pay a little more attention to detail and creativity. I'm surprised with the interest from people in what we're doing. People like old things nowadays and keeping the original look makes them feel good.

"It's a landmark for people in Acton and for people coming here from out-of-town."

When the house is complete, Zions plans to put a plaque inside with "The Moore House" inscribed on it. Thomas Moore, Town municipal clerk and treasurer for a long period as well as esteemed principal of Acton schools, was the original owner and builder of the house.

He would like to hear from people who may have some history about the house in terms of how the re-building process should proceed. And he welcomes any comments about the progress of the project. Zions can be reached at 853-2464.



LOCAL HERITAGE: Peter Zions Construction is rebuilding "The Blue House." Zions figures it will take three months to restore it to its original splendour. (Doug Harrison photo)

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