Acadian home to become tourist center

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CROWLEY — The Acadia Parish Tourist Commission is taking steps to speed up the establishment of a Tourist Information Center adjacent to I-10.

A century-old Acadian-style home is to be moved from Branch and restored as the permanent office of the commission at the I-10 and La. 1111 intersection (East Crowley exit).

The historic structure was donated to the commission by Carol Smith of Lafayette and is currently located near the intersection of La. 30 and La. 365, commonly called "the four corners," in Branch.

The site upon which the structure will be moved was donated to the tourist commission earlier this year by the Bill Hoffmann family.

"The weather's been the main problem," said Gwen Hanks, commission director. "We still have to get some land work done on the donated property and it's just been too wet."

The work to be done at the site includes the laying of underground irrigation for surrounding farmers and clearing in an adjacent canal. All that was part of the stipulation in the donation of the property, according to Hanks.

"At our last commission meeting, we appointed Paul Brunnard as building project chairman and the members voted unanimously to give the executive committee and Paul the full authority to make the decisions needed to proceed with the project. That way we don't have to call the full commission together every time a decision has to be made," Hanks said.

Preliminary cost estimates to move the building to the new site and restore it for office use are "right at $50,000," Hanks said.

The commission is also planning its second annual "Taste of Acadia Parish" fund-raiser to be held from 5-8 p.m. May 2 at the Rice Festival Building.

"Cooks — professional and amateur — from throughout the area are being invited to participate. Booth spaces will be $50 each and will include a pair of dinner tickets which will allow two people to visit and sample the items at each participating vendor. Admission will be $5 for children and $10 for adults 12 and older."

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