

Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (DOT) Bypass to Consume Historical Barn... But there is hope.

The Wisconsin DOT's construction of a Hwy. 26 bypass around Jefferson has been eating up land, homes, and other structures except for one very special building. On the old Spangler Farm, located on Hwy. N, north of the Jefferson County Fairgrounds, there is a barn built in 1888. It is a traditionally built timber-frame bank barn that was recently painted "Sweet Corn Yellow and Green", because of the barn's previous owner, John Spangler, and his association with his family's agricultural seed business.

The barn was constructed in an area that was to be covered up with a mound of fill dirt in order to make an earthen ramp for a bypass bridge over Hwy N. The contractors responsible for moving all the dirt/fill for his project were also responsible for clearing out any obstacles like trees, houses, and this barn. As fate would have it, a foreman employed by this company, had recently leased a portion of a locally owned duplex. His neighbor turned out to be barn restorer, and he offered to let him take the barn down. Within the same week, the "barn guy" had stopped at a rural residence where there was obvious work being done on a different barn. Driven by curiosity, he enquired about the project. The new owner had started to restore the damaged structure, and had plans to add an addition. It was a perfect fit. The barn that was to be torn down was now slated to become the new addition.

As a part of the transition of the Spangler barn, the building is being completely dismantled, during which all the beams will be tagged and numbered. It will be transported to the new location North of Edgerton, WI. The barn is to be reconstructed in part by volunteers during an old fashion barn raising, where they will also be enlisting the help of team of draft horse and the use of a gin-pole for the main lifts. The barn raising is a free event and open to the public. It is scheduled for Saturday, August 22. Start time will be at 8 a.m., and will go all day until the frame is completely assembled.

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