

# Old Terrace Hill gets new garage

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The governor's mansion is undergoing a \$5.6-million restoration and renovation project that will give Gov. Tom Vilsack and his family an amenity no previous tenants have enjoyed. They are getting a garage.

The five-stall, earthen-covered and landscaped garage is under construction on the west side of the property, between the mansion and the carriage house.

Designed to blend in with the 1869 Victorian-style mansion, the structure will house two personal vehicles and the governor's state vehicle, said Dave Cordes, Terrace Hill administrator.

The garage also will hold lawn mowers, snow blowers and other grounds equipment that has been clustered behind the carriage house. Cost of the garage, driveway, sidewalk, excavation and electrical work is \$358,000.

"We've just had no place to store our ground-care equipment," Cordes said. "In the summertime we have the snow blowers and everything else sitting out. This will give us storage and make the grounds more presentable."

Former Gov. Robert Ray, the first chief executive to occupy Terrace Hill, said efforts to build a garage began about 25 years ago. Early plans were to convert the carriage house to a garage, which would have destroyed the historic value of that building.

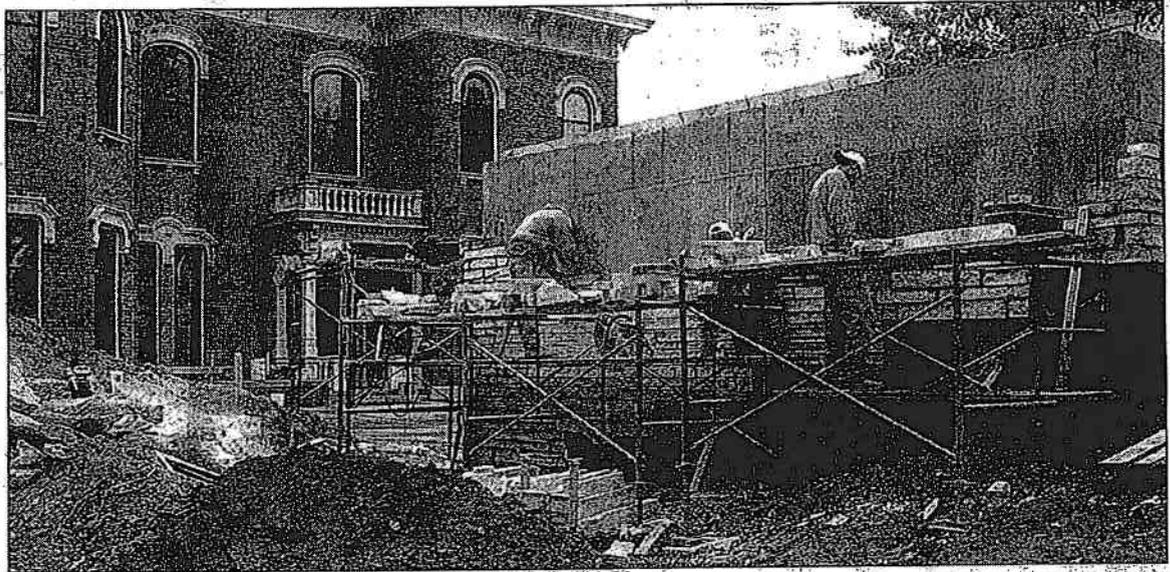
Ray and preservationists opposed the idea.

Another suggestion was to build an underground garage linked to the mansion by a tunnel. The project was never approved by the Legislature.

A fund drive brought many Terrace Hill projects to fruition by raising \$2.2 million, said Cordes. "Once there was this big initiative going on, one of the things that certainly needed to be provided was a garage."

Terrace Hill is a historic treasure as well as being the governor's home, he added. "There are some things we do like to boast of here. There are only 12 governors' homes open to the public. . . . How many other governors' residences have no garage, though? I'd guess we have the only one."

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ROBERT NANDELL/THE REGISTER

At the Vilsack place: Workers put up the limestone wall of a five-stall garage under construction at Terrace Hill, the governor's mansion, at 2300 Grand Ave. The garage will have room for three cars and yard equipment that has been kept outdoors.

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