A Rochester home of Frederick Douglass — which for well over a century was not known to exist — was granted local landmark status by the City Planning Commission on Monday.

Existence of a home linking Douglass to Rochester was believed lost after his South Avenue home burned down in 1872.

But in 2003, local historians Jean Czerkas and Tim O'Connell began research that revealed Douglass owned the home at 271 Hamilton St.

O'Connell, a former city employee with knowledge of city engineering records dating back to 1789, began tracking ownership of the home from 1821. The historians additionally searched city, county and Library of Congress databases to confirm their find.

They discovered that Douglass kept the home as his legal address after moving to Washington, D.C., in order to maintain the right to vote. Douglass lived in the home for a time after his South Avenue home was destroyed.

He owned the two-story wood-frame house until his death in 1895.

While Douglass lived there, it was also occupied by his daughter Rosetta Douglass Sprague, her husband Nathan and their children.

Commissioners, in a 6-0 vote, granted landmark status to the home. Approval came quickly and almost without comment.

Several commissioners offered congratulations to current homeowner Sherri Dukes, who said she was "ecstatic," and "overwhelmed" after the vote.

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Google Street (view of house at 271 Hamilton)