# Lunney Museum acquisition not going easy for Seneca

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SENECA — The city of Seneca has hit a legal roadblock in its attempt to purchase the Lunney Museum at 211 W.S. First St., leaving Oconee County Attorney Tom Martin to look over the attempted transaction further.

"We wanted a warranty deed so that everything had a clear title," Seneca City Administrator Greg Dietterick said. "At the last minute, the county would not sign the warranty deed."

The Lunney Museum was given to the county for the purpose of operating the museum, but in 2007, the county made the move to cease funding there. The deed on the property included a reversion clause stating if the county did not utilize or fund it, it would return back to the rightful heir, Charles Finley.

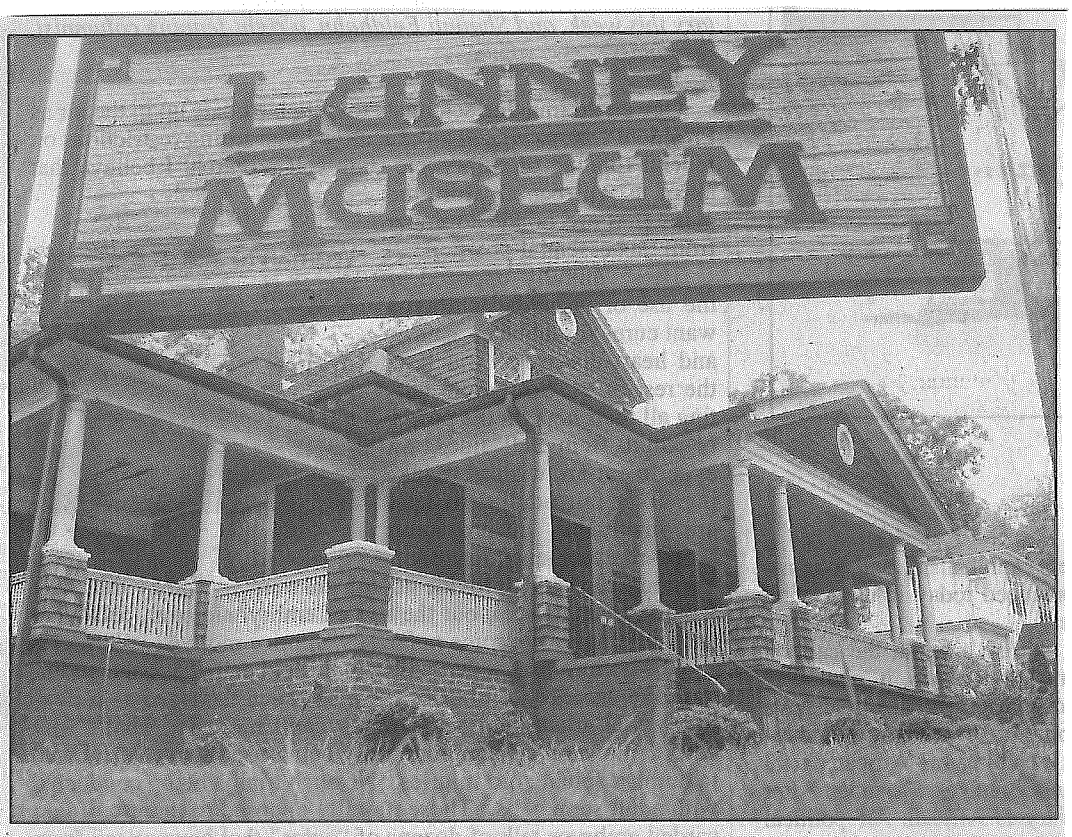
Seneca City Council voted unanimously in June to purchase the landmark for $45,000, contingent upon the clarification of clear title and any other legal issues. If and when current owner Finley signs off on the agreement, no further council action will be necessary.

"Seneca wanted to give the heir a warranty deed," County Administrator Dale Surrett explained. "It was the opinion of (former county attorney) Brad Norton that we shouldn't provide warranty on the deed."

A general warranty, Martin said, would mean the county would defend the legality of the title in court against potential claims for the property.

"Units of local government almost always give only a limited warranty or a special warranty," Martin said. "That's the way counties normally operate."

Oconee County has not yet legally reverted the property back to Finley, but is in the process of doing so. Surrett said he had spoken with Martin about the issue, and that he'll be giving Martin direction as to how to proceed. Dietterick emphasized the city needed warranty on the deed.




Jessica Nelms/Staff

**A disagreement over** a warranty on the deed for the Lunney Museum property has put a snag in Seneca's plan to purchase it.