

To: Members of the Urban Design Commission

I am responding to the information shared with you by Mr. Gary Tipler in an e-mail of February 15, 2012. I also received that information from Mr. Tipler on February 10, 2012, and asked the project team for the Block 100 Foundation project to review the materials, which we have now been able to complete.

The Block 100 Foundation submitted a Letter of Intent to the City of Madison Plan Commission, Urban Design Commission and Landmarks Commission on January 9, 2012 detailing the project proposed for the 100 block of State Street, bordered by Fairchild and Mifflin Streets. This submittal included reports from various specialists noting results of their respective investigations into existing conditions of the six properties included in the project.

One such report was provided by the firm of Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE) and focused on building envelop components (exterior walls, windows, doors and roof). WJE is a firm of architects, structural engineers, and material scientists specializing in the investigation, analysis, testing, and design of repairs for historic and contemporary buildings and structures. They are a highly respected firm performing investigations nationwide and internationally. Locally, they were engaged for oversight of granite restoration on the Wisconsin State Capitol (1999 – 2001). This past year they were engaged to evaluate earthquake damage to the Washington Monument. One of the individuals who worked on the State Capitol project conducted the Block 100 Foundation analysis.

In the past month, a number of individuals have offered their opinions regarding existing conditions of several of the Block 100 Foundation Project properties. Most recently, Mr. Tipler has issued a letter containing an “approximate bid” for repairs to the building at 127 – 129 State Street (Vallender Building). The restoration contractor, Ex-Cell Building Restoration of Richland Center, WI, provides a different account of the buildings than does WJE.

Ex-Cell’s analysis consisted of an exterior, visual review of the building’s brick walls. By contrast, WJE’s investigation consisted of review of all exterior components, interior side analysis of the double wythe exterior wall at the building’s basement, ground and elevated floors. WJE's report was paired, in our submittal, with structural reports generated by Pierce

Engineers, Inc. which indicate the reliance of floor and roof structures on these composite brick walls.

While the Ex-Cell document notes limited structural failure, the WJE report states:

“The brick masonry is generally in very poor condition, with extensive previous spalling and erosion of brick faces and open mortar joints...at many locations, loss of the coating has revealed severe deterioration and disintegration of the underlying brick and mortar.”

While the Ex-Cell document states, “The failure to repaint the building has allowed moisture to worsen conditions”, WJE asserts that the paint and other coatings have been key contributors to brick decay, stating:

“The brick masonry has deteriorated over time, and coatings and cementitious parging have been applied to the surface of the wall rather than addressing the underlying masonry distress. The build-up of coating layers has exacerbated and accelerated the deterioration of the brick masonry. Deterioration of the brick and mortar appears to be so widespread that extensive reconstruction of the exterior walls is now required. The quality and condition of the masonry materials appears to be relatively consistent across the facades; therefore, 100 percent replacement of the outer wythe of brick masonry of the facades should be assumed. Since the majority of the exterior walls are only 8 inches thick, reconstruction of the outer wythe only may not be feasible, especially considering the deterioration of the back-up wythe of brick in the portions near grade. Rather, reconstruction of the full thickness of substantial portions or all portions of the wall will likely be necessary.”

Our team is confident in the effort put forth by WJE in analyzing the envelop of this building and believe that their report indicates a much more extensive, invasive and costly effort would be involved in restoring the brick walls of this property.

The Ex-Cell document also provides a report and approximate bid, derived via exterior inspection only, pertaining to the brick walls of the Schubert Building (120 W. Mifflin St.). While this report is generally in agreement with that of WJE (Mifflin façade in good condition, north side and rear facades constructed of lower grade brick are in poor condition), the extent of any

repair effort is viewed differently. WJE reports the need for more extensive repairs to the north and rear facades. Additionally, the Ex-Cell document does not address brick concealed by painted metal cladding or the penthouse structure.

While we appreciate the expertise shown in the resume of Ex-Cell in the trade of field masonry work, we respectfully place our trust in the careful analysis of WJE. We felt that our due diligence effort merited the opinion of a highly respected national firm and we hope that those evaluating the project will recognize the effort and expertise that went into production of our submittal documents.

Thank you for your consideration.

George E. Austin, Project Manager for the Block 100 Foundation Project