

July 13, 2011

From:
Joe Lusson and Aleen Tierney
627 E. Gorham Street
Madison WI 53703

To:
Amy Scanlon and Tim Parks
Planning Department
City of Madison

Re: 625 E. Gorham Street requirements
City Row/600 Block Gorham PUD/SIP

Ms. Scanlon and Mr. Parks,

We purchased 625 E. Gorham Street in October 2010. Currently a single-family rental, the house is just west of our own home. Our goal is to repair and restore it to the point it will become more attractive to an owner-occupant buyer. This would also help preserve the house and strengthen the neighborhood. To those ends, we would like to present a plan that reverses deferred maintenance, while emphasizing safety and structural issues and exterior appearance.

We are attaching our home inspection report, dated Aug. 18, 2010, prepared by Freiburger Consulting, Inc. The report contains items a homeowner would address over a period of many years. Nevertheless, it provides a good blueprint for short-term actions as well.

We are proposing to complete the items listed below over the next 18 months. They are broken into 2011 and 2012 portions. When all items are complete and confirmed by city staff, we will request that the maintenance/restoration-related deed restrictions be released from the property.

Deferred maintenance, etc.

2011

- * Attic -- explore whether attic insulation is touching older wiring. If so, update wiring and outlets to modern standards in the affected sections
- * Roof -- Secure loose shingles
- * 1st level back porch -- secure loose railing
- * 2nd level porch door opening -- caulk under door
- * 2nd floor bathroom vent - vent through roof. The current vent does not reach the outdoors
- * Front stoop - paint

- * Gas pipe run to drier - support and restrain properly
- * Water heater - repair or replace
- * Water softener - replace (tenant request)
- * Garbage disposal - install and tighten loose kitchen sink fixture (tenant request)

Completed

- * Wiring - numerous items fixed
(neutral and ground wires moved to separate lugs; Water heater wire secured; A.C. unit wiring enclosed in conduit; old service removed from attic; GFCI protected outlet added for washing machine; unused breaker box covered)
- * attic vent added to meet rental weatherization certification
- * broken front door light fixture replaced with arts & crafts style fixture
- * backyard chain link fence and rusty laundry line poles removed
- * plantings and mulch added under front windows and along entry sidewalk

2012

- * Back pantry footing (connected to 1st level porch) -- rebuild masonry pier
- * 1st level porch - restore as needed, including replacing decayed floor boards
- * 2nd level porch roof -- remove
- * Both porch railings -- rebuild in historically appropriate style
- * Gutters - patch
- * Fascia and soffit - replace damaged sections where needed
- * Stucco - repair where needed
- * Window ropes - replace where needed
- * Dormer windows and siding - restore and paint windows; paint siding
- * Front door - add storm door
- * Heating system boots -- assess for asbestos risk, encapsulate or remove if needed

Aesthetic items/improvements

2012

- * Permanently remove all non-original exterior shutters
- * Paint exterior
- * OPTIONAL: Add historically-appropriate front porch

Original requirements proposed for removal

- * Remodeling kitchen and bathroom, and refinishing wood
In the longterm, we or a subsequent owner will undertake these items. However, they would not appear to be critical at the moment to preserve the house or to improve the public's view of the exterior. The trim is in good shape, and the floors appear to have been buffed and sealed by the previous owner.
- * Replacing roof
This requirement appears to have been included by mistake. The roof is approximately 10 years old. A few loose shingles on the north side will be replaced in 2011.
- * Repairing and refinishing siding.
Also appears to have been included by mistake. The recent home inspection deems the siding in "very good condition."

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Joe Lusson and Aleen Tierney

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Attachments: home inspection report, exterior and interior photos

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August 18, 2010

Joe Lusson
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Dear Joe,

At your request we have inspected a residential property located at 625 East Gorham, City of Madison, and have compiled the following brief report. This report is for your information, and is not to be construed as a warrantee of any mechanical system nor does it guarantee any portion of the building against subsequent failure.

We have evaluated the current condition of the residential building, noting those items required by state administrative code as part of a home inspection. This inspection is not to be considered technically exhaustive and is limited by the rules covering home inspections which forbid sampling, intrusion into spaces not usually accessed by the homeowner, deconstruction of any mechanical element other than opening the main electrical panel, or accessing any portion of the building where a personal safety concern may exist or where an OSHA regulation limits access. We have not conducted an environmental assessment as part of our services.

The items underlined are those items required to be described by Wisconsin Administrative Code RL134.03. A copy of the Standards of Practice has been attached. Please review this report and the Standards and ascertain that this report meets your current needs. If you believe any item required to be inspected by the Standards was not adequately covered by our visit, please contact us immediately for supplemental information.

1. Structure:

- 1.1 Age: The house appears to have been constructed circa 1908 in the Arts and Craft Vernacular Style. The house is attributed to Claude and Starck. The dining room was made into a kitchen and the former kitchen room's use is not clear. No additions have been made.
- 1.2 Foundations: The house has a sandstone rubble and lime mortar foundation. The foundation appears to remain in good condition where visible. The pantry and rear porch were once supported by three masonry piers, one of which has been replaced by a four by four wood column placed on a sona-tube foundation. The column is not adequately secured to the foundation or the framing. Eventually the masonry pier should be reconstructed.
- 1.3 Driveway, walks and patios: The front walk is serviceable. There is no garage or driveway. There is no patio.
- 1.4 Framing system: The house is conventionally framed with two by ten first floor joists supported by a central composite split two part beam that is carried by wood columns. The columns were set on footers or stone below the floor level. One steel column has been added, perhaps due to decay in the column base.

- 1.5 Roof framing: The house roof is framed with two by four rafters on sixteen-inch centers. The roof ridges remain relatively straight and excess deflection does not appear to have developed in the rafters. While lightly framed, the roof appears to shed snow well, reducing live loading.
- 1.6 Decks and porches: The front porch is a deck like, structure composed of older treated wood. It appears to remain in serviceable condition.
- The rear porch is in poor condition with decay in the framing and deck boards as well as columns and trim. Restoration is required. The structure, rails, trim decking, etc. will need to be replaced.
- 1.7 Handrail systems: There are adequate railings for the interior stairways.
- 1.8 Plaster and drywall systems: The house's original plaster system appears to remain in good condition. The expected mid span cracks exist in the ceilings, but there is no evidence of shifting structural elements.
- 1.9 Grading and Drainage: The lot is generally sloped to the rear and is adequately drained. The front yard is generally flat, but there is some modest slope towards the sides.
- 1.10 Retaining walls: No retaining walls were noted.

2. Roof, gutters, envelope:

- 2.1 Roofs: The house pitched roofs are covered with three in one tab asphalt shingles. The house roof is probably about a decade old. The original wood shingles were removed and oriented strand board sheathing was applied over the original skip sheathing. The roofing appears to have been professionally installed.
- The metal roof over the pantry and rear porch is of tin with soldered lead joints. An opening exists under the access door where bead board insulation is visible. Water can enter the wall system at that point. There also appears to be leaks near the northeast column. The roof should be replaced with an E.P.D.M. roof that should be protected by a traffic surface.
- 2.2 Roof penetrations and flashings: The plumbing flashings appear to be correct. The front attic dormer was step flashed and the work appears to be correct. The wood that was run above the front first floor roof appears to be an attempt to solve an unknown problem and is not historically correct.
- 2.3 How viewed: The pitched roof was viewed from the porch, grade and second floor and attic windows. The roof was too high to be walked without fall protection.
- 2.4 Guttering: The house has gutters and down spouts that appear to be quite old. The gutters are rusting and will need to be replaced when the fascia and soffit are restored.
- 2.5 Eaves and fascia: The house's fascia and soffit have been affected by both former roof leaks and condensation. Most of the soffit wainscoting can be salvaged, but some areas that will require replacement exist. It appears that multiple sections of the fascia will need to be replaced. This work should be coordinated with attic venting and gutter replacement.
- 2.6 Evidence of condensation: Evidence of condensation was noted on the exterior in the vicinity of the second floor bathroom. Both the stucco and the fascia appear to have been damaged by condensation moving through the wall system from the bathroom.
- 2.7 Siding and casing: The first floor is covered with thick rough sawn dense red cedar siding. The siding remains in very good condition for its age. The second floor is clad with stucco. The stucco is probably a three coat lime and cement stucco plastered over wire lath.. Some repairs have been made and some cracking filling done in an inexpert manner. It is important to maintain the paint. Some replacement and repairs will be required in the future.

3. Doors and windows:

- 3.1 Windows: The dining room windows appear to be two decades old and are modern replacements. The balance of the windows in the house appear to be original. The double hung windows have lost their balance ropes in most cases. The weather stripping is rabbited and of good quality. the windows can be restored. The attic windows have received more weather, but again can be kept in service after restoration.
- 3.2 Interior doors: The interior doors are in serviceable condition. All operated and the jambs do not appear to have significantly racked. The first floor doors are of quarter sawn oak.
- 3.3 Exterior doors: The front entry door is an original oak door that has been refinished. It does need further restoration and a storm door. The kitchen door is an original or older panel door that remains serviceable. The porch access door has an opening under the threshold that needs to be closed. The basement door is also old or original.
- 3.4 Garage doors: There is no garage.
- 3.5 Cabinetry: The kitchen cabinets are 1970s vintage. They are inexpensive apartment types that appear to remain serviceable.

4. Insulation:

- 4.1 Sill boxes: The sill boxes appear to be generally insulated with fiberglass batting. Some vacant areas exist, but where knob and tube wiring run through the boxes, insulation must not be added.
- 4.2 Attic insulation: The attic accessed. It appears that mineral wool has been added and that the spaces between joists under the floorboards may have been filled with insulation. If so, heat dissipating wiring has been covered and a fire safety issue exists. The National Electrical Code in section 394.12 forbids such uses.

It is possible that portions of the exterior wall cavities have been insulated as some small drill holes were noted. Urea formaldehyde foam may have been installed in the early 1970s.

- 4.3 Basement insulation: The house's foundation is not insulated.
- 4.4 Venting: The attic is vented by two pot vents and a turbine vent. There are no soffit vents. The attic exhibits evidence of condensation. The venting is inadequate and the attic gets both very hot in the summer and damp in the winter. A venting and insulation program could be developed to reduce heat loss and vent excess heat from the attic.
- 4.5 Fire separations: There appears to be asbestos paper under the first floor hardwood flooring. Some asbestos also appears to have been used on heating system boots.

5. Plumbing:

- 5.1 Plumbing system: The water meter is located against the front basement wall. The service is a replacement tubular copper type. The supply pipes are a mix of older lead, steel and some newer copper. Adequate hangers exist to support the water pipes where they are visible. No cross connections were noted. The cast iron, copper, steel and CPVC waste lines appear to be generally sound. All sinks appear to have traps. The gas pipe run to the drier is unacceptably loose and needs to be supported and restrained.

- 5.2 Water heater: A 1993 Ruud model PVP50 gas fired water heater supplies hot water to the house. The heater has a correct relief pipe and an old non-AGA approved shut off valve. The tank has fifty gallons of storage and the unit is side vented. It should be considered near the end of its useful life.
- 5.3 Water softener: An older non-metered water softener is in use. Replacement with a modern metered softener is suggested.
- 5.4 Faucets, drains and fixtures: The kitchen and bathroom faucets and drains appear to be operational. The concrete laundry tub is old and cracked and should be replaced at some point. The exterior faucet is not a frost free type and could be replaced to reduce the chance of freezing.
- 5.5 Sump: A sump pit and pump is not provided.
- 5.6 A cistern with a damaged concrete top and lid appears to exist in the rear yard. These can be filled with clean compactable material to reduce the chance of collapse.

6. Electrical:

- 6.1 Electric service: The house has a one hundred amp overhead electrical service. The panel is a twenty or more year old Square D panel and appears to have been professionally installed. Breakers are used for over current devices and grounding appears to be to a lead pipe that run under the basement floor with a bond wire run to a second water supply pipe on the basement ceiling. The jump wire is adequate.

Breakers are used as over-current devices. Neutral and ground wires have been placed under single lugs so that only single return paths exist.

- 6.2 Wiring: The original wiring was in knob and tube. In about 1960, metallic cable was added. Some plastic cable was added more recently. While the metallic cable was generally installed to the code of the time, some plastic cable was not. Cable was run under joists and down a board to the water heater without the required protection. The a.c. condensing unit has exposed exterior wiring that needs to be in conduit.
- 6.3 On old or original service exists in the attic. While the service was replaced, it is hot, probably being back-fed from a convenience or lighting circuit. The old equipment should be removed and the feed terminated. The situation is very hazardous.
- 6.4 The laundry equipment is powered by an extension cord, which is not allowed. A GFCI protected outlet is required.
- 6.5 The former 1906 vintage breaker box on the basement column should have its cover replaced as it has openings in it.
- 6.6 Grounding of outlets: The kitchen and basement bathroom have grounded outlets. The majority of the outlets in the house are not grounded. Eventual rewiring of all knob and tube circuits will be required due to their age and insulation contact.
- 6.7 Battery type smoke detectors have been installed.

7. HVAC:

- 7.1 Furnace or boiler: A 1984 Carrier model 398AAW36080 condensing gas fired furnace heats the house. These are 92% seasonally efficient and generally have twenty-year lives. The installation appears to be correct. The collection box has already been replaced. The furnace is past the expected end of its useful life.

- 7.2 Air conditioning: Air conditioning is provided by a eight to ten year old Goodman model CKH24 two ton condensing unit. It operated during the inspection.
- 7.3 Heat distribution system: The duct system appears to be more or less adequate for the house. High returns appear not to have been supplied to break up stratification and remove hot air from the second floor. Perhaps high returns could be placed in the hall and some bedrooms to greatly improve airflow during the cooling season.
- 7.4 Fireplace: The fireplace appears to be a gas side vented unit. Due to tenant property, it could not be inspected.
- 7.5 Chimney: The chimney has been taken down into the attic.
- 7.6 Exhaust ducting: The basement bathroom has an exhaust fan ducted to the exterior. The second floor bathroom has a fan, but no duct to the exterior. It may be run into the soffit and be the source of the condensation we noted there.
8. **In general**: The following items appear to be the more consequential conditions discovered during our inspection. Review the entire report for all the items noted that require repairs or where improvements are recommended or suggested.
- 8.1 An electrician should inspect the house to determine the condition of the knob and tube wiring and locate wiring covered with insulation. All other code violations should be repaired as well.
- 8.2 Rear porch will need a new pier and the porch floor replaced.
- 8.3 The tin and lead roof will need to be replaced.
- 8.4 The fascia and soffits will need to be repaired where decay has developed.
- 8.5 Eventually replace the laundry tub.
- 8.6 Duct the second floor bath fan to the exterior.
- 8.7 Consider adding high return ductwork for the second floor.
- 8.8 Consider replacing the furnace before it fails.
- 8.9 Consider improving attic venting and insulation standards.

625 E. Gorham St







