

Kurt Mitenbuler & Associates, Inc.

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] St.
Chicago , IL 60614

Property Inspection location:

[REDACTED]
Chicago , IL

Inspection Date Monday, October 1, 2007

Dear Ms. [REDACTED]:

At your request, I have inspected the subject property and my inspection report summary follows. The summary makes no attempt to describe all of the materials and conditions in the building; this summary only describes defects or major concerns in the building.

Porches

1) The rear steel egress stairs are badly deteriorated; the NW support post is holed through from rust in several locations, as are stair treads. The porch is in bad enough condition, it's conceivable it could fail catastrophically under load. The porch should be repaired or rebuilt immediately.

After the porch is repaired/rebuilt, it should be sanded down & painted w/rust inhibitive paints. This is a substantial job.

2) The front bay upper balcony guardrail support posts are completely rotten and falling apart. They could fail catastrophically under load. The guardrail balusters have spaces >4"; this could allow small children to fall through the railing. The iron portion of the railing is not fastened properly to the masonry; it could fail under load. In at least one location, there are no fasteners securing the railing @ all.

The railings need to be rebuilt immediately; they are an imminent life safety hazard.

3) The rear steps/porch decks lack joist hangers @ the joist connections; this could allow the joist connection to fail under load. All the treated wood step assemblies should have joist hangers, strapping, and metal reinforcement to prevent failure.

Sidewalls

The masonry sidewalls have water entrance problems. The concrete block side and rear walls and the face brick front wall lack flashing, wicks, or weepholes @ several critical locations.

Flashing, wicks, & weepholes are necessary in new construction masonry to control water entrance in the wall. Flashing is usually a black plastic membrane; it is required above and below all windows & doors, where the block bears on the foundation, and @ each floor platform where there are wood support joists that bear on the exterior wall. Weepholes and wicks are the little ropes you see on the building; they are required @ all the same locations as flashing.

Lack of flashing, wicks, and weepholes is a major problem; it is not possible to properly retrofit flashings without rebuilding large portions of the wall.

In addition to the general lack of flashing, there are several specific defects to consider.

- 1) The decorative masonry @ the front of the building lacks flashing, and there are a number of gaps & openings that will let water into the masonry. All of this decorative masonry will need flashings to stop the leaks.
- 2) None of the doors has flashing around the thresholds; this is a common source for leaks. There is no way to properly retrofit flashing under doors without removing and reinstalling new doors. Since several of these doors are already deteriorated, you could very likely end up having to install new doors.
- 3) The side and rear wall block is painted, but it isn't clear if this is a concrete sealant engineered for this specific purpose, or just some latex paint that someone blew onto the building. I tend to suspect that it is just paint.

Good quality masonry sealers both seal out large amounts of water, but are vapor permeable so they can breath & evaporate moisture out of the wall; sort of like Gore-Tex for concrete. If the wall can't breath, the paint can exacerbate wall moisture problems instead of improving them. This building may need to be stripped and repainted w/proper masonry sealants.

- 4) The aluminum soffit is falling off the building @ the south & east sides; in addition to the weather exposure, pieces of aluminum falling could severely injure passerby or occupants.

The south gable peak is separated by a wide margin (approx. 1"). I honestly have no idea why, other than to suspect there is some underlying unsatisfactory structural framing, or possibly blocking that was omitted. At this point, the aluminum should come off so it can be repaired properly, and when the aluminum is off, you call me to determine what repairs might be necessary.

- 5) There are a number of rotten windows & doors. I will need access to all the units to determine a replacement inventory. At this point, I can only say several windows & doors will need replacement.

Roof

1) There are several locations where the roof sheathing (the plywood that the shingles are installed on) is buckled up. This is usually caused by improper installation where there are no gaps between panels to allow movement, or lack of ventilation that causes moisture to condense in the assembly & makes the panels warp, or both.

This is a large problem. There is no particularly good way to repair this condition without tearing the roof off and starting over. You might be able to find someone willing to attempt a repair, but until you find them, I have to think this repair means removing the roof & starting over.

2) The chimneys are soaking up water and falling apart; the crowns are literally saturated, and growing moss & mold. I'm not entirely sure why, but I suspect the initial concrete installation wasn't finished or sealed adequately, and the crown simply soaked up a lot of water.

These chimneys should be rebuilt in the near future, the sooner the better. If you wait, they will need complete rebuilding.

General Summary Comments

These are substantial issues that are going to defy any simple or inexpensive fix. The lack of flashing & the resulting leaks have been found to cause major structural damage in similar buildings.

There is no definitive fix for these conditions; they are the result of unsatisfactory materials & workmanship, and there is no recognized or approved methods for correction without dismantlement or starting over.

You are going to receive a lot of recommendations for caulking and sealants. There may some combination of caulking & sealants that may correct some of the issues, but I think flashing is still going to be necessary in several locations. At this point, you need to get a number of masonry contractors in to look @ the building, and start collecting proposals for repair, including specifications & approx. cost. When you receive a number of proposals, you should call my office to schedule and appt. to discuss.

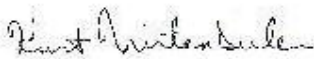
Similarly, the roof is a problem that isn't going away. You need to get roofing contractors in to determine what solutions might be appropriate, and then collect proposals for repair (or replacement).

The porch defects & guardrails are a life safety hazard; they need to be repaired immediately. Get carpenters in to provide specifications for repair & the approximate cost.

Now that you have the fundamentals, you should go on to the following Photolog so that you can see the conditions for yourselves. Read through everything. I can provide you additional graphics of flashing, wicks, weeps, and other repair items so you can see where this has to go, but at this point, you need to get acquainted w/the defects and their locations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide inspection services; if you have any questions whatsoever regarding the inspection or the report, do not hesitate to call me @ anytime.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kurt Mitenbuler".

Kurt Mitenbuler IL lic. #450.0000220 expires 11.30.08

Photolog of Major Concerns

Kurt Mitenbuler & Assoc., Inc.

1021 Wesley Ave.
Evanston, IL 60202

This is the photo file for the property.
Defects are listed.

IL Lic, #450.000220
Exp. 11/30/2008

Customer: [REDACTED]
Property Location: [REDACTED] Chicago, IL

The following photos are used to describe items that might not be easily understood without a picture to explain the problem.

Read through this file, and if you have any questions, you should call me @ my office to discuss them.

1

No through wall flashing @ the south foundation; there should be flashing, wicks, & weeps all along this joint.....



2

More of same along north north wall...



Photo defects for:

██████████ St. Chicago, IL

3
No flashing under the windows.....



4
Flashing over a window, but no weeps or wicks.



5
White stains are evidence of water in the block migrating back to the exterior.



Photo defects for:

St. Chicago, IL

6

Typical gaps over the east/front elevation decorative elements.....



7

3rd fl. north balcony slider.

I have no idea why this brick would be "pushed out" like this, but it would be the sort of thing that would happen



8

No flashing over one of the east/front elevation sliding doors; this is the 3rd fl. north door.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

9

More gaps in the decorative element detailing.



10

Gaps in arch over 3rd fl. windows; water can enter these gaps.



11

If I can stick my dull knife blade into cracks in the masonry, water can enter it in volume.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

12

More similar cracks over the east/front wall decorative lintels.



13

There is no visible flashing @ the lintel under the east/front wall decorative stone lintels.



14

There is no flashing under the window sills; this can allow moisture to migrate into the masonry.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

15

There is some flashing visible in various locations, but the material is very thin, and almost looks like cheap poly sheeting, similar to garbage bags.

This inadequate flashing material usually falls apart quickly, and provides little or no function.

In addition, the sloppy installation does not promote confidence that the underlying details (that can't be seen) are correct, which will negate function of the flashing.



16

There is no visible or apparent flashing, wicks, or weeps @ the wall platforms.



17

The door thresholds @ the east LR are decayed from lack of moisture proofing flashing details.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

18

Upper rear 3rd fl. wall siding lacks flashing; the intersection of these walls could allow leaks.



19

These stains are from moisture in the wall migrating back out again. They don't look like they are @ a flashing joint, i.e., water movement in the wall is uncontrolled.



20

There is flashing in some locations along the front wall; it appears the masons understood there was supposed to be some flashing.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

21

Rot @ a rear/west 3rd fl. window.



22

Opposite corner window rot.



23

Badly rotten window frame; this rot could be migrating into the building structure.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

24

Mold & mossy growth along the lower level sliding doors; this means elevated moisture.



25

No flashing @ the sliding door thresholds; lack of flashing in these locations almost always leaks. The caulk joint just doesn't hold up adequately.



26

Worn finish @ the window & door frames.



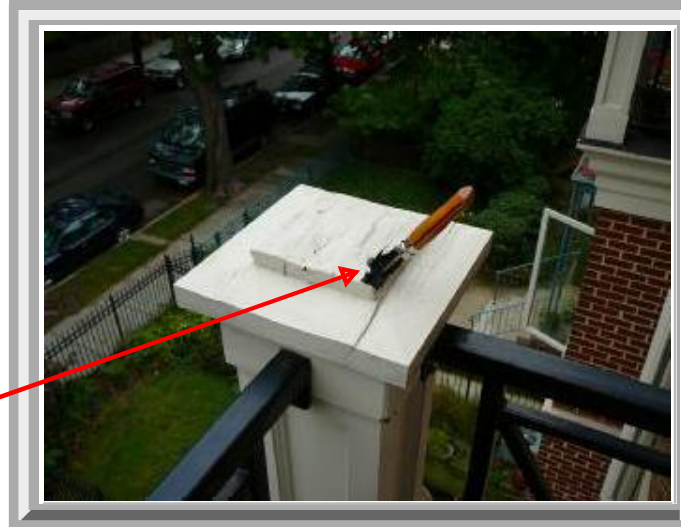
Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

27

Totally rotten front balcony guardrail support post.

These posts could fail catastrophically under load; they are a life safety hazard.



28

Base of posts is also totally rotten.



29

Some of the posts are literally falling apart.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

30

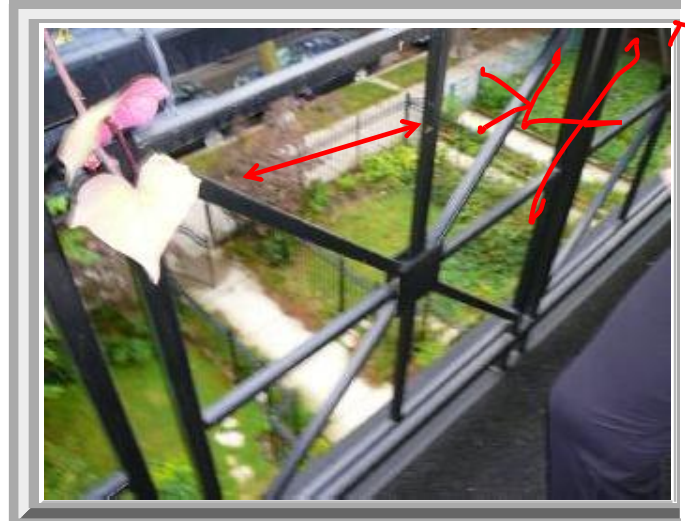
Rotten door frame @ east LR door.



31

These railings have spaces >4" between the baluster details; this can allow small children to fall through the railings & be severely injured or killed.

All guardrail model codes have indicated maximum 4" spacing in railings for the last many years; I don't know how this passed the the municipal inspection.



32

The railings are secured into the masonry w/ tapcon bolts, or other fastener(s) that are not approved for this application. They could fail catastrophically under load.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

33

This railing "attachment" isn't; there is no fastener whatsoever. This is a life safety hazard.



34

The rear egress stair support post is totally rusted out; it could fail catastrophically under load.

The rear porch egress stairs should be rebuilt, or otherwise repaired immediately.



35

Close up of the steel support; this (very dull) knife can be pushed right through the steel.

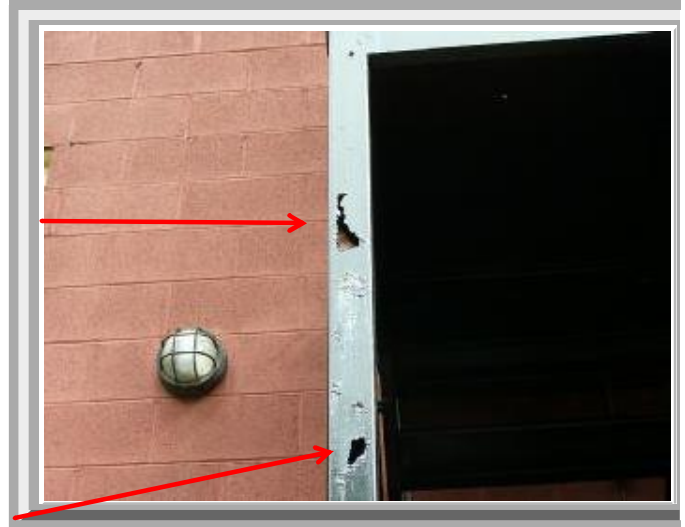


Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

36

Another closeup; this post is gone.



37

Railing rust @ the rear; the metal fencing & guardrails all need to be completely sanded down & refinished w/rust inhibitive paints.



38

More of the same.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

39

The rear egress stair treads are also rusting out.....



40

.....and entirely holed through in spots.



41

Undulation in the roof indicates inadequate carpentry, possibly on several points.

This could represent structural defect(s), moisture problems caused by leaks, inadequate roof ventilation, improperly installed vapor retarders, or simply poor quality carpentry.

Given the lack of venting & the obvious other roof defects, I have to be suspicious of leaks or problems caused by elevated moisture levels.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

42

Another hump in the roof; this could be caused by inadequate spacing in the plywood roof sheathing,



43

This is a surprisingly large hump in the ENE roof quadrant; the plywood is coming completely loose & lifting off the structure.



44

Another angle on the same defect.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

45

I lifted up the shingles in this location (they are completely loose), and I could see the corner of the ply sheathing lifting up.

It is damaging the shingles, and it will leak. It might be leaking already.



46

Nails backing out through the shingles; this is often an indication of elevated moisture.



47

Nail pops @ the front south gable ridge.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

48

This same ridge is separated and in very poor condition; it looks like the rake boards have separated from the ridge.



49

Another shot of same; they are gapped almost 1".



50

View from below.

I suspect there is a lack of structural blocking holding the framing together.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

51

Roof discharge combustion gas vents from heating equipment.



52

NNE roof valley; the roof "flattens" out in this location.....

The resulting lack of drainage will cause the roof to leak or fail prematurely.



53

Caulk around the base of the gas vents @ the roofline; caulk should not be used in this application; the wrong caulk can actually damage the flashing.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

54

Another shingle holed through.



55

More ridges in the roof sheathing.



56

No ridge vent on large portions of the roof.

No venting here.....

But there is here.....

Not extending the venting to the end of the roof is a sloppy install.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

57

Blackish mold on the underside of the sheathing above the north unit "attic" access.



58

The chimney caps are soaking up water badly, and already falling apart from saturation & freeze/thaw damage.

The chimneys need new caps.



59

Another view of same.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

60

There is no curb between the deck elevation & the door threshold; snow & ice will pile up against this joint, and it is a common location for leaks.



61

Water stains @ the ceiling of the 3rd fl. BR.



62

More of the same.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

63

More water stains/leak stains @ the ridge of the BR.



64

Badly water stained drapes @ the north wall; water apparently came raining down through the window opening.



65

Water damage & leak stains @ the ceiling of the mechanical room.

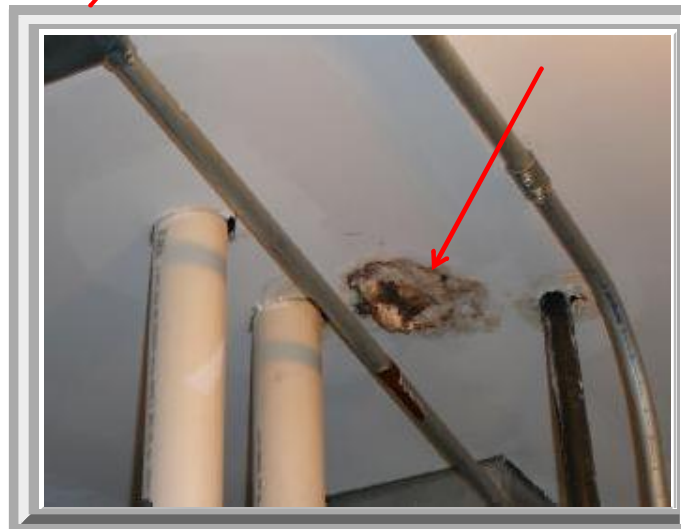


Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

66

More water stains @ the lower level apt.



67

Major water leak @ the lower level FR sliding door.



68

The rear porch/deck lacks joist hangers @ the joist connection.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

69

The porch posts are not set on footings; they could settle.



70

Ledger board has inadequate fasteners.



71

No joist hangers.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

72

Lower level rear bsmt. entry doesn't look like it drains adequately; there is no floor drain in the areaway.....



73

Ejector system @ the rear mechanical room.



74

Damaged roofing @ the west garage eave.



Photo defects for:

Chicago, IL

75

Missing brick @ the garage/west wall.



76

Disconnected downspout @ the garage.

