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May 25, 2022

Mr. Andrew Dutton, Community Development Director  
City of Medina  
132 North Elmwood Street  
Medina, Ohio 44256

RE: Structural Examination  
277 South Court Street  
Medina, Ohio  
IAL No. 22275

Dear Mr. Dutton:

As authorized by his Honor Dennis Hanwell, Mayor of the City of Medina, I examined the building located at 277 South Court Street in Medina, Ohio. The examination was request for me to establish the structural integrity of the building and feasibility of rendering the building habitable. This was done in response to conflicting opinions as to the condition of the is building. The scope of this examination does not include a detailed structural analysis of the various structural components. The site was visited by me on May 17, 2022. I was met by Mr. Andrew Dutton Community Development Director and Mr. Dan Gladish, Chief Building Official, at the site visit, both of whom was present with me part of time. Photographs of the existing building were taken and are on file at this office. Selected photographs are attached to this report.

The building in question is a two-story structure which is wood framed. The building does have a full basement. The building has an approximate square footage of 2000 SF not including the basement. The Medina County Auditor's website indicates the building was constructed circa 1880. It was reported by Mr. Gladish the building had been relocated from another parcel to this location. The first and second floors are all covered with carpeting or vinyl flooring and the walls are all drywalled. The only structural components visible are the first-floor ones from the basement.

The following observations were made:

**Second Floor**

1. The floor in the front room drops north approximately 3 inches.
2. There are multiple floor levels in the unit.
3. The rear of the apartment which appears to be a bedroom has sloping ceilings.
4. The floor of the rear room slopes.

5. Access in to the rear room is through a two feet wide by five feet high doorway.
6. The walls of the front bathroom are not plumb.
7. The ceiling and walls of the rear room are not straight.

### **First Floor**

1. The front wall by the entry door has cracks in it.
2. The partial walls in the Living Room are not plumb.
3. The south Bedroom floor slopes to the south.
4. The north Bedroom floor slopes to the north.
5. The hallway floor is crowned.
6. The floors throughout the first floor are uneven.

### **Basement**

1. The first floor consists of a mixture of half tree timbers, adzed beams, and light lumber.
2. Eighteen columns were present which reinforced the floor in multiple places. The posts consisted of adjustable steel posts, 6x6 timbers, 4x4 timbers, and tree trunks.
3. Evidence of both carpenter ants and termites were observed in the form of damaged wood members.
4. Three joists had small 2x4s used as posts.
5. A number of joists including tenoned half timbers have slid out of their sockets. Some of these have been resupported but not all.
6. The basement walls consist of multiple structural elements. These include rubble stone, brick, and cast in place concrete. The cast in place concrete was placed on the interior of the masonry walls. In my experience this has been done to deepen basements, but the cause in this location is unknown.
7. The basement walls show signs of significant moisture seepage into the basement. This includes water stains indicating there has been standing water.
8. A large number of posts are supported on pieces of brick, pieces of concrete masonry or are placed directly on the concrete floor slab.
9. The floor has been patched in a number of places. Some of this patching shows signs of poor workmanship.
10. The stone foundation wall at the front of the building slopes downward to the north.
11. The foundation walls are in need of tuckpointing at various locations throughout the basement.

### **Exterior**

1. The front porch roof and second floor are visibly sagged down to the north.
2. The trim of the porch roof is deteriorating as evidenced by the appearance of damaged soft wood below the paint finishes.
3. The north elevation bows inward in the middle half of the building.
4. The exterior trim along the north elevation varies in elevation along the length of the building.
5. The rear wall of the building appears to be bowed inward.

6. The south wall of the building undulates in and out along the building's length.
7. The south wall of the rear portion of the building is visibly out of plumb.
8. A review of the aerial photograph from the Medina County GIS site indicates the west end of the building has shifted approximately one foot to the south.

After reviewing the existing conditions described above, it is my professional opinion the building is not habitable in its present condition. The number of structural issues observed is significant. Given the uneven floors, out of plumb interior and exterior walls, out of alignment walls, structural deficiencies observed in the basement the repairs needed may not be feasible by performing the work in a conventional manner. The conventional manner would be to gut the building by removing all wood molding, wood trim, drywall floor finishes to the sheathing and studs. Then shore the building up and disconnect the framing from each other, square and plumb the walls, reinforce the structure as necessary, replace any deteriorated structure found, level the floors and then reinstall all components such as drywall, finishes, electrical wiring and fixtures, plumbing and heating systems. The foundation walls will need to be exposed on the exterior, all the open joints sealed and the walls dampproofed. Where the foundation walls are not level, they would have to be leveled. However, in my professional opinion, this conventional method is not possible due to the large quantities of multiple issues. In addition, the second-floor framing, roof framing and wall framing may contain damaged components that would not be known until the building is gutted.

It is my opinion, the only feasible way to renovate this building to make it habitable is to literally disassemble it. That process would entail removing all finish materials, drywall, and floor sheathing and disposing of them legally. All of the exterior siding and trim would have to be removed and stored for future reuse. Then disassembling the building rafter by rafter, stud by stud and joist by joist. Each component would be evaluated for reuse, discarding and replacing those sufficiently damaged to prevent reuse. Each piece would need to be piece marked for later reinstallation. This will be a very labor-intensive process that would require almost full-time supervision by a licensed professional to evaluate which components could be salvaged for reuse. Once the superstructure is down, the foundations would be disassembled in similar manner. Then the reconstruction can begin.

Based on my experience in restoring historical structures, the cost for restoring this building with either method is on the order of magnitude of \$ 500 to \$ 1000 per square foot given the complexity of the project and that the work will basically be all hand labor. This translates to a minimum of \$1,000,000 to \$ 2,000,000. The other issue, based on my experience, is the reported historical nature of the building. While the building has its historic siding and exterior trim, the windows and doors present are not historic. The interior is also not historic. A qualified architectural historic preservationist would be needed to establish the historical nature of this building in its present state.

To summarize, it is my professional opinion, the building is in poor structural condition. The full extent of the structural issues cannot be determined until the interiors of the building is gutted

so that the entire structure can be evaluated. The renovation of this building can only be accomplished with significant funding that would need to have substantial contingency funds available as concealed damaged structure is exposed.

This letter is based on a limited examination of an existing, finished structure. No warranty is made or implied that all defects were observed and reported. Due to the finished construction, concealed conditions may exist that would affect this report; this office assumes no liability for concealed conditions that may affect the extent or costs of any repair work needed. If conditions assumed by this office are found to be different than those described in this letter, this office should be notified. This office reserves the right to adjust the information presented in this letter should additional information become available from reports by others or legal discovery. No structural analysis was performed as part of this examination. The opinions, conclusions and recommendations contained in this letter are based on this writer's judgment and experience as a practicing Structural Engineer.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,  
I A LEWIN, PER & ASSOCIATES



Isaac Lewin, PE  
Principal



Copies: Gregory A. Huber, City of Medina  
Todd Hunt, Esq, Walter and Haverfield

Attachments  
File

**AERIAL SITE PLAN**



277 So Court St



**PHOTOGRAPHS**



Front or east elevation of building



Front room on second floor. Note slanted wall on left



Slanted wall on second floor



Sloping ceiling on second floor



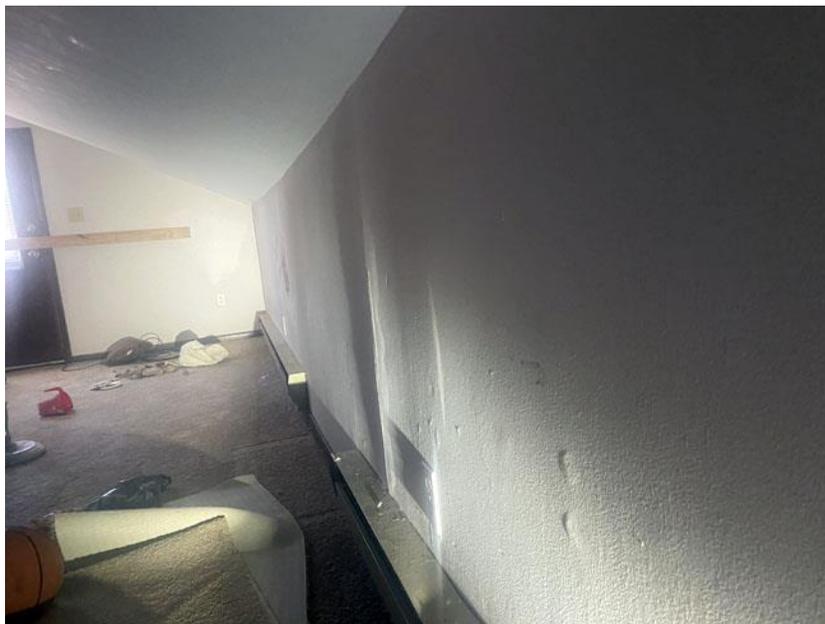
Sloping soffits on second floor



Roof structure



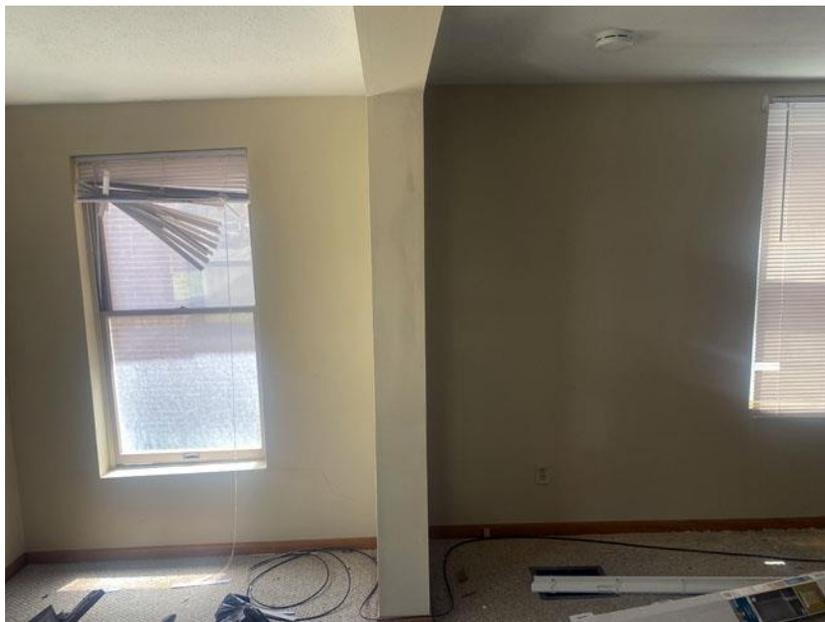
Undersized entry door to rear second floor room



Sag in roof, and out of plumb and alignment wall, rear second floor



Sag in rear room ceiling



Sagged window in south first floor



Sloping floor in north bedroom



Unlevel header in north wall of kitchen



East basement wall with floor sloping down to the north.  
Mix of foundation wall materials



Concrete foundation wall. Note timber post on piece of concrete masonry



Southeast corner of basement with mix of materials



Stone foundation on south side of basement needing tuckpointing



Timber post in front basement



Insect damaged joist



Timber post on brick on concrete floor



Insect damaged joist



Dry-rotted timber



Timber post on wood shim and concrete masonry on floor



Central wall with stone needing tuckpointing



Multiple posts with shims



Posts improperly supported



Water stains on floor



Water stains on floor



Concrete foundation wall with brick and 2x4 joist post



Water seepage in west (rear) wall



Termite tracks



Water seepage in west basement



Joist tenon slipping out of beam



Dry rotted window frame



Front elevation with sag to the north



North elevation



Sagged porch along north elevation



Uneven trim along north elevation



Bowing, non-plumb north wall



Non-plumb, undulating south wall