

Complaint Inspection Report Narrative

1128 Dakin Street
Lansing, MI

Performed by: James Bennett
Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae follows at end of report.

Inspection Date: Tuesday November 19th 2019

Inspection Time: 9:00 AM

NOTE: This inspection is a survey of conditions at the time of inspection and can only document those conditions. The observed conditions may lead to the making of reasonable assumptions/opinions as to the history of the property conditions.

General Information:

The structure is of light frame wood construction on a concrete block basement foundation. The structure was originally constructed in 1926 per Assessor records. The structure has both front and rear treated wood decks/porches that were added at a later undetermined date. Further, a room with a fireplace was added to the front of the house, either as new construction or by enclosing an existing covered porch at a later undetermined date.

The property includes a garage constructed in 1957 that was not included in the inspection.

Conditions at time of inspection:

Weather was overcast and temperature was near or slightly below the freezing point. There had been snow in the previous few days and the roof was partially snow covered. Additionally there were a few icicles hanging from the north side gutters.

The property and adjacent properties contain several mature deciduous trees and all the gutters were filled with leaves likely impeding proper operation of the system.

Exterior Inspection:

Site:

The site grading at the east side of the structure appears to be positive away from structure. However, the presence of the treated wood deck/porch and wheelchair ramp preclude inspection at the actual wall line.

The concrete driveway is located on the south side of the structure with cracked and heaved sections that provide negative drainage from the house. There is bare soil between the foundation

wall and the driveway. The owner has placed scrap shingles over portions of this area in an attempt to channel water away from the foundation. However, the soil at time of inspection was damp and the gutters along this side of the house are damaged with open joints, lack of end caps, and no downspout rendering the gutter system ineffective in channeling storm water away from the structure. Further, the deteriorated and missing paint, as well as the presence of algae and moss, on the foundation walls would indicate this is a long standing issue. Also there exists a number of cracks of varying size in the foundation with varying ineffective attempts at repair.

The treated wood deck with solid skirting prevents the observation of the site drainage at the west wall line. The rear porch/mudroom bump out of the original house provides for a direct door into the basement and some storage under the mudroom. All of this area is a concrete slab located below the adjacent grade of the site. Access to this area was prevented by accumulated clutter.

The north side appears to have positive drainage away from the structure with limited areas of negative slope at roof drip line. There is a general slope to the west. However, the gutter/downspout system is damaged with missing parts and it appears some portions of the west downspout was installed in an inverted fashion with tar/caulking repair attempted. Further, the front fireplace room roof does not have gutters installed and the roof eave is inset from the main house. Therefore storm water coming off this roof is deposited to grade at the NE corner of the foundation and the general grade may channel it towards the foundation.

Roof:

The roof of the entire house is new architectural shingles. The main house has nail over ridge venting and nail over eave venting. The presence of icicles at the north gutters indicates a strong potential for roof ice dams to form. Such ice dams, if large enough, could cause water infiltration through the shingles themselves or even backing up through the nail over eave vents. I observed the flashings (chimneys and plumbing vents) and roof vents from the ground using binoculars and found them to appear to be properly installed. This could be confirmed by a water test. It is my understanding that the contractor suggested this and the owner refused.

Interior Inspection:

NOTE: A number of code violations and construction defects were observed and are noted in the inspection report. However, given the nature of the complaint was related only to moisture issues, this narrative will be confined to those items.

Basement:

Two storage rooms are located at the west end of the basement. Both contained large amounts of clutter, with the north room including clothing and mattresses. The south and west walls of the southern room showed signs of water infiltration to a level approximately halfway up the wall.

The northern room could not be observed due to the amount of clutter. However, given the amount of clutter and the composition of the items, it is reasonable to assume that any water infiltrating the basement walls would be held and contribute to the overall humidity and mildew issues.

All of the main basement walls showed signs of minor cracks and water infiltration at the base of the walls. Steel support posts have been added to support the main beam and an existing wood column has rotted off entirely at the base indicating water issues are longstanding in the basement.

Kitchen:

The ceiling of the kitchen shows very minimal damage at wall junctures with the vast majority of the ceiling intact and undamaged. There is no indication of substantial water infiltration on the ceiling or walls. There are indications of kitchen grease and/or cigarette tar staining on the kitchen walls near the ceiling.

Mudroom:

The mudroom does not show any indications of significant or recent water infiltration in the bead board ceiling or at the walls.

Dining Room:

The dining room does not show any indications of significant or recent water infiltration in the plaster ceiling or at the walls.

Living Room:

The living room does not show any indications of significant or recent water infiltration in the plaster ceiling or at the walls.

Fireplace Room:

This room shows extensive water spots in the 12x12 acoustic staple up tiles. There is also evidence that there have been attempts to paint over some of the water spots. The paint does not appear recent nor did it do an adequate job of sealing out the water spots. The ceiling is in generally poor condition and the water spots appear to be of varying age.

Bathroom:

The bathroom ceiling has some areas of mold/mildew, both at the perimeter and on the ceiling overall. The bathroom is not equipped with a vent fan so it is indeterminable if these spots are

from exterior water infiltration or general humidity issues commonly associated with inadequate bathroom ventilation. The walls do not show any significant evidence of recent exterior water infiltration.

Hallway:

The ceiling of the hallway is a heavy stipple finish and is in generally poor condition. Both the ceiling and walls show signs of what appears to be cigarette tar staining. There is no indication of exterior water infiltration on the ceiling or walls.

Rear Bedroom (NW):

The ceiling of the bedroom is heavy stipple finish and is in generally fair condition. There is no indication of recent exterior water infiltration on the ceiling or walls.

Front Bedroom (NE):

The ceiling of the bedroom is a heavy stipple finish and is in generally poor condition with two areas of delaminated paint/plaster. There is some indication of exterior water infiltration on the ceiling in limited areas (existing cracks in plaster). There is no indication of recent exterior water infiltration on the ceiling or walls. There is no indication of recent exterior water infiltration on the walls.

The carpet has been pulled back from the NE corner and along the north wall. There is not any apparent water staining of the subfloor.

Attic:

The attic is semi-finished with built in drawers/cabinets and finished fiberboard ceiling (attached directly to the underside of the rafters) and knee walls. However, this area would not comply with code for habitable space as it lacks required ceiling height and an emergency escape and rescue opening.

There are numerous areas of impact damage to the plaster walls in the attic stairway and to the fiberboard ceiling/and walls in the room. There are also indications of roof leaks to the ceiling finishes. However, no active leaks are observed and the existing damage is of indeterminate time frame. The insulation materials observable through some of the impact holes appears to be dry and without significant water staining.

Conclusions:

Based upon my observations on November 19th 2019, I do not find substantial evidence of a roof leak occurring after the re-roofing work was completed. There does exist evidence that the roof leaked at some point in the past and necessitated the re-roofing work.

The general condition of the new roof as observed from the ground and with the aid of binoculars does not appear to be substandard in any material way that would permit water infiltration as claimed by the owner and certainly not to the extent claimed.



James Bennett

Curriculum Vitae
James Bennett

Bachelor of Science Degree – Industrial Technology, Western Michigan University

Licensed Residential Builder 1983 to present.
(Lic. # 2101081710)

State of Michigan Registered Building Inspector & Plan Reviewer 1994 to present.
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State of Michigan Registered Building Official 2013 to present.
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