

Cemetery House Detailed Project Notes

Exterior:

- Unused portico Door needs to be removed and reglued, then treated with a preservative.
- Slab-door for entry to basement is rotted around the lower edges, contributing to the building's porosity to pests, especially mice.
- Masonry walls are generally okay, although there are some places where white paint could use some touch-up. In a 1925 building there is the potential for lead paint, requiring lead-safe practices when dealing with it.
- Slate roof: a number of loose tiles, possibly contributing to moisture in the north end of the upstairs, where plaster layers are separating, especially the skim-coat from the scratch-coat in the kitchen and north lavatory. I suggest replacement with an asphalt roof. Inspection of the attic shows boarding under roof sheathing is in good condition. As the dormer-cheeks and gable end are also enclosed in slate, that would be a good time to change to a no-maintenance vinyl siding on gable ends and dormer cheeks. Roofer estimate for replacing slate roof with asphalt and siding dormers and gable ends is: 15 K. The cost of this should be undertaken by the synagogue. This is a superbly low and practical estimate. It is an expense that will have to be undertaken eventually anyway, whether or not the interior project takes place. I would also take it as a signal that the synagogue is as committed to the project as I am.
- Flat roof: Apparently in good shape, although there is most likely a gutter issue that has resulted in moisture entering above bedroom window (north bedroom), causing ceiling damage. Small amount of trim-rot above that window, exterior.

Interior:

- Systems-Electrical. 100 amp electrical panel has space for additional circuits, should they be needed. Possible need: Heat-pump for air-conditioning and auxiliary heating.
- Systems-Electrical. Change over 2-prong receptacles to grounded plugs. Wiring is in BX MC cable, so grounding is both possible and desirable. Most rooms have at least one switched outlet; adding an overhead light is also a good idea. There are two outlets (dormer and north bathroom) that will have to be diagnosed and replaced, assuming circuitry is intact.
- Systems-heating. Livingroom radiators have been disconnected. They show evidence of leaking and should be replaced. Not necessary to replace both 5' radiators. One is likely sufficient. North bedroom radiator cover has a note on it indicating a split element, which would also necessitate replacement. Add modern timer thermostat, or smart thermostat that can be controlled remotely.
- Interior/exterior-Security. Add a DVR-based array of 4-6 cameras to monitor the cemetery access road and the building.
- Interior-Kitchen. Extensive infiltration by mice. Replace cabinets, sink, countertop. Take up at least two old floors and replace with waterproof vinyl plank. Walls and ceiling have extensive plaster-delamination which requires removal of all loose areas, checking undercoats, and replastering. One could gut down to the studs, but this is not necessary, and would require additional outlay for materials. General: use foaming rodent barriers on all plumbing chases, especially in crawl space behind kitchen sink area.

- Interior-walls. In addition to plaster repair, the entire dwelling unit needs to be repainted, with minor repairs to walls and trim.
- Interior-north bathroom. Replace sink and toilet. Keep as a half-bath, with laundry. Replace existing shutoff-valves with modern quarter-turn ball-valves. Add circuit for electric dryer, plus exterior dryer venting through gable-end. Replace floor, either vinyl plank or ceramic tile. Have to see what's under current floor. Discuss: could be simpler to place W/D or just Dryer in cellar: convenient to panel; venting simpler.
- Interior-Dining Room. Remove two old tile floors. Possibly refinish wooden flooring, but more likely go over with LVP.
- Interior-north bedroom: repair moisture damage over window. Repainting walls. Remove half a room of old vinyl tile flooring; refinish existing oak floor if hidden part is in good shape. LVP on flooring "bump-out" that covers chapel ceiling.
- Interior-south bedroom: repainting and refinish floor.
- Interior-Living room: refinish floor. Possibly remove exterior metal window awning.
- South Bathroom: replace all fixtures (sink and toilet). Remove old tub and replace with full-sized shower base; replace existing plumbing with new valves and drains. Add ventilation fan. Replace floor with either tile or LVP.
- Garage: repair broken spring. Add at least one automatic garage door opener with both remote-control and keypad access; maintain area in clean and neat fashion, including genizah. Disposition of old synagogue materials TBD.
- Interior-stairwells: clean and repaint both, walls and treads.
- Interior-cellar bathrooms: remove fixtures and cap drain openings.
- Interior-Health and Safety: install wireless interconnected smoke detectors on all three levels; install smoke and CO detectors as needed in utility area and in living area.

I stand by my earlier estimate of materials and costs. There will be some variability. Depending on what level of involvement there is in heating (and cooling) repairs, for instance.

Tenant will not be responsible for building envelope or exterior issues, including but not limited to: roof; exterior walls; waterline and sewerline. Suggest getting Safety Valve Insurance, or American Water Resources insurance (AMWRUSA) to cover any possible issues.

Synagogue to pay for pest control if needed. Tenant agrees to take all measures to render the building less porous to rodents during the renovation phase, and to maintain clean and sanitary conditions inside, both prior to and during occupancy.

Tenant agrees to cooperate with and oversee Genizah as necessary.

Open questions:

Assuming agreement can be reached on lease, what about utilities (oil, electricity)? Building needs to be partially heated anyway.

How to structure lease?

Need to place radon meter

What if costs outpace plans? The building's issues are all solvable within the budget constraints I've outlined. I have renovated a dozen multi-family buildings since 2011. The level of complexity in those projects is far greater than in this one. This is, essentially, a single-family home. My efficiency comes from being left to make the decisions necessary to advance the project. There needs to be a level of trust: for the owners to know that I will bring the project to conclusion in a timely and qualitatively good manner; for the project manager to trust that the owners will not micromanage what is a complex, but straightforward series of tasks. Anything that impedes my efficiency could render the project not worthwhile. Will there be unanticipated issues that come up during the project? It's possible. But I have the experience and knowledge base to handle them and still bring the project in.

Rent versus expenses: 2 bedroom apartments rent for 1700 and up in Wethersfield. On one hand, this is a unique property, with garage space. On the other hand, it's a bit of a tough rental, located as it is in a cemetery, and not in a neighborhood. Assuming, for the sake of discussion, 2 K monthly rental, that's 24 K/year, so the project represents five years of occupancy. That should be the starting point for our discussions. I hope to occupy the premises for three years, quite possibly five, and in any case would like to have a lease that offers me the option of five years, minimum. If we decide to part ways before that, we can work things out. If I decide to move on before that, I would like the right to sublet for whatever remaining portion of five years there is, in order to recoup my up-front commitment.