



NORTH PROVIDENCE OLD TOWN HALL CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT REPORT

2226 Mineral Spring Avenue, North Providence, RI

May 1, 2020

BTGA No. 2004



ARCHITECTURE
DESIGN
MASTERPLANNING

317 Iron Horse Way, Suite 202
Providence, RI 02908

401.861.1600 ext. 110
brewsterthornton.com

This report is partially funded by a National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund matching grant-in-aid administered by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission. The report has been financed in whole or in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of Interior, and administered by the RIHPHC. The contents and opinions, however, do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the United States Department of the Interior or the RIHPHC. This program receives federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to:

Chief, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scope of Work	7
Acknowledgements	7

SECTION 2 – DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

Methodology	9
Introduction.....	9
Historical Context, 1636-1874	9
The Establishment of North Providence and Its Boundaries	
The First Town Hall, 1874-1931	11
The Construction of the Town Hall	
North Providence Outgrows Its First Town Hall	
Redefining and Restoring Old Town Hall, 1931-1986	14
20 th Century Occupants of the Old Town Hall	
A Major Restoration of the Old Town Hall	
Recent Activity, 1987-2020	18
The Old Town Hall Weathers the 20th and 21st Centuries	

SECTION 3 – EXISTING CONDITIONS

Code Requirements	19
Zoning/Use	
Building and Fire Code	
Accessibility Requirements	
Site Conditions: Lighting, Drainage, and Walking Surface	21
Site Lighting	
Site Drainage	
Site Walking Surfaces	
Parking	
Site Conditions: Site Access Points	22
South, Back Entrance	
North, Main Entrance	
Site Drainage	
Site Summary	
Building Exterior – Roof	24
Roof - General	
Chimney	
East Roof Edge	
Main Entrance Roof	
Building Exterior – Exterior Walls, Windows, and Doors	26
Siding	
Trim	
Windows - General	
Exterior Doors – General	
North, Front Door (1-1)	
South, Back Door (1-2)	
Second Floor Egress Door (2-1)	
Basement Door (0-1)	
Basement Stair	
Building Exterior – Foundation Walls	32
Foundation Walls	

Coal Chute	
Front Stairs	
Building Interior – Attic	34
Attic - General	
Wiring	
Backside of Shingles	
Attic - Chimney	
Plumbing Vent	
East Roof Edge	
Building Interior – Second Floor	36
Second Floor Interior Finishes	
Second Floor Interior Door Notes	
Plaster Between Windows and Heaters	
Plaster Crack	
Plumbing Vent Roof Leak	
Cracked Toilet	
Lavatory	
Chimney Enclosure	
Ceiling Crack	
Building Interior – First Floor	40
First Floor Interior Finishes	
First Floor Interior Door Notes	
Stairs to Second Floor	
First Floor – Toilet Room	
Kitchenette	
First Floor – Chimney Enclosure	
Trap Door to Basement	
Hidden Floor Box	
Building Interior – Basement	44
Basement Interior Finishes	
Trap Door and Stairs	
Basement - Chimney	
Brick Columns	
Basement Floor	
Basement Cells - Ceiling	
Access Over the Cells	
Building Systems	47
Plumbing	
Heat	
Electrical	
Fire Alarm	
Pest Control	
Communication and Security Systems	
Summary of Existing Conditions	49
 SECTION 4 – RECOMMENDATIONS	
Safety Issues	51
Unsecured Electrical	
Unlined Chimney	
Roof Leak	
Missing Emergency Egress Light	
Short-Term	51
Roof	

Chimney	
Exterior Doors	
Windows	
Siding and Trim	
Basement Access	
Foundation	
Brick Columns	
Site Drainage	
Long-Term	54
Electrical	
Main Entrance Roof	
Siding and Trim	
Foundation	
Trap Door and Stairs	
Plumbing	
Interior Finishes	
Heat	
Improvements	54
Parking Lot	
Front Stair	
Accessibility	
Kitchenette	
Basement	
Communication and Security Systems	
Fire Alarm	
Heat	
Budget	56

SECTION 5 – APPENDICES

A. Reference Documents

Historical Bibliography.....	59
Additional Sources Consulted.....	62
Additional Materials Consulted	62
Supporting Documents.....	63

B. Reference Drawings

Historic Drawings.....	141
List of Drawings	141
Drawings	142

C. Reference Photos

Historic Photos.....	161
Existing Conditions Photos	165

D. Meeting Minutes

3/23/2020.....	185
3/24/2020	187

E. BTGA Firm Information

BTGA Profile.....	189
Resumes	191

Historic Preservation Experience	193
--	-----

SECTION 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the spring of 2020, at the request of the North Providence Historic District Commission, Brewster Thornton Group Architects, LLP (BTGA) produced this Conditions Assessment and Historic Structures Report (HSR) for the North Providence Old Town Hall building located at 2226 Mineral Spring Avenue, North Providence, Rhode Island, built in 1879. BTGA has concluded that the building structure remains remarkably sound, but that the enclosure has condition issues that allow moisture and air infiltration which is slowly degrading the building's interior finishes and will eventually cause structural damage. We recommend that certain safety and moisture intrusion problems be addressed as soon as possible to prevent further degradation.

SCOPE OF WORK

The North Providence Historic District Commission (NPHDC) through the North Providence Purchasing Agent selected BTGA to assess the existing conditions of the structure in order to better understand the scope and cost of a restoration project to address current issues. BTGA worked with a group of local volunteers, town officials, and members of the Rhode Island Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) to research the history of the Town and develop this report.

The BTGA work goes beyond the NPHDC assessment conducted on November 24, 2018 and addresses issues of deterioration in all building components. This report includes:

1. Exterior Conditions including, but not limited to building facades, roofs, windows doors, exterior lighting, and safety issues.
2. Interior Conditions including, but not limited to walls, floors and ceilings, lighting, stairs, and bathrooms.
3. Structural conditions.
4. Prioritized recommendations for improvements to remedy deficiencies.
5. A summary of costs associated with the recommendations.

Safety Issues identified were very minor, given the current unoccupied nature of the building, and can be addressed for around \$8,000. Recommended work within the next 5 years to stabilize the exterior shell and correct conditions contributing to deterioration, such as re-grading, painting, window restoration, and roof replacement, are estimated to cost about \$363,000. After that major effort, recommended work that can be delayed 6-10 years, such as basement foundation interior parging, total about \$132,000. Another \$200,000 of optional Improvements, such as air conditioning, were also identified that can be done if funds are available.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The North Providence Historic District Commission received a grant from the Rhode Island Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission: Grants-in-Aid for Federal Fiscal Year 2019, Historic Preservation Projects for Certified Local Governments for a value of \$8,000. The Town of North Providence, courtesy of the Honorable Charles A. Lombardi, Mayor, provided an additional \$2,000 in funding and BTGA reduced their proposed fee by \$2,500, in order to make this work possible.

SECTION 2 – DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY

METHODOLOGY

Developing the Old Town Hall's history began with an on-site interview with Thomas Greene, Town Historian, and Ruth Bucci, Chair of the North Providence Historic District Commission. They provided information, photocopies of some relevant materials, and a tour of the building interior. Our team also visited the Rhode Island Historical Society Library to conduct research on the building's history and that of the Town of North Providence. We contacted reference departments at the North Providence Public Library and the Providence Public Library. We also placed calls and sent emails of inquiry to Sarah Zurier of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, and to Elizabeth W. Rochefort, Principal Architectural Historian at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, who was designated as our contact there. We also spoke with David Westcott, who was the Town Planner at the beginning of our research. In addition, we conducted a telephone interview with Helen Reall, chair of the North Providence Antiquities Society's Restoration of the Old Town Hall Committee, who provided an oral history of the restoration work done during the 1970s and 1980s under her committee.

INTRODUCTION

North Providence began as a large settlement, broken off from a thriving, commercial Providence. Its initial establishment, and several subsequent alterations of its boundaries, eventually gave rise to the need for a new seat of government and a town hall within which to conduct official business. What we now call the Old Town Hall on Mineral Spring Avenue in Centerdale was the first governmental hub of today's North Providence. That pragmatic building on the one of the town's main turnpikes (RI Historical Commission, *Survey Report*, p.7) continued to serve the town's primary governmental needs from its construction in 1879 until 1931 when the current Town Hall was built on Smith Street to house government offices. The office of the town's first mayor was added to that facility in 1974. Free of governing activities, the Old Town Hall reemerged as a different kind of civic building. Today it stores much of North Providence's historical documents, photos, maps, and art, and provides an appropriate space for the offices of the Town Historian and the Historic District Commission and acts as a base for historical student tours.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT, 1636-1874

The Establishment of North Providence and Its Boundaries

In 1636, Roger Williams arrived to establish what would become the state of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations with its capital at Providence. Providence grew rapidly, and by 1680, a wharf was built to facilitate trade, signaling the beginning of Providence's prosperity ("History of Providence") and a growing focus on merchants and commerce. But farther from the shore and bustling town center, other areas remained rural and agrarian. As the Providence Council passed laws and regulations that addressed issues of the more developed areas (Caranci, Heritage Stop 21), people in the more rural locations began to feel that they could better manage their own affairs, and many petitioned the General Assembly to separate from Providence.

The northern part of Providence was one of these. In February 1765, 115 petitioners signed on to request that the General Assembly allow them to incorporate as a separate town to be known as "Wenscutt" (also referred to today as Wanskuck). In pleading their case, they specifically referenced the logistical difficulties and the stark difference in character between Providence proper and its northern section (*Report of Centennial Celebration*, p. 18).

In particular, they complained that legislative action – most often concerning the merchants and tradesmen – was being conducted in the more populated area of Providence, and that the farmers of the rural north were forced to travel the distance to prevent votes that might be disadvantageous to themselves. In so doing, they were taking precious time away from their farming activities. (*Report of Centennial Celebration*, p. 18)

The General Assembly deferred action on the petition until June 13, at which time it granted the request – but not the town name. The new “North Providence” was set off as a town that included a portion of the North Burial Ground (Bayles, p. 181), at least one ward from Providence, and a part of today’s Pawtucket. At its incorporation in 1765, the town extended from the Seekonk River on the east to the area of today’s State House in Providence. The smaller portion that today comprises North Providence had only five farms in the eighteenth century. The new town chose its seat of government to be in its more thickly settled village of Pawtucket (Caranci, Heritage Stop 21).

In 1774, nine years after its incorporation, North Providence had 138 families, including whites, blacks and Native Americans. The population was 830 people. (*Report of Centennial Celebration*, p. 22)

Circa the eighteenth century, villages, as such, were coming into their own. Present-day North Providence had two - Fruit Hill and Centerdale. Centerdale had a sawmill site and a few residences on the Woonasquatucket River (RI Historical Preservation Commission, *Preliminary Report*, p. 4).

In 1870, North Providence’s population was 20,495. It continued to grow and thrive, as witnessed by its tax records of 1873. The amount of real and personal taxes was \$204,710 (*Town Tax, 1873*). The booming village of Pawtucket contributed greatly to those numbers. In addition to being the seat of the town’s government, that village also held North Providence’s first police force. The town was governed under a town meeting system, and the meetings were held in various homes or convenient buildings throughout the 1870s.

Over time, the eastern part of town – specifically the village of Pawtucket – developed much more rapidly than the more rural, western portion. Soon, residents faced the same grievances they had attempted to solve when they petitioned to break from Providence. Author and historian Frank Angell stated: “The thickly populated sections of the town were frequently calling for large appropriations for various purposes that had little interest to the farmers, and in no way directly benefited them, naturally causing the rural taxpayers to believe they were being unnecessarily taxed to maintain the alleged extravagances of the richer and more populous sections.” (Angell, p. 184)

Those grievances led to one of the most significant land transfers since North Providence’s incorporation. In January 1874, the General Assembly received a petition asking for another division of land, this time to cede the village of Pawtucket (about two square miles) to the Town of Pawtucket. (The section of the North Burial Ground acquired initially from Providence had already been returned to Providence, and, at a different time, the 10th ward as well.)

The petitioners for annexation pointed out the natural topography that lent itself to the division, and they raised concerns about the inefficiencies of having services such as education, and fire and police protection divided between North Providence and Pawtucket. Overall, they said that the people of the village were at one with the Town of Pawtucket. The report stated: “A homogeneous population should have a homogeneous government.” (*Report of the Joint Special Committee*, p. 6)

The petition was quickly granted in March and became effective in May, leaving North Providence with much less land, a greatly reduced population, and no seat of government.

THE FIRST TOWN HALL, 1874-1931

The Construction of the Town Hall

The loss of the village of Pawtucket to the Town of Pawtucket in 1874 brought significant but apparently desired change for North Providence. The petition had acknowledged “no animosities in the hearts and minds of the inhabitants of the new although territorially and pecuniarily lessened town but meets their cordial assent and the approval of their judgments” (*Report of the Joint Special Committee*, p. 4).

Less desirable and more widespread were the ramifications. North Providence had no government headquarters. Its town meetings had to be held at Armory Hall in Centerdale. The Town Clerk’s Office was in the home of George Eddy (the first Town Clerk elected in 1874) in the Fruit Hill area (Angell, p. 185). And, since the police department in the village of Pawtucket was now gone, the Town Council appointed police constables each year instead (Greene, p. 19). A jail was established first on a local farm, then in the basement of a home, and later in the basement of Armory Hall, along with other locations over the years. It was quite probably left with about one-twentieth of its population (Bayles, p. 182). As for its coffers, real and personal taxes plummeted to \$8,566 (*Town Tax, 1874*). The town now covered only about 5.8 square miles. To this day, it remains the state’s second smallest town in terms of square miles.

Reorganizing itself after the last land transfer, North Providence needed a new hub. Communities within the town vied for the distinction of being the new town’s first seat of government. After a rather spirited contest, the village of Centerdale was chosen for that honor at Town Meeting on June 2, 1879 (Angell, p. 185-186). Voters appropriated \$2,000 for the construction of their new Town Hall, which was to include the Town Clerk’s office. A committee was appointed to purchase a suitable site and to oversee construction. Eventually a slightly sloping site was obtained on Mineral Spring Avenue. This site, shown on an 1882 map, was a small triangle that appears to have been sectioned off from a larger triangular plot. Local carpenter and builder Benjamin Sweet (*The Providence Directory*, p. 483) began construction based on a design by Civil Engineer Lemuel M.E. Stone (Rhode Island State Censuses). An 1880 town map he drew also identified Stone as a “draftsman”, as does a city inventory (RI Historical Records Survey, p. 86-87). He was also a surveyor (Bayles, p. 196).

No plans from Stone have been discovered. However, the building as constructed had an overall footprint measuring 28 feet by 36 feet (Angell, p. 186). It was Italianate, a simple two-story structure with a gabled roof that faced the street. The Town Hall’s front north-facing façade has windows on the left and right that are not balanced. All windows on the left are extremely close to the building’s corner, whereas



Figure 2.1: Map of Town Hall site, 1882.
Courtesy of the Town of North Providence.

the ones on the right are spaced generously, much as a structure of that style would have been constructed at the time.

Overall, the building was pragmatic in its construction and appearance; it was simply meant to serve the small town in its governance of a small population. The front door displayed the building's one exterior embellishment, an Italianate bracketed hood above the dark red, paneled, double doors. The building's doors incorporated arched windows and a transom above.

Three wooden steps led from the ground to front door. Immediately upon entering, the first floor had a small room to the left and a larger room opposite the hallway on the right. These are believed to have been used as the Town Clerk's and the Town Sergeant's offices, but little credible documentation exists to determine which room was which. Behind the smallest room, the staircase rose to the floor above. At the end of the first-floor hallway was the largest room, occupying the back half of the first floor. Whether there was a back door in the south wall originally is unknown. This large room was reportedly the Council Chambers.

No documentation has yet surfaced to confirm when gas was installed for lights or when gas lamps were converted to electricity.



Figure 2.2: Significant details are noted in this older photo of Town Hall: An older version of the chimney, the original second-floor window at the northwest corner, the coal chute, the front wooden steps, window shutters, and a structure standing seemingly close to the east wall. Courtesy of the Town of North Providence. Undated.

Adjacent to the south wall of the Council Chambers, a trapdoor was set in the floor with a staircase leading to a full stone rubble basement and a large room that served as the police station. Four individual cells – the two on the east and west sides of the building being slightly wider than the two interior cells – were located along the north wall of the basement for the detention of prisoners. The original slope of the land away from the building to the west allowed a coal chute to be constructed on the western wall of the stone foundation. Eventually, the stone foundation was parged with concrete at some later point in the building's history.

The exterior of the building was covered in white clapboard. A gable roof and frieze board cap off the structure with an oculus window at the center. The east and west sides of the building each had four windows; each was one-over-one. An outhouse probably stood in the back, on the western side of the main building, according to an artist's rendering by Vincent Dexter, North Providence's first town historian (Greene, p. 4) in January 1960. That rendering, probably sketched from earlier photos, and a later photograph suggest that the chimney was rebuilt at least once in the structure's history, if only the exterior portion from the roofline up to the top.

No documentation has been found to confirm any work on the building from its construction to the early 1900s.

North Providence Outgrows Its First Town Hall

In 1917, a map of plots along Mineral Spring Avenue shows that the Town Hall had been joined by a second building on this small lot. Although the size of the buildings shown are unlikely to be drawn to scale, the second building is shown to be almost as large as Town Hall and in close proximity. The Town Hall now appears to be located closer to the curb, much as it exists today, but again the map may not reflect the exact circumstances at the time. But the map does document that the triangular plot was bordered by other developed lots on two sides and by Mineral Spring Avenue on the third.



Figure 2.3: Map of Town Hall site, 1917, shows a second building on the plot. Courtesy of the Town of North Providence.

Sometime between 1909 and 1927, an ell was appended to the back of the building as a fire-proof vault to secure the town's records. This constitutes the only significant change to the building's original footprint over the years. It was a logical addition since the Town Hall was still used for official business. But it also could indicate that by this point, space inside Town Hall proper was already at a premium. According to photographic evidence, the vault originally extended across almost the entire back of the building, except for about three feet at the southeast corner of the back wall. At least one entrance was from a door in the basement's south wall.

By 1927, the Town Hall was decidedly crowded – inside and out – and considered a fire hazard. The fire-proof vault was now characterized as completely inadequate to secure the town’s records, and “the workspace for consulting volumes is congested,” according to State Record Commissioner Herbert Brigham. An article in the *Providence Journal* on February 3 quoted Brigham as saying that the town clerk was “literally choked to death for room.” Brigham also raised concerns about the adjacent building on the property used to house town vehicles, saying its construction was a serious fire hazard. In addition, he stated that plans were underway to develop a three-story residence behind the Town Hall, which would, in his opinion, create a serious fire hazard a short distance from the vault. Furthermore,

the rear of the building was inaccessible to fire apparatus, he warned, likely because of the adjoining, developed lots.

Brigham also had clear concerns about the very architecture of the building. “The wooden structure with its light framing is also a greater fire risk than a modern, brick building,” said Brigham. “It appears to me that for their own protection, the town fathers should take adequate steps to safeguard their records.”

The following year, on March 8, 1928, the *Providence Journal* again recorded difficulties with the Town Hall, this time with its ability to accommodate the growing number of town voters. While 200 voters could be “squeezed” into the Town Hall, the article said, approximately 1,864 people were qualified to vote. The article expressed concerns that amounted to voter suppression due to the lack of accommodations.

Sometime after 1930, another map shows the construction of Thomas Street behind Town Hall, which might at least have eased old concerns about fire access to the back of the building, but by then the point was moot. In 1931, a new Town Hall was built at 2000 Smith Street, leaving the Old Town Hall to be redefined for its next chapter of usefulness.

REDEFINING AND RESTORING OLD TOWN HALL, 1931-1986

20th Century Occupants of the Old Town Hall

In 1931, the North Providence Union Free Library had outgrown its small building also on Mineral Spring Avenue, originally built in 1870. At that point, a new era began with the library’s move to the Old Town Hall’s second floor and the new librarianship of Arthur Sharp. Three years later in 1934, Veronica Hurley became librarian. The second floor had been renovated, and money raised for books through the Fruit Hill Women’s Club. The collection now stood at some 7,000 volumes. During Hurley’s tenure, the size of the collection eventually doubled and necessitated another move, this time to a new building on George Street in 1962 (North Providence Union Free Library, pgs. 7, 10). The Old Town Hall’s second floor was vacated.

In the mid-1930s, the Works Progress Administration was also located in the Old Town Hall building. The WPA was part of the American New Deal enacted by Executive Order in 1935 in an effort to employ millions of people, many of them unskilled men, in various public works projects. While it is unknown where exactly the office was in the building, the WPA used the vault appended in the basement for storage.



Also, around this time, the local Welfare Office was housed in at least one office on the first floor and appears to have continued its operations there for almost 40 years, according to a *Providence Journal* article in February of 1976.

Around the 1950s or 1960s, the outside of the building received improvements, quite possibly an exterior painting, as the clapboards were severely peeling and in need of repair, as shown in a period photo below. By this time, the window in the northwest corner of the second floor had already been replaced with a single white door, unlike the double doors at the front steps. A small metal stoop had been attached outside it on the exterior wall with an eight-rung fire escape fastened to the side of the building to allow emergency access from the second floor.



Figure 2.5: Mid-century photo shows Town Hall in need of some repair, but by now front steps were already replaced and a fire access provided from the second floor. Courtesy of the Town of North Providence.

The chimney also may have already been rebuilt at least once by this point. Photographic documentation shows an earlier chimney stack that appears to have been slightly more ornate with a decorative corbel course of bricks in two places. But by around this time, mid-century, the chimney's stack had been simplified to plain courses of brick without ornamentation, and a masonry cap of brick – open on at least two sides – had been added to the top to prevent at least some rain and snow from entering.

In addition, the original hood above the front door was at some point reconstructed, but at this time was a terne-metal hood roof (Pozzi, handwritten letter). The front steps may have been replaced with concrete by this time, but no substantial documentation exists.

No documentation has yet been found on system changes to indoor plumbing, electric wiring, or the change from coal to oil heat.

A Major Restoration of the Old Town Hall

In 1976, inspired by the town's celebration of the nation's bicentennial, a group of citizens formed the North Providence Antiquities Society, Inc. The members chose the aging Old Town Hall as a restoration project to honor the national milestone. At the time, the *Providence Journal* reported that the group thought the restoration might take about two years because of the meticulous nature of the work (Bruno, *Providence Journal*). In the end, it would take about 10 years, according to Helen Reall, who chaired the Society's newly formed Restoration of the Old Town Hall Committee.

The town hired restoration architect Lombard John Pozzi of Bristol, Rhode Island, to evaluate the building, restore features, and make improvements with an eye toward historical sensitivity. His recommendations resulted in a much longer list than the town was prepared to fund. Many items, such

as a Victorian fence to delineate the property boundaries, were never constructed. Other items, like wooden storm windows, were newly constructed and added to help preserve the building; they were patterned according to historic documentation of the time. Storm windows are not known to have been part of the original Town Hall structure.

On the first floor, critical improvements were undertaken both to improve aesthetics and code compliance. Photographic documentation shows that walls and ceilings – very likely made of horsehair plaster as was common in the 19th century – were demolished during the renovation almost everywhere except the staircase and one corner of the second-floor meeting room, according to Reall, who provided an oral history during a telephone interview with Brewster Thornton Group Architects on February 20 and March 26, 2020. The walls on the first and second floors were meticulously relieved of years of paint until the original colors could be ascertained, replicated and eventually reapplied. She described more than six layers of paint were meticulously scraped from original door frames, windowsills, and other wood moldings, leaving the wood smooth and ready for repainting in historically accurate colors.

While documentation concerning the electrical work has not surfaced, Reall recalled that a single-bulb, antique lamp that had been given to her – and was said to be of the same era as the Town Hall – was included in the design deliberations that eventually would lead to the re-creation of similar light fixtures throughout the building, all newly made by Breeze Hill Lamp Shop of Riverside. The original antique lamp was installed on the overhead wall just above the first few east-facing steps of the staircase as it leads to the second floor.

On the second floor, at the top of the stairs, the long landing was shortened to create another bathroom along the eastern wall of the old Town Meeting room, according to Reall. Also, on the second floor, a new metal fire escape was added outside a new set of double doors on the west side of the building. This fire escape had a much larger landing at the second story level with stairs descending south to the ground. The new doors were installed where once a single fire door had been and fashioned using the original front doors (at street level) as models.

In the basement, the coal chute on the western wall was sealed off, although Pozzi had proposed adding a new one instead, possibly because of its historical significance to the building. A new, four-panel, emergency door with crash bar was added with a cement landing outside and an exterior concrete flight of stairs ascending to ground level. This alteration provided a secure set of steps and easier access to the basement than the steep wooden steps below the trap door. Alterations proposed in Pozzi's plans – a brick floor in the basement and four-inch concrete block wall beside the wooden steps, for example – were never done.

Also, as part of Pozzi's renovations, a handicapped ramp and new door were added near the southeast corner of the building. Whether a door of any kind was there originally is not clearly documented. Also, outside, replacement blinds (shutters) were made, but no documentation exists as to when the originals were first installed on the building. Pozzi seems to believe that shutters were original to the building. The exterior of the building was also repainted the original colors, white with dark red shutters, according to a hand-written letter from Pozzi's. The terne-metal hood roof was replaced at this time as part of the restoration (Pozzi, handwritten letter).

The detention cells were left in their original form. The single-story brick vault at ground level attached to the back of the building, being a 20th century addition, was demolished around this time according to photographic evidence, and certainly prior to 1980, according to Pozzi's 1984 drawings. Reall stated that

the removal returned the building to a closer version of its 1879 form. The door in the basement, which likely led into the vault above, was also sealed off.

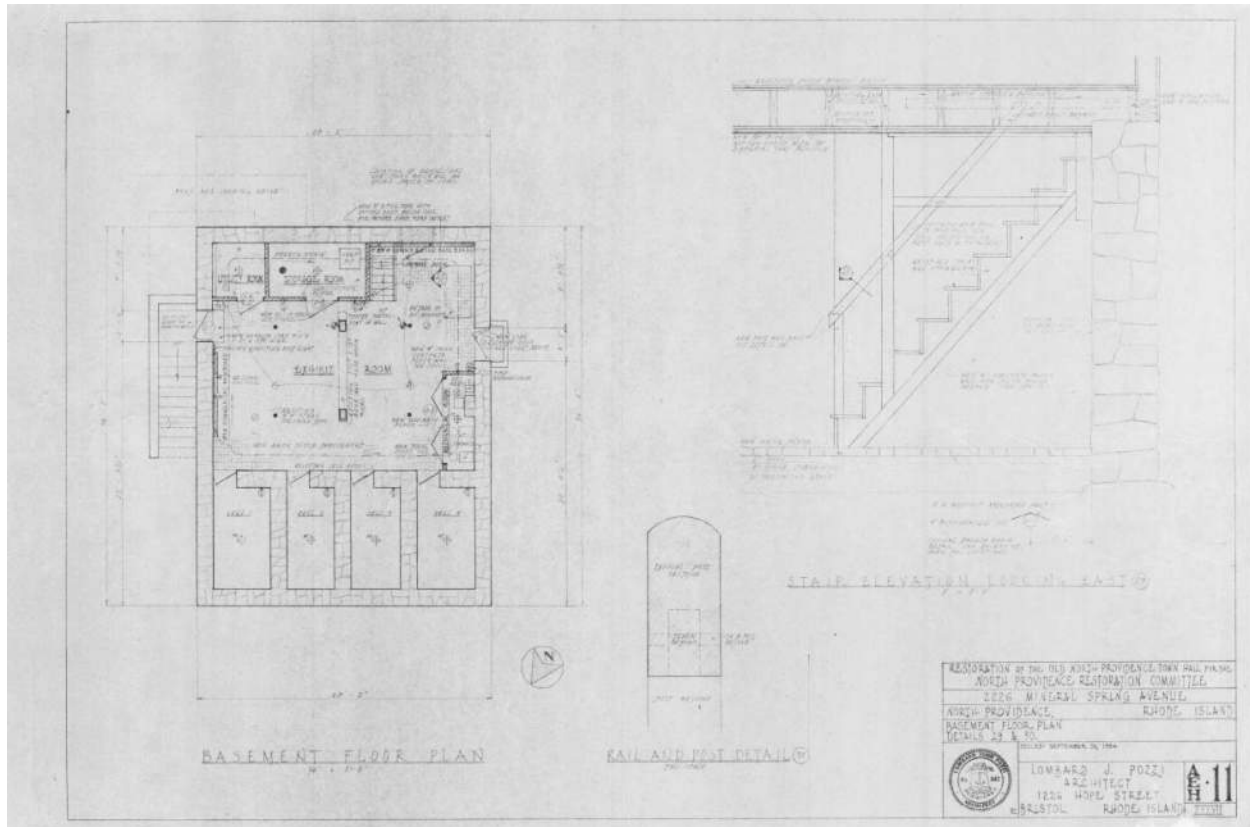


Figure 2.6: Pozzi's architectural drawing for the basement shows a recommendation for a concrete block wall beside the wooden steps. Courtesy of the Town of North Providence.

Nothing is known about when the driveway was first carved out of the plot or how its size or configuration may have changed over the years.

Around the mid to late 1970s, the town assembled information regarding the building on an application to the National Register of Historic Places, as part of an attempt to have the building listed on the register. It may be that part of that application included supporting correspondence written by Pozzi in December of 1975, describing the building and some of its more significant historic aspects (Pozzi, handwritten letter). Unfortunately, the application was denied.

In April of 1983 and again in September of 1984, Pozzi provided several letters stating probable costs for various elements of the restoration that he sometimes characterized as the "next phase" of work. These encompassed interior and exterior projects, including adding a Victorian fence, installing new period wood-on-masonry base front steps (likely to replace the concrete steps), rebuilding the chimney according to an old photograph, and providing extensive restoration work in the basement. The only items that appear to have been done were the exterior painting of the building and the custom fabrication of a period side entrance door.

RECENT ACTIVITY, 1987-2020

The Old Town Hall Weathers the 20th and 21st Centuries

After the restoration, the building settled back into quiet usefulness as a storage space for some town records and artifacts, office space for the Town Historian and the Historic District Commission on the first floor, and a base for historical student tours. The second floor is still used as a large meeting space for some gatherings, such as the tours.

Now in its 141st year, the Old Town Hall has been showing signs of age. In November of 2018, the North Providence Historic District Commission conducted a preliminary assessment of Old Town Hall, based on observation of visible interior and exterior issues. The Commission also filed the “Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission’s Grants-In-Aid Application/Federal Fiscal Year 2019” to obtain funding for a consultant that would create a conditions assessment/historic structure report. Receiving some funding, the town then wrote a Request for Qualification and Proposals to hire a professional firm to write that report and to consider the extent and cost of any necessary restoration efforts. The project was funded in part by the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, as administered by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, and by the Town of North Providence.

In early 2020, the town selected the architectural firm of Brewster Thornton Group Architects of Providence to conduct the assessment, based on its professional evaluation of the current condition of the structure. This report, in its entirety, including budgets and appendices of reference documents, is the result of that assessment.

SECTION 3 – EXISTING CONDITIONS

METHODOLOGY

To begin the building's conditions assessment, Tom Greene and Ruth Bucci granted Cameron McCormick, Senior Project Architect with BTGA, an interview and tour of the building. Cameron then met with Jim Furoroli, North Providence Director of Public Buildings who discussed the building systems and maintenance history. They provided another tour identifying areas with recurring problems. Those tours were supplemented by two additional trips to the site by architect McCormick to over-fly the roof and to inspect the attic, which required the town to provide an extension ladder for access. Most photography included in this report was provided by BTGA using cell phone photography and supplemented with a high-definition digital camera and drone photography. The drone was a DJI Mavic Mini and was operated by Cameron McCormick of BTGA. A reference copy of all photographs are included in Appendix C, while all photos are included on electronic media for the Town. Assumptions regarding the existing conditions were reviewed with Town and historic representatives via phone conference on March 23, 2020. Historic references were reviewed with the Town on March 25th. Minutes of these meetings are included in Appendix D.

A. CODE REQUIREMENTS

Zoning/Use

The Old Town Hall is on the property at 2226 Mineral Spring Avenue in North Providence's Plat No. 14, is lot 245 and is zoned Commercial Village (CV): This district is established to recognize that certain areas of town are characterized by smaller commercial establishments that predominantly serve a particular neighborhood or segment of the Town's population, versus town wide or intertown.

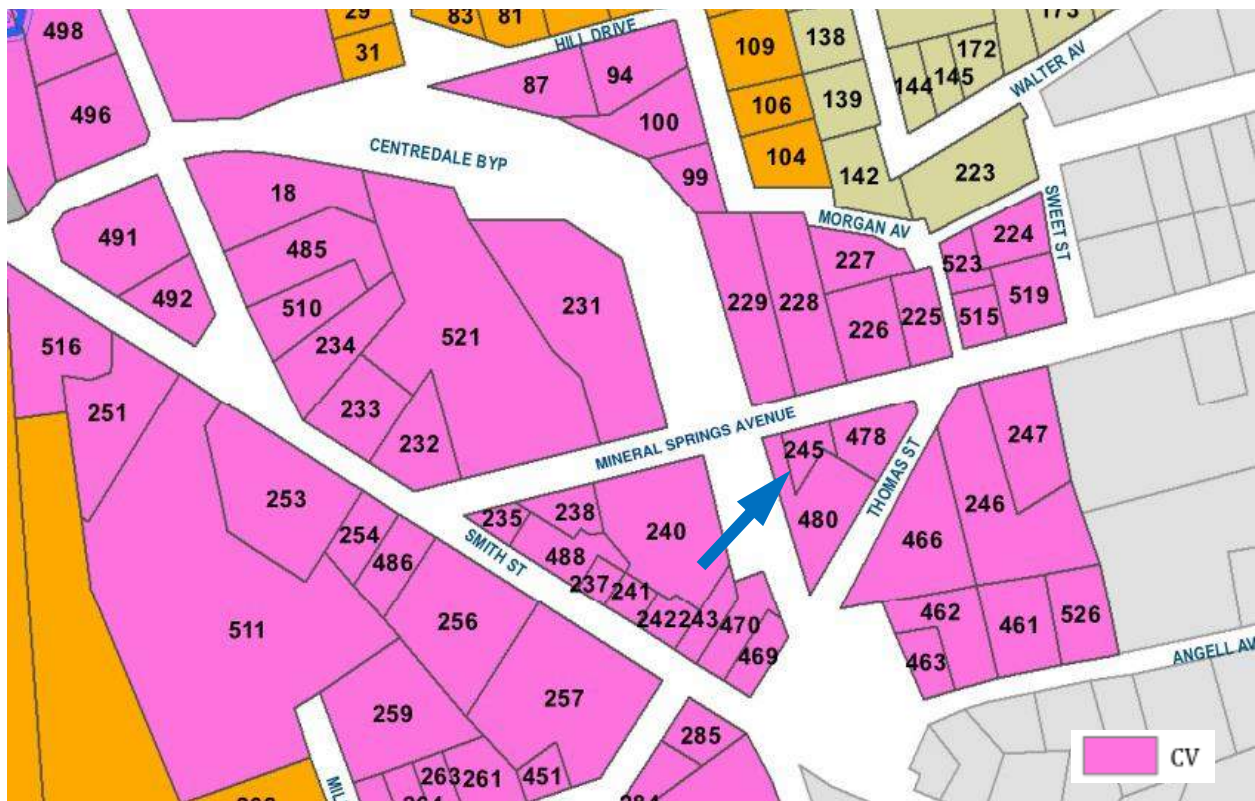


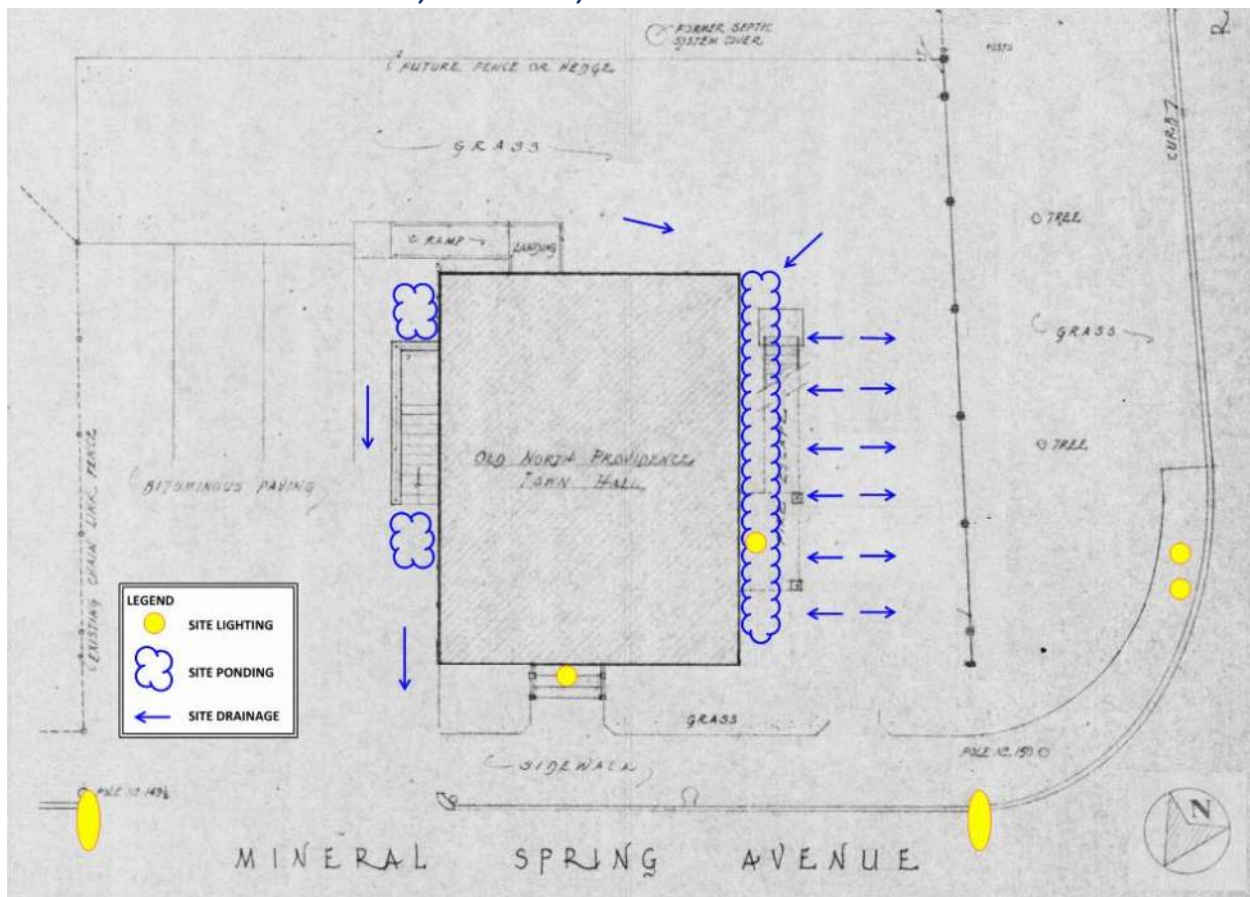
Figure 3.1: Portion of North Providence Zone Map #14.

Building and Fire Code

The Town of North Providence relies on the Rhode Island State Building Code (RISBC) Title 510 which has adopted and promulgated the provisions of the International Building Code (IBC), 2015 edition, as published by the International Code Council (ICC), specifically Part 20 – The State Rehabilitation Building and Fire Code for Existing Structures. Chapter 3: Repairs states that the work shall be done using like materials or materials permitted by the applicable code. The current use as offices with accessory assembly was addressed during the 1985 work and is not projected to change. Further analysis is beyond the scope of this report.

Accessibility Requirements

The existing building is not required to be accessible as services there can be accommodated elsewhere by the Town. Existing historic door restrictions conflict with accessibility guidelines but are allowed under RI Code with historic exceptions. However, the Town has requested recommendations on how to improve accessibility where possible.

B. SITE CONDITIONS: LIGHTING, DRAINAGE, AND WALKING SURFACE**Figure 3.2: Site Plan.****Site Lighting**

There are several streetlights in the area adequately lighting the sidewalk. The north, main entrance and emergency egress door from the second floor both have lights mounted directly above them, but the rear entrance and the back of the building in general do not have adequate lighting.

Site Drainage

The north and south sides of the building drain well. The east side, the parking lot, has settled and ponds on either side of the stairwell to the basement. The west side is slightly sloped toward the building with the low spot along the dripline. **See Figures 3.5 – 3.9**

Site Walking Surfaces

No holes, cracks, or other trip hazards are apparent in the sidewalks around the property.

Parking

The parking is limited to 3 spaces with limited turn-around maneuvering space. Backing onto busy Mineral Spring Ave. is not a safe option.

There are cuts and patches in the asphalt where unknown work was recently performed. **See Figure 3.9.**

C. SITE CONDITIONS: SITE ACCESS POINTS**South, Back Entrance**

The ramp slope meets accessibility requirements, but it leads to an inaccessible door (two narrow leaves). See Door 1-2

The rails do not meet the requirement to have either a curb or barrier within 4" of the walking surface or having extended rails 12" beyond the end of the ramp. They are not required to be guards due to the low elevation above grade.

The landing outside the door does not meet the space requirements outside the arc of the door swing.



Figure 3.3: Concrete ramp to south entrance.

North, Main Entrance

There is no landing at the door and the steps at the front door (See door 1-1) are inconsistent heights from the sidewalk to the first floor:

Riser 1: 6 5/8"

Riser 2: 8 1/2"

Riser 3: 7 5/8"

Riser 4: 10"

This does not meet building code requirements that risers be within 1/8" of consistent height or have a handrail on both sides. However, returning to an historic condition would remove even the one rail. Stairs in old photos show stone treads on masonry risers in approximately the same configuration as the rebuilt concrete version.



Figure 3.4: Concrete steps to north entrance.

Site Drainage

The north and south sides of the building drain well. The east side, the parking lot, ponds on either side of the stairwell to the basement. The west side is slightly sloped toward the building with the low spot along the dripline.

See Figures 3.5 – 3.9



Figure 3.5: Dripline along west wall.



Figure 3.6: Ponding south of basement stair.



Figure 3.7: Ponding north of basement stair.



Figure 3.8: Ponding along dripline.



Figure 3.9: Recent work on Parking lot.

Site Summary

The site does not have adequate drainage which allows ponding near the foundation. When water can pond near a building moisture intrusion is inevitable.

The access onto Mineral Spring Ave. is problematic for more than single car parking.

The building, although ramped at the rear, is not accessible per both RI Code and ADA guidelines.

D. BUILDING EXTERIOR – ROOF

Roof - General

The roof system is multiple levels of asphalt shingles over roof felt on deck boards and is at the end of its useful life. See also BUILDING INTERIORS – ATTIC for additional discoveries regarding the roof deck and structure.

Discoloration and frayed edges indicate that the roof shingles have begun to fail. See Figure: 3.15 The roof ridge is straight and true indicating that the structure is sound. See figure 3.14

There are only 2 roof penetrations: the chimney and a plumbing vent near the east edge. Neither have proper flashing – the vent appears to only have black mastic as waterproofing while the chimney flashing, although present, is leaking copiously. There is no cricket.

Chimney

The chimney masonry joints have deteriorated. The chimney may need to be demolished to the roof or further and rebuilt if beyond the point of repointing.

The Roof deck around the chimney shows no apparent sag or any other signs of deterioration. See the interior portions of the report for more information.

The cast concrete roof cap has worn enough that the rebar is visible. See figure: 3.16

East Roof Edge

A spot near the middle of the roof edge on the east side of the building is greatly deteriorated. See figures 3.12 and 3.54.

The eave construction appears to be profile moulding on a flat fascia board; no metal drip edge is visible.

The building has no gutters which has contributed to a dripline on the west side of the building. Also see the Site Drainage portion of the report and Figures 3.5 – 3.9.



Figure 3.10: Roof.



Figure 3.11: Chimney.



Figure 3.12: Deteriorating roof edge.

Main Entrance Roof

The main entrance roof appears to be made of terne metal painted red to match the shutters. No deficiencies are apparent, but wear-through is evident on the surface coatings.



Figure 3.13: Entrance Roof.



Figure 3.14: Ridge is straight, Metal edge at rake.



Figure 3.15: Worn shingles and plumbing vent.



Figure 3.16: Worn chimney cap.



Figure 3.17: Hole in Cornice Return.

E. BUILDING EXTERIOR – EXTERIOR WALLS, WINDOWS, AND DOORS

Siding

The siding has a few areas that need to be replaced. Scrape and Paint it all, including louvers in the attic.

There are nail heads visible all around the building and in some cases are showing rust which is staining the siding.

Several siding boards have swollen creating a rough, unfinished appearance.



Figure 3.18: Siding.



Figure 3.19: Siding.

Trim

There are several pieces of trim that need to be replaced.



Figure 3.20: Trim.

Windows - General

The operability of each window unit was NOT tested because they have been deemed unsafe.

Observing with a standard 24" level, BTGA found that the window openings are all acceptably plumb and level.

The paint visible on all wooden members of the windows: sashes, screens, shutters, storms, frames, trim, etc. both interior and exterior is past its useful life. Much of the wood is damaged from prolonged exposure to the weather.

The window drip caps are painted wood without metal head flashing and some of them have the joint at the siding sealed, which directs moisture back into the wall.

Interior conditions

Evidence of water droplets on the top rail of this window is a sign that moisture has infiltrated the wall and found its way through the window head.

Interior stops are frequently loose and the stools, especially on south and west facing windows are damaged by moisture and UV exposure. Plaster damage around window openings is common.



Figure 3.21: Typical window.



Figure 3.22: Window drip cap.



Figure 3.23: Window interior - head.



Figure 3.24: Window interior - stool.

Exterior Doors – General

Door numbers are located on the plans in the BUILDING INTERIOR portion of this report.

Observing with a standard 24" level, BTGA found that the door openings are all acceptably plumb and level.

No doors have weatherstripping.

The putty and paint on all door transoms have passed their useful life.

The exterior doors, except Basement door 0-1, all have thick, wooden thresholds/sills which are too tall to be acceptable for accessibility standards, and the paint has faded and chalked.

North, Front Door (1-1)

Door 1-1 is made up of two (2) 26" wide x 7' tall leaves. Cracks around the door perimeter allow visible light and therefore weather to enter. Bottom rail of the operable door is showing rot.



Figure 3.25: North, Front Door - Elevation.



Figure 3.26: North, Front Door - Daylight.



Figure 3.27: North, Front Door – Rot.

South, Back Door (1-2)

Door 1-2 is made up of two (2) 21 1/2" wide x 7' leaves. There is a 1/8" wide gap at the astragal where daylight can be seen. The bottom panel of each door leaf is broken with enough gap to allow light through. One of the panels is fixed, so the clear opening is less than 20" wide for this "accessible" door. The threshold is 1 3/4" tall and in VERY bad shape.



Figure 3.28: South, Back Door – Cracked panel.



Figure 3.29: South, Back Door - Elevation.



Figure 3.30: South, Back Door – Weathered paint.



Figure 3.31: South, Back Door – Open joints.

Second Floor Egress Door (2-1)

Door 2-1 is made up of two (2) 22 1/2" wide x 7' tall leaves. Cracks around the door perimeter allow light. These doors were added in the 1985 renovation.



Figure 3.32: Second Floor Egress Door - Transom.



Figure 3.33: Second Floor Egress Door - Elevation.

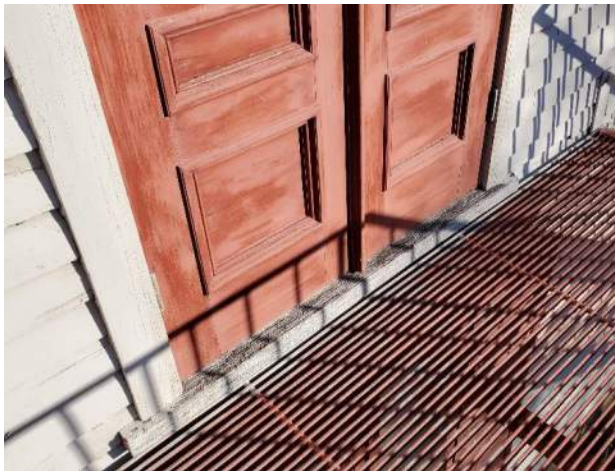


Figure 3.34: Egress Door – Weathered paint.



Figure 3.35: Egress Door - Light.

Basement Door (0-1)

Door 0-1 is a single door in the basement that does not latch properly, has gaps around the frame allowing light through on all sides, and has no threshold. Hardware is damaged.

Basement Stair

The stairs down to the basement have uneven riser heights, no handrails, and a gravel landing.



Figure 3.36: Basement Door – exposed brick.



Figure 3.37: Basement door - elevation



Figure 3.38: Basement Door - Daylight.



Figure 3.39: Basement Door - Daylight.

F. BUILDING EXTERIOR – FOUNDATION WALLS

Foundation Walls

The rubble stone foundation received a parge coat at some point. That coating is beginning to fail with cracking, spalled sections, rising damp staining, and biological growth.



Figure 3.40: Foundation.

Coal Chute

The coal chute is covered and boarded up from the exterior.

There is evidence of moisture intrusion in the basement around this opening. See figure 3.45.



Figure 3.41: Coal Chute.

Front Stairs

There are several open joints in the stone wall behind the front door stairs which allow water infiltration into the foundation.



Figure 3.42: Gaps behind front stairs.



Figure 3.43: Biological growth in some areas.



Figure 3.44: The sill plate is exposed in areas.



Figure 3.45: Interior Coal Chute.



Figure 3.46: Infilled opening.



Figure 3.47: Infilled opening.



Figure 3.48: Level structure.

G. BUILDING INTERIOR - ATTIC

Attic - General

The attic is ventilated through vents on the north and south gable ends which are not original to the Hall.

There is kraft-faced batt insulation between the ceiling joists.

There is a lot of evidence of moisture intrusion. Stained areas were tested with a multi-tool pick and found to be dried out and strong. This is typical in an attic that is well vented with little insulation because it allows the wood to dry properly.

The roof deck boards are tight together at the low ends with gaps between the remaining deck boards up to the ridge; this is the way that cedar shake roof decks were built to allow for drying.

Wiring

There is an electrical box in the attic that appears to enclose different types of wire without a cover plate.

There is evidence in the attic, and throughout the building that the electrical system is a blend of knob and tube and modern, grounded wire.

Backside of Shingles

There are several places where the backside of the roof shingles is visible from inside the attic. In this photo you can see that there was a layer of roof felt in place, but over time it has become brittle and fallen away.



Figure 3.49: Attic.



Figure 3.50: Exposed wire connections.



Figure 3.51: Visible backside of shingles.

Attic - Chimney

The roof deck boards and rafters on either side of the chimney have been exposed to moisture intrusion. They felt strong when tested, but the biological growth raises an air-quality safety concern.

The chimney masonry is deteriorating. Based on the condition here and what's visible from the outside and in the basement, it may be that the masonry and mortar joints behind the plaster enclosures on the first and second floors are deteriorating as well.



Figure 3.52: Roof deck at chimney.

Plumbing Vent

The plumbing vent is visible penetrating the roof and leak damage repair is evident just below it. This is also just above the leak-damaged area in the stairwell. See figures 3.15 and 3.59.

Also seen here is a heavy-gauge black insulated wire and two modern wires inserted into a junction box.



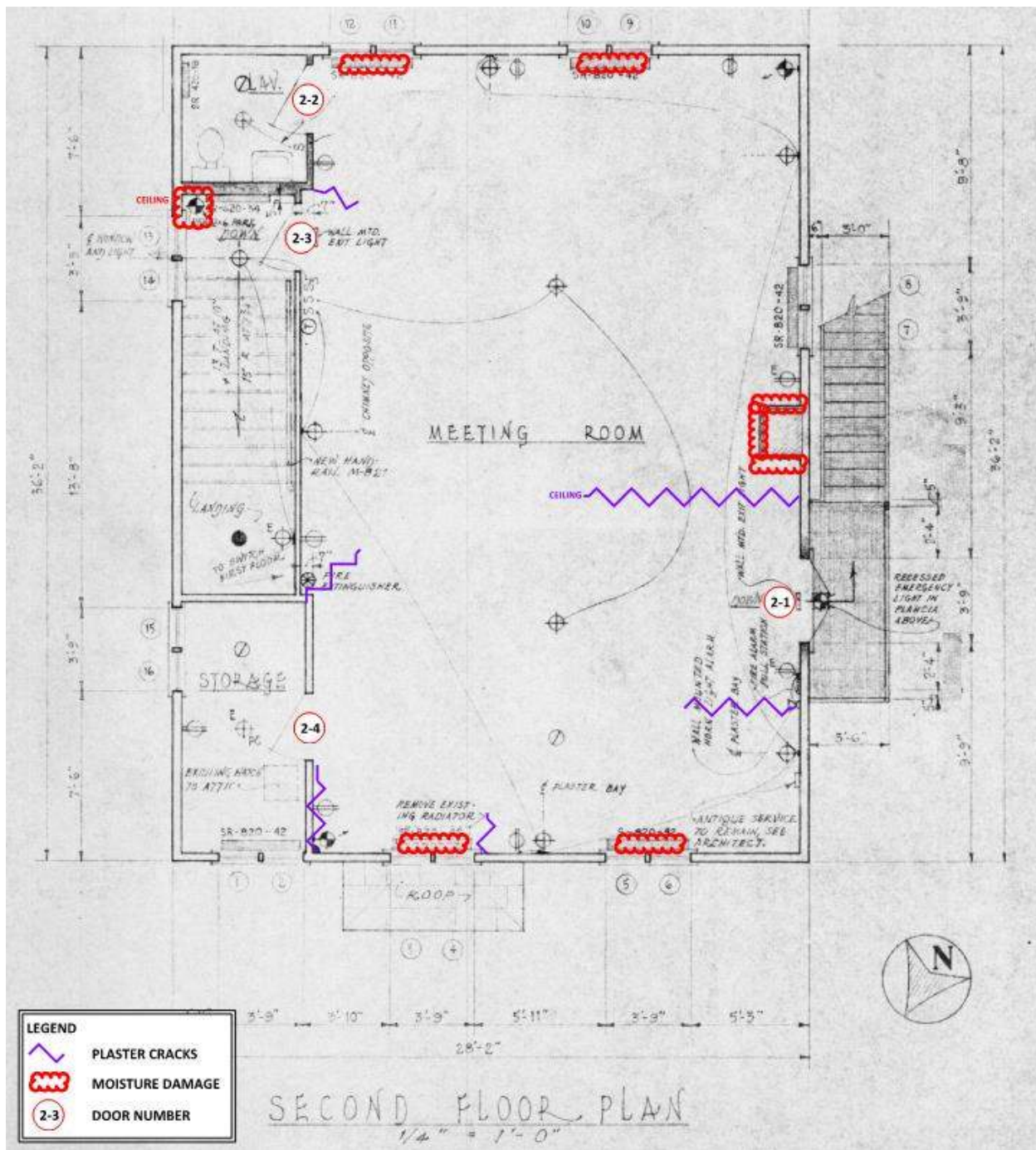
Figure 3.53: Plumbing vent.

East Roof Edge

Daylight is visible at the east roof edge. This is the most obvious deficiency from the outside; see figure 3.12.



Figure 3.54: East roof edge.

H. BUILDING INTERIOR – SECOND FLOOR**Figure3.55: Second floor plan with notes.****Second Floor Interior Finishes**

Feature	Material	Condition	Notes
Ceiling	Plaster	Good	Various cracks as indicated on the plan
Walls	Plaster	Good	Various cracks as indicated on the plan
Floor	Hardwood	Good	Toilet room floor is terra cotta tile

*All room on the second floor have the interior finishes listed unless otherwise noted.

Second Floor Interior Door Notes
(Please Refer to Plan for Door Number)

2-2 doesn't close properly – it catches on the frame at the top, latch side.

2-3 Doesn't latch properly

2-4 operates normally



Figure 3.56: Door 2-2 doesn't close.

Plaster Between Windows and Heaters

This is an example of the plaster damage frequently present between the windows and the heaters



Figure 3.57: Moisture damage.

Plaster Crack

A crack that stems from the fire alarm to the door and ceiling.



Figure 3.58: Plaster crack.

Plumbing Vent Roof Leak

Leak damage apparent in the stairwell. This area is directly below the plumbing vent roof penetration. See figures 3.15 and 3.53.



Figure 3.59: Roof Leak.

Cracked Toilet

All plumbing fixtures in the building are operational except the toilet in the second-floor bathroom, which, even though it has water in it, shows evidence of past leaks and has a crack in the bowl.



Figure 3.60: Cracked toilet.

Lavatory

Although the sink in the second-floor bathroom is functional, the right faucet is loose in its setting, and both are difficult to operate.



Figure 3.61: Lavatory.

Chimney Enclosure

The plaster chimney enclosure is deteriorating. Based on the condition in the attic it becomes likely that the masonry behind the plaster enclosure is deteriorating as well.

The embedded wood corner pieces on both outside corners, as well as the other two outside corners indicated on the plan to be cracking, have separated from the plaster distinctly.



Figure 3.62: Chimney enclosure.



Figure 3.63: Chimney enclosure.

Ceiling Crack

There are several open joints in the stone wall behind the front door stairs.



Figure 3.64: Ceiling crack.

LEGEND

- PLASTER CRACKS
- MOISTURE DAMAGE
- DOOR NUMBER

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$

First Floor Interior Finishes

*All room on the first floor have the interior finishes listed unless otherwise noted.

First Floor Interior Door Notes (Please Refer to Plan for Door Number)

- 1-3 operates normally
- 1-4 is fixed shut
- 1-5 operates normally
- 1-6 operates normally
- 1-7 is missing a knob on the chamber-side
- 1-8 doesn't close or latch properly



Figure 3.66: Door 1-8 doesn't latch.

Stairs to Second Floor

The interior stairs do not meet the standard code requirements for handrails, treads and risers in non-residential buildings and may require new or renewal of historic variances granted before 2003. Such permission should not be hard to achieve given the easy-to-navigate configuration.



Figure 3.67: Interior stairs.

First Floor – Toilet Room

The toilet room contains a standard water closet and lavatory; both are operational. The room size does not meet the requirements to be made accessible.



Figure 3.68: First floor toilet room.

Kitchenette

The ceiling and exterior wall in this room exhibit moisture damage likely stemming from the plumbing vent leak in the roof above.

The kitchenette contains a single-bowl stainless steel sink, refrigerator and gas range. All are operational, but the range top has rusted through in areas. The countertop has been worn in spots. The cabinets are good quality and operational.

The room is too small to ever meet the current accessibility requirements.

There is a dead space under the stairs only accessible by a door behind the refrigerator.



Figure 3.69: Kitchenette ceiling.



Figure 3.70: Kitchenette cabinets.



Figure 3.71: Door behind the refrigerator.



Figure 3.72: Kitchenette appliances.

First Floor – Chimney Enclosure

The plaster chimney enclosure is deteriorating. Based on the condition in the attic it becomes likely that the masonry behind the plaster enclosure is deteriorating as well.



Figure 3.73: Chimney Enclosure.

Trap Door to Basement

The trap door to the basement is not adequate for regular use. With no landing or rails, one is forced to balance themselves while stepping down onto rickety steps, described in BUILDING INTERIOR – BASEMENT, or with nothing for stability as one pulls themselves out of the basement. This is the original access to the cell block and is designed to be restrictive in width.



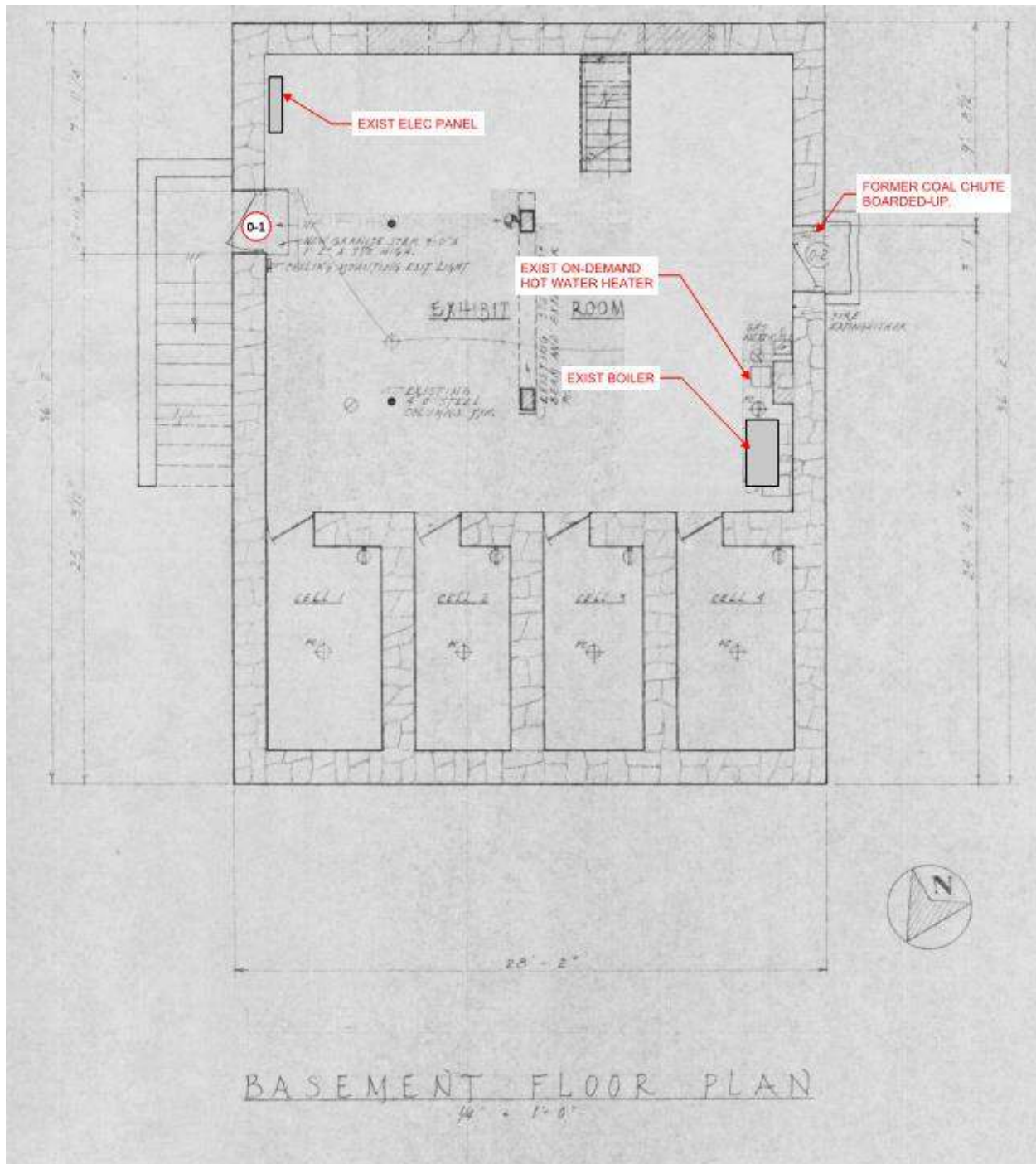
Figure 3.74: Trap Door.

Hidden Floor Box

No one knows for sure what this was for, but the most likely theory is that it was once a safety box.



Figure 3.75: Hidden floor box.

J. BUILDING INTERIOR – BASEMENT**Figure3.76: Second floor plan with notes.****Basement Interior Finishes**

Feature	Material	Condition	Notes
Ceiling	Plaster	Removed	Only wood lath remains. Bluestone in cells
Walls	Parge coat	spotty	
Floor	concrete	Rough & pitted	

*All room on the first floor have the interior finishes listed unless otherwise noted.

Trap Door and Stairs

The existing stairs are rickety and unsound. They are configured more like a ship's ladder than a code-compliant stair.



Figure 3.77: Stairs.

Basement - Chimney

The brick masonry chimney in the basement has deteriorated greatly. Its current and continued use as a flue with gas appliances would indicate a requirement for a flue lining. No evidence of such a lining was found.



Figure 3.78: Basement - Chimney.

Brick Columns

The brick masonry columns in the basement have mortar joints attacked by rising damp, but do not appear to have shifted.



Figure 3.79: Deteriorating brick column.

Basement Floor

The basement floor is rough and pitted concrete, likely due to a lack of protection from moisture under the slab, or a poor mix.

Also shown is one of the 4 steel columns in the basement: two (2) on the east and two (2) on the west of the brick columns.



Figure 3.80: Basement Floor.

Basement Cells - Ceiling

The cells have bluestone slabs for the ceiling. One of the cells has a large hole in the bluestone, but it's unclear how it was broken.



Figure 3.81: Broken bluestone.

Access Over the Cells

There are several places where the plaster enclosing the interstitial space over the cells has been broken open.



Figure 3.82: Access over cells.

K. BUILDING SYSTEMS

Plumbing

The building is equipped with an early-model on-demand hot water heater that appears to be nearing the end of its useful life. At the time of this observation, hot water was available at all sinks.

The Paloma gas water heater model No. PH-12A DN has been discontinued as part of the Paloma 'Legacy' Series. It was prevalent in the early 80's suggesting that it was installed during the '85 renovation.



Figure 3.83: Water heater and boiler.

Heat

The building is heated with a natural gas hot water radiant heat system with a hot water boiler manufactured by Vaillant.

At the time of observation, the heat was active, and all convectors worked except the one on the west wall of the Council chamber; it was warm, but just barely compared to the others.

See chimney comments for liner requirements.

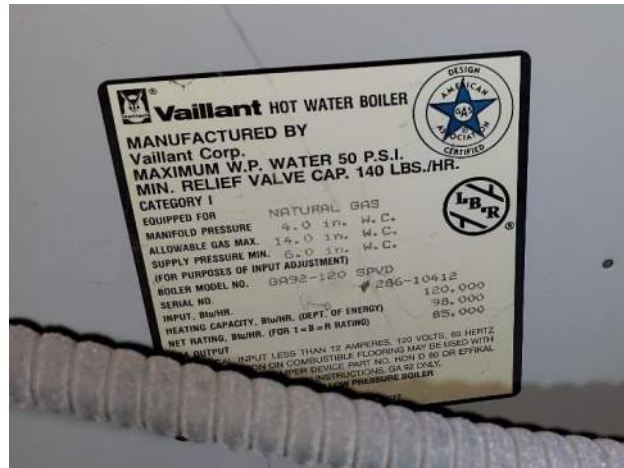


Figure 3.84: Boiler Model.

Electrical

Portions of the building have had the wiring upgraded to modern wiring, but no evidence has been found to suggest the date of renovation. Also refer to INTERIOR CONDITIONS - ATTIC for more information.

At the time of the observation all electrical outlets were operational and all lights and switches worked except one in the hallway near the front door; Tom says that it controls the light above the front door and needs the bulb replaced to ensure that it is operational.



Figure 3.85: Electrical and security systems.

Fire Alarm

The fire alarm system is operational and tested quarterly by the fire department. An opinion as to its current code compliance is beyond the scope of this report. There is no sprinkler system within the building.

Pest Control

The building is treated monthly by A&D Professional Pest Elimination.

Communication and Security Systems

The security system is currently not operational, and its history is unknown. The security company is Prime Systems, Inc. of Warwick. (401) 231-9600

There are a couple of adaptors unplugged in the basement.



Figure 3.86: Fire Alarm Panel.

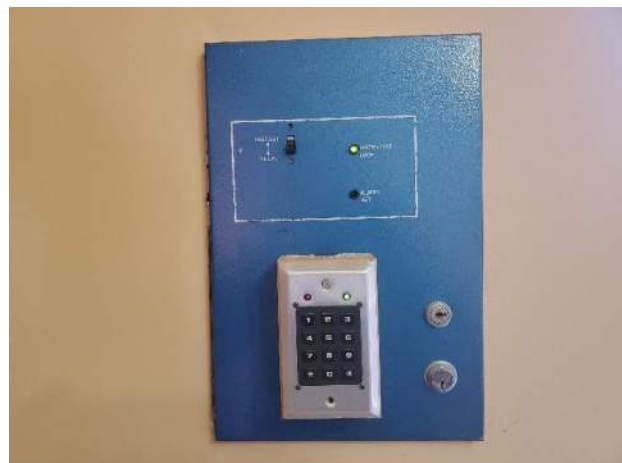


Figure 3.87: Security panel.



Figure 3.88: Junction box in first floor toilet room.



Figure 3.89: Water heater model.

L. SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building structure is remarkably plumb for its age. Using a standard 24" level BTGA checked the floors, ceilings and fenestration all around the building and found that most were nearly level and those that were not, were within 1/8" – 1/4" off over 24". This suggests that the foundations have remained stable.

The roofing is well past its useful life and some of the deck, trim, and interior finishes have suffered for it. The well-vented attic has allowed for drying which has been instrumental to its longevity.

The windows and doors are no longer weather-tight and their paint, which acts as a protective coating, has deteriorated which allows the wood to be exposed to the weather and deteriorate more.

The interior finishes have remained in good condition except where affected by moisture intrusion.

The building systems: electrical, plumbing, and heat are all due for attention. The hot water heater is at the end of its useful life, the electrical system has some deficiencies, a chimney liner may be required, and the boiler should be serviced and professionally inspected. If the owner is interested in making the security system operational, they should contact the company for an inspection.

SECTION 4 – RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposed work has been prioritized as SAFETY ISSUES, SHORT-TERM, LONG-TERM, and IMPROVEMENTS:

- **SAFETY ISSUES:** work is recommended to be accomplished as soon as possible to correct code violations, resolve a potential safety matter, or prevent a security breach.
- **SHORT-TERM:** work we recommend completing within 1-5 years and is necessary to stop or delay further deterioration of the historic building.
- **LONG-TERM:** work we recommend completing within 6-10 years and is recommended to be done to improve the stability or functionality of the building.
- **IMPROVEMENTS:** work we recommend addressing as you see fit, preferably after all other work is complete to enhance building function or historical accuracy.

See Budget at the end of this section for anticipated costs.

A. SAFETY ISSUES: Recommended to be accomplished as soon as possible to correct code violations, resolve a potential safety matter, or prevent a security breach.

Unsecured Electrical

During attic and interior reviews, open junction boxes and non-standard wiring were observed that should be corrected immediately to avoid fire hazards.

Unlined Chimney

Given the chimney condition and lack of a visible gas appliance liner, it is possible that carbon monoxide fumes may be entering the building when space and water heating appliances are in use. We recommend that carbon monoxide detectors be installed immediately before office occupancy or assembly use is resumed. Inspection by National Grid regarding installation of this liner should be undertaken as soon as possible.

Roof

Temporary repairs at the chimney roof flashings should be made as soon as possible to reduce or eliminate the moisture intrusion to prevent further degradation in that area. At least a temporary cricket flashing behind the chimney should be installed.

Missing Emergency Egress Light

Although there are emergency light heads visible throughout the building, we did not find one at the rear egress door. A light source over this door is required.

B. SHORT-TERM: Recommended to be completed within 1-5 years to stop or delay further deterioration of the historic building.

Roof

The roof system is well past its useful life and should be replaced. Multiple layers of shingles require removal to the deck. Areas of deteriorated roof deck and trim should be replaced as discovered. At that time, the chimney and plumbing vent flashings should be also replaced. If asphalt shingles are used, metal drip edges should be installed around the perimeter. For a more historically appropriate

treatment, a slate roof should be considered with a 1-1/2" overhang as seems to be evident in the oldest photo. As gutters are not visible in this photo and the trim profile is complete without a built-in component, we recommend that the site be properly sloped away from the building rather than adding gutters now. See Site Drainage.

Chimney

The existing concrete chimney cap should be replaced with a slate or bluestone slab. The chimney above the roof should be repointed if possible, but depending on the extent of the damage, may need to be fully reconstructed. Exposed basement and attic chimney portions should be repointed. A liner to protect the mortar from gas fume attack should be installed. With this liner, the plaster enclosure at the first and second floor can be allowed to remain undisturbed. Otherwise, exploratory removal should be accomplished to determine the soundness of that masonry as well.

Exterior Doors

The North, Front Door 1-1, and Second Floor Egress Door 2-1 should be repaired and made weather tight.

The South, Back Door 1-2, should be temporarily removed and rebuilt. To improve accessibility, it is recommended that both leaves be fitted with paddle-operated coordinated operators with both inside and outside actuation. The threshold will need to be reworked to be 1/2" or less with beveled sides.

Basement Door 0-1 should be replaced in kind with weatherstripping, hold-open closer and new storage-function lever hardware and made weather tight.

Accessibility

Handrails can be reconfigured to be outside mounted with cane rails and 12" horizontal extensions at the bottom landing to comply with code and ADA guidelines. We note that creating such an accessible route into the building may create the demand for other accessible features such as an accessible bathroom and access to the upper floor meeting space. These last two are not immediately achievable.

Windows

The existing windows can be restored, and we recommend beginning with those which cannot be opened easily since that was the cause of recent injury to a Town employee. Their deterioration varies but is not extreme. Care should be taken to salvage all existing glass for reuse in any re-glazing efforts. The window sash can be restored one pair at a time with temporary opening protection in place – the new storms are almost enough on their own. All mechanisms should be cleaned and reworked using the original materials. Broken and missing items should be replaced with historic replicas. The added storms can continue in use and should be repainted on a regular basis.

Siding and Trim

All siding and trim that has rotted or otherwise been damaged beyond repair should be replaced. We recommend adding pediment flashings to all window heads, which would require removing several rows of siding to install. During that work, damaged sheathing should also be replaced.

Trap Door and Stairs

The existing stair to the basement should be treated as an historic exhibit. We recommend repairing the door and stairs to prevent collapse, but relying on the outside basement door as egress. We

recommend restricting access to the basement, which should continue to be used only as a mechanical space. Historic tours should enter and exit through the exterior door and be restricted to only a few persons at a time.

Basement

The exterior basement stairs should be rebuilt, made code-compliant, and include a drained landing outside the door. An interior landing with steps should be added. The brick masonry columns in the basement should be pointed and made structurally sound. Rising damp will continue given the slab condition, but damage can be slowed.

Foundation

The coal chute, now only visible from the interior, should be uncovered to better determine the source/extent of moisture intrusion and corrective actions. We recommend that an appropriate bulkhead be designed and installed at the coal chute to provide weather protection and a better historic interpretation utilizing modern flashing and sealants behind it.

Site Drainage

The parking lot should have ponding areas cut out, patched, and sloped to direct water to the street where a storm drain exists. The west side should be re-graded to slope away from the building and channel water to the storm drain.

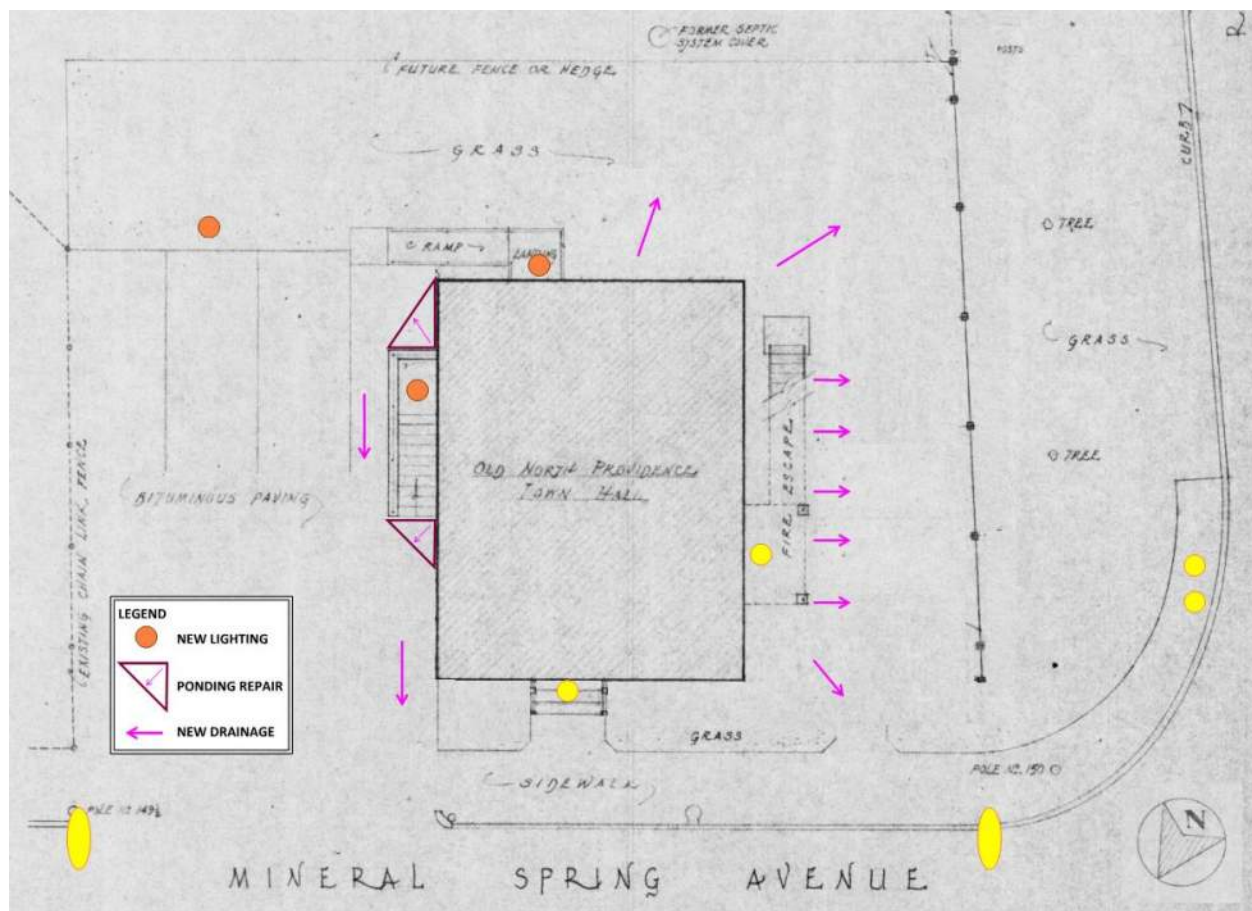


Figure 4.1: Recommended site drainage and lighting.

C. LONG-TERM: Recommended to be completed within 6-10 years and is recommended to be done to enhance building function or historical accuracy.

Electrical

There is a mix of wiring throughout the building including knob and tube. If the building is to be continued in public use, we recommend that the system be completely upgraded to modern, grounded wire.

Main Entrance Roof

The main entrance roof should be top coated to extend its life expectancy. It may be economical to include its replacement with tin-coated copper as an alternate in the re-roofing recommended under "Short Term".

Siding and Trim

The trim at the base of the wall should be replaced and lengthened to cover the exterior wall sill plate. The siding should have any rusting fasteners pulled and replaced with galvanized nails, topped with glazing compound, and painted. Budget for regular repainting every 5-8 years.

Foundation

The foundation wall should be pointed at the interior and the parging cleaned before patching on the outside. The foundation wall behind the front steps should be pointed at this time.

Plumbing

The broken second-floor toilet should be replaced and the lavatory faucets either repaired and properly set in the bowl or replaced entirely. The hot water heater should be replaced before it fails.

Interior Finishes

Once the building is made weather-tight, the interior finishes can be repaired.

Heat

The boiler should have its annual maintenance performed and the radiant heat unit that is underperforming should be inspected. Replacements should be budgeted on a regular life cycle basis.

D. IMPROVEMENTS: Recommended addressing as you see fit, preferably after all other work is complete. Items enhance functionality or historical accuracy.

Parking Lot

The site lighting could be improved to include better illumination at each exterior door and across the parking lot. A revised striping strategy and T-turnaround to allow front-only access to Mineral Spring Ave. would be a good investment in site safety.

Front Stair

The concrete stair at the North, Front Door 1-1 could be replaced with a stone tread and masonry stair more consistent with the historic record. The new stair should have consistent riser heights. It should be stated that the use of this front door as an exit is risky given the lack of landing and historically accurate lack of handrails. The doors are also too narrow for current code compliance but acceptable as an historic variance item. With limited occupancy, the building could rely on the rear egress door only.

The upper floor has a second means of egress provided by the fire escape. Something to be considered in future use reviews.

Kitchenette

The countertop could be replaced, and the appliances could be upgraded to energy-efficient models if the Owner chooses. Interior doors could be repaired to full functionality.

Basement

The basement floor could be made smooth and free of trip hazards. The plaster enclosing the interstitial space over the cells could be repaired. We recommend the broken stone ceiling be preserved as an historic relic of an attempted break-out!

Communication and Security Systems

The security system is currently not operational but if the Owner chooses, they could contact the provider and have the system inspected and upgraded.

Fire Alarm

If the use of the building intensifies, it is recommended that the building fire alarm be upgraded to a more modern system using notification devices with accessibility provisions.

Air Conditioning

It has been suggested that air conditioning the building for summer use would enhance the user experience and provide a more stable environment for the historic records and photographs. To do so for a reasonable cost, split system heat pump units could be added on each of the main floors with condensers located beside the ramp landing. This would minimize interior disruption and outside noise.

Repair Interior Doors

Various interior panel doors are difficult to operate or have damaged hardware. Sensitive minor repairs would make use more pleasant while preserving historic character.

May 1, 2020

BTGA Job #2004

Budget Estimate - North Providence Town Hall

Items below correlate to the recommendations offered for the building in Typical Construction Trade order.

	Unit	Cost	Qty.	Immediate	Short Term	Long Term	Improvements
SITE							
Regrade to drain away from building	lf	\$200	40		\$8,000		
Repair low spots in paving to drain out	sf	\$120	120		\$14,400		
Add site lighting	each	\$8,000	3				\$24,000
Redesign parking and curbcut access	ls	\$20,000	1				\$20,000
					\$22,400		\$44,000
CONCRETE							
Clean parging	sf	\$20	372			\$7,440	
Patch parging	sf	\$40	75			\$3,000	
Replace basement floor w/vapor barrier	sf	\$25	875				\$21,875
						\$10,440	\$21,875
MASONRY							
Rebuild from roof up w/new cap	lf	\$500	8		\$4,000		
Install Chimney liner	ls	\$1,000	1	\$1,000			
Point interior of foundation	sf	\$30	1098			\$32,940	
Point exposed areas of chimney	sf	\$40	75		\$3,000		
Point basement columns	sf	\$40	84		\$3,360		
Point behind front stairs	lf	\$40	20		\$800		
Replace entry stair w/historic version	lf	\$300	4				\$1,200
				\$1,000	\$11,160	\$32,940	\$1,200
METALS							
Redo ramp rails for better clearance/extensions	lf	\$125	50		\$6,250		
Inspect and paint fire escape regularly	each	\$3,500	1			\$3,500	
					\$6,250	\$3,500	
WOOD & PLASTICS							
New Bulkhead at coal chute	each	\$2,500	1		\$2,500		
Patch rotted trim	lf	\$75	125		\$9,375		
Flash window pediments	lf	\$250	51		\$12,750		
Treat rusting nail heads	each	\$25	200			\$5,000	
Stabilize stair and trap door	ls	\$3,500	1		\$3,500		
New landing/stairs at basement door	ls	\$2,000	1		\$2,000		
Upgrade kitchenette	ls	\$8,000	1				\$8,000
					\$30,125	\$5,000	\$8,000
THERMAL - ROOF							
Install cricket at chimney and treat leaks	each	\$500	1	\$1,200			
Strip shingles	sf	\$4	1512		\$6,048		
New underlayments, asphalt shingles, flashings	sf	\$20	1512		\$30,240		
Slate instead of asphalt shingles - add	sf	\$40	1512		\$60,480		
LCC step flashing and vent sleeve	lf	\$175	7		\$1,225		
				\$1,200	\$97,993		
WINDOWS & DOORS							
Restore windows	each	\$1,200	17		\$20,400		
Rework storm window hardware	each	\$250	17		\$4,250		
Replace basement door	each	\$3,000	1		\$3,000		
Rework newer door pairs	each	\$2,000	4		\$8,000		
Repair interior doors	each	\$200	7				\$1,400
Install dual operators on rear door pair	set	\$8,000	1		\$8,000		
					\$43,650		\$1,400
PAINTING							
Doors and windows and storms, both sides	each	\$500	34		\$17,000		
Repair work touchup	sf	\$20	100		\$2,000		
					\$19,000		
FIRE & SAFETY SYSTEMS							
Install hard-wired Carbon Monoxide Detection	each	\$400	3	\$1,200			
Reinstate security system	each	\$1,000	1				\$1,000
Upgrade fire alarm system	each	\$8	2700			\$21,600	
				\$1,200		\$21,600	\$1,000

BREWSTER THORNTON GROUP ARCHITECTS, LLP

	Unit	Cost	Qty.	Immediate	Short Term	Long Term	Improvements
HVAC							
Add HVAC for summer usage - split systems	each	\$5,700	2				\$11,400
Inspect and service appliances	each	\$500	3		\$1,500		
Replace boiler	each	\$7,000	1			\$7,000	
Replace water heater	each	\$2,500	1			\$2,500	
					\$1,500	\$9,500	\$11,400
PLUMBING							
Repair or replace existing faucets	each	\$400	3				\$1,200
Replace broken toilet	each	\$500	1		\$500		
					\$500		\$1,200
ELECTRICAL							
Secure and make-safe existing wiring	ls	\$2,000	1	\$2,000			
Install emergency light head at rear door	each	\$750	1	\$750			
Upgrade wiring for entire building	sf	\$15	2700				\$40,500
				\$2,750			\$40,500
SUBTOTAL				\$6,150	\$232,578	\$82,980	\$130,575
GENERAL CONDITIONS							
Overhead & Profit	percent	10.00%		\$615	\$23,258	\$8,298	\$13,058
General Conditions	percent	20.00%		\$1,230	\$46,516	\$16,596	\$26,115
TOTAL BUDGET ESTIMATE				\$7,995	\$302,351	\$107,874	\$169,748
Contingency	percent	10.00%		\$800	\$30,235	\$10,787	\$16,975
A/E Fees	percent	10.00%		\$800	\$30,235	\$10,787	\$16,975
TOTAL PROJECT COST				\$9,594	\$362,822	\$129,449	\$203,697
All Phases =							\$695,967

Projected total project cost is in 2020 dollars and does not include financing or escalation costs.
 Project cost may be impacted by bid method, bid package size, and/or labor conditions at time of bid.