2751 Dundas Street West, Toronto

Inspection Report

November 9, 2016

PETER YEATES

INSPECTIONS

COMPANY INFORMATION

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- ☑ 30 years Inspection Experience
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- ☑ Over 12,000 Homes Inspected

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Overall Condition:

This is a solidly built early 1900's building that has been well-maintained and has had a number of mechanical updates over the years. It is felt to be in good overall condition.

Roofing, Flashings and Chimneys:

The building has a "flat" roof (it has a good drainage slope to the rear) surfaced with a 2-ply modified bitumen membrane. The roof is reportedly 11 years old. Typical total life expectancy for roofs like this is closer to 20 years (statistically speaking). The top granular surface does show some alligator cracking, but it is felt that there are still a number of years of remaining life.

The rear deck would have a roof surface below, but it is not visible at all. On the plus side, the sun is what wears roofs out the most and it won't be getting any of that. Additionally, there is no living space below this roof (just the main floor south patio).

The mutual masonry chimney is in satisfactory condition – it only services the chimney liner.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:
-Roof inspected by walking on it.
-The decking material prevented inspection of the lower rear flat roof over which it has been installed.

Exterior:

The exterior brickwork is in good overall repair for its age. The decorative front brick parapet wall should really have a metal drip cap to protect the brick from water damage and freeze/thaw action. This parapet is shared with the neighbour to the east so any such work should be coordinated. Fortunately, it is easily accessed from the flat roof. The neighbour still has a metal brace for this tall, thin wall. But there is no longer a brace on the west side. Consult with a specialist to see if a brace should be put back – suspected to be desirable.

The aluminum eavestroughing and downspouts are in satisfactory to good condition.

The rear 2nd floor deck is newer and appears to be in good condition. The railing could be considered to be climbable (which is not permitted by Code). Improve if this is a concern.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:
-Exterior inspection from ground level.
-Sheds are not included in the inspection.

Structure:

The stone and brick foundations support solid masonry exterior walls. The building appears to be in good structural condition.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:
-There is no access to the various roof spaces (typical in buildings of this age/design).
-Walls were spotchecked only.

Electrical:

The building has a 100-amp main disconnect in the basement that is newer and leads to two separately metered 60-amp services. One for the main floor and basement and one for the 2nd floor. Each of these has its own electrical circuit breaker panel. While the service size is non-standard, it will likely prove to be adequate (particularly with the gas furnaces and main floor gas stove). The electrical panels were opened and found to be in good condition. The various disconnect boxes are locked by Hydro (standard procedure) and these main fuses could not be examined.

The visible wiring is updated grounded copper. The original wiring appears to have been entirely replaced or deactivated. Although its absence cannot be guaranteed, no *active* knob-and-tube wiring was visible or found during spotchecks of various outlet and switch boxes. All electrical outlets and most lights were found to be operable. A couple of lights and the fan in the main floor kitchen weren't responding to the switches. This could be due to bulbs being burnt out (or possibly switch issues) – try the bulbs first, then consult with an electrician if need be. In the case of the fan, it may be connected to a remote that was put away in a drawer or otherwise not located.

Minor Deficiencies:

-The switches in the basement bathroom are too close to the shower according to Code (they are trying to prevent people from operating the switches while standing in the shower). In this case, that doesn't seem too likely and improvement may not be cost-effective.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-Concealed electrical components cannot be inspected.
-For safety reasons, the main disconnect switches were not operated.
-The splitter box in the basement could not be opened as it was obstructed by a storage unit.

Heating:

Each of the two units is heated by its own 44,000 BTU/hr mid-efficiency forced air gas furnace. Both units were manufactured in 2000 and installed 15 years ago. Typical total life expectancy for gas furnaces is 15 to 20 years. It would be a good idea to budget roughly $5,000 to $6,000 (ballpark) for each new high-efficiency furnace - timing unpredictable, but continue to use these units until they fail. The furnaces were found to be operable when run through brief shoulder season test procedures.

The basement bathroom has an electric heater that was found to be operable.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-Heat exchangers not visible.
-Safety devices not tested.
-Heat loss/heat gain calculations not done.
-Humidifiers not tested.
-Although we have no reason to suspect that one is present, it should be noted that checking the premises for buried oil tanks is not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice.

Air Conditioning:

The 2nd floor has central air conditioning associated with its furnace. The unit is rated at 18,000 BTU/hr. The unit was manufactured in 2011 or 2012 and was reportedly installed 3 years ago. Typical total life expectancy is closer to 15 years. The unit could not be tested due to cold outside air temperatures (running the A/C when the temperature is below 16°C can damage the compressor).

The main floor has a ductless unit rated at 18,000 BTU/hr as well. It appears to be the same vintage. This is a good choice, because an A/C attached to the furnace would expend too much effort cooling the basement when only the main floor needs it. Like the 2nd floor unit, it was too cold outside to test.

Insulation:

There is no access to the roof spaces to check for insulation. Due to inherent space limitations it is unlikely that flat roof insulation is up to modern standards, but the cost-effectiveness of adding more insulation would need to be carefully considered since the energy savings to capital cost ratio would be very low – especially in the short term.

There really is very little outside wall space that isn't mostly window or common with the neighbours. While it is almost certain that the north and south wall insulation levels are below current standards, improvement would definitely not be worth the effort because the windows dominate the equation. If any drafty areas are encountered (in the basement for instance), we recommend weatherstripping, sealing and caulking improvements wherever possible.

We did note some mineral wool insulation during spotchecks behind finished basement walls.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-There is no access to the various roof spaces (typical in houses this age/design).
-Walls were spotchecked only.
-Continuity of air/vapour barrier not verified.
-Although checking for asbestos (which may be present in many products and materials) is not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice, it should be noted that the use of asbestos was ubiquitous at the time the house was built and for several decades afterwards. Virtually all building materials containing asbestos are considered to be of little or no health risk as long as they are not disturbed.

Plumbing:

The incoming City supply pipe is ½ inch copper as far as we can see. Water pressure is within the typical range for an older building, but definitely tends to drop with more than one fixture running simultaneously. While it should be possible to upgrade the incoming water service pipe for more pressure, it would be expensive and the cost may not be justified.

The visible supply piping *within* the house is primarily copper.

The *visible* waste plumbing is primarily ABS plastic.

There are two separate water heaters. One is a 151-litre gas-fired rental water heater that is 8 years old. The other is also a 151-litre unit, but is 21 years old. Typical life expectancy is about 15 years total (statistically speaking). We suggest calling the Gas Company for a replacement unit as water heater failures can occur unexpectedly in older units and can result in significant water leakage. Some rusting was noted at the fitting above the south water heater – monitor for leakage.

It is not known if the 2nd floor laundry area has a floor drain. Interestingly, one is not required by Code. Keep the washing machine well-maintained. If desired, there are electrically controlled emergency shut-off valves that can be installed on the supply lines. They instantly shut off the water supply to the washing machine if sensors detect any water on the floor.

Minor Deficiencies:

-The basement sink needs to be better secured to the wall.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-Concealed plumbing not inspected. -Tub/sink overflows not tested.
-Isolating/relief valves and main shut-off valve not tested.

Interior:

-The interior finishes are in good overall condition. There was a past skylight leak in the 2nd floor bathroom. It has apparently been fixed at roof level, but the interior drywall had yet to be repaired at the time of the inspection.
-The windows have been replaced over the years. Interestingly, some of the main floor windows appear to be recycled from an older building. Fortunately though, interior magnetic storms have been provided and they should prove to be serviceable (if not the most convenient arrangement).
-The stairs leading to the 2nd floor unit from the front door have some loose treads that should be resupported. The best way to do that is from below (i.e. by removing a portion of the drywall above the stairs leading to the basement below). Consult a carpenter or similar specialist for repair, but be aware that some contractors will unnecessarily suggest that stair replacement is a preferable to repair.
-The basement was found to be dry at the time of the inspection. Again, the long common wall arrangement is helpful in this regard. The building was constructed long before the invention of modern waterproofing and perimeter drainage systems, so it is very important to prevent surface water accumulations near the house by keeping eavestroughs and downspouts well maintained and by promoting good drainage next to the foundations with proper grading.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

-No comment made on cosmetic aspects of interior finishes.
-CO/smoke detectors, central alarm systems and appliances are not inspected. One smoke detector and one carbon monoxide detector are recommended for each level of every home.
-Drainage tile (if any) not visible.
-No comment can be offered on the acoustical properties of the common walls.
-No comment is offered on Fire Code/Retrofit compliance. A specialist can provide more information on the topic if desired.
-In all houses, moisture problems may result in visible or concealed mold growth. Environmental Consultants can assist if this is a concern as inspection for mold is a specialized assessment not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice.

Notes:

This is the inspection report for 2751 Dundas Street West, Toronto – performed on November 9, 2016. For the purposes of this report, the front of the house is considered to be facing north (although it actually faces northeast). The inspection was performed according to the standards of the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors – see Limitations and Conditions at www.yeatesinspect.com/lim&cond.htm.

Telephone consultation regarding this report is available free of charge – call 416-422-1571. Walkthroughs with the inspector can also be arranged at a typical cost of $150.