

587 Annette Street, Toronto

Inspection Report

December 19, 2007



COMPANY INFORMATION

- Professional Engineer (**P**rofessional **E**ngineers of **O**ntario)
- B.A.Sc. - Civil Engineering (University of Toronto)
- 23 years inspection experience
(14+ years with *Carson, Dunlop & Associates*)
- Over 9,000 homes inspected

PETER YEATES



INSPECTIONS

1237 AVENUE ROAD
UNIT 1
TORONTO, ON
M5N 2G5

(416) 422-1571

WWW.YEATESINSPECT.COM

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Overall Condition:

This is a generally well-built solid brick older home that is in typical overall condition for its age and neighbourhood.

Roofing, Flashings and Chimneys:

The sloped roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. The visible shingle areas are in good condition (reportedly 3 years old). The chimney is not currently used.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Roof inspected by binoculars.
- Several areas of the roof were snow-covered at the time of the inspection.

Exterior:

The brickwork is in good overall condition. The galvanized steel eavestroughing is in satisfactory condition, but needs to be resecured on the west side of the house (it is overflowing).

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Exterior inspection from ground level.
- Grading not visible due to snow.
- Restricted access below the front porch and the top surface was partially snow covered.

Structure:

The stone foundations support solid masonry exterior walls. The structure is in generally good condition. The east end of the third floor (by the stairs) is sagging as the joists in this area are cantilevered out over the second floor hall wall. While this is not ideal, it has been like this for many decades (if not from initial construction). Monitor for now and improve if any significant renovations are going to be done.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- No access to the roof space.
- Finishes, insulation and/or storage concealing some structural components.
- Walls were spotchecked only.

Electrical:

The house has a 100-amp electrical service with a newer breaker panel. This is considered to be an appropriate service size for a single family home and could be adequate for a duplex or duplex with basement apartment if the major appliances were gas-fired.

The wiring has been updated in some areas, but the original knob-and-tube wiring remains to various mainfloor and second floor lights and outlets.

Although knob-and-tube wiring is very common in older houses and is considered by most experts to be safe unless tampered with, it has become an insurance issue (can be very difficult to get insurance). Consult you insurance company. We would also suggest contacting Dave

Slack at Aero Insurance Brokers (1-800-971-1363 or 416-992-6695) as they will typically insure homes with knob-and-tube wiring provided that they have been inspected by us (in the case of multi-family homes, the house may have to be owner-occupied). A few other insurance companies will also insure knob-and-tube wiring (at a premium).

Even if insurance is available, we would recommend eventual replacement of the older wiring in order to enhance future saleability. Replacement costs are highly variable, but would likely be \$10,000 and up.

Minor Deficiencies:

- The electrical outlet to the north of the main floor kitchen sink is wired up with the black and white wires reversed (reversed polarity). It is a simple job to switch them back at the outlet.
- Various electrical outlets are not really grounded (typically because they are connected to older, ungrounded wiring). This will be automatically corrected when the house is rewired.
- The (ungrounded) 2nd floor bathroom electrical outlet should have a GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) receptacle (parts cost is less than \$20).

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Concealed electrical components not inspected.
- Main disconnect cover not removed.

Heating:

Heated by a new high-efficiency gas-fired forced air heating system rated at 80,000 BTU/hr. The unit was operable at the time of the inspection.

Minor Deficiencies:

- The fresh air intake is not actually connected to the furnace. This may have been done on purpose, but consult a specialist the next time it is cleaned/serviced. Simple to improve if appropriate.
- The airflow is uneven. Balance as necessary. Also, the ductwork to the heat register in the south third floor bedroom has been disconnected – add electric heat if necessary. It should be noted that third floors are generally hot in summer and cool in winter. Provided supplementary heating/cooling as dictated by needs/usage.
- The mainfloor kitchen heat register is not connected directly to ductwork for reasons unknown. Investigate further and improve if necessary.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Heat exchanger not visible/inaccessible.
- Safety devices not tested.
- Buried oil tanks are not included in the inspection. Asbestos may be present in many products and materials. Environmental Consultants can assist if these issues are a concern.

Insulation:

There is no access to the cathedral roof spaces or kneewalls. It is suspected that the third floor roof spaces were insulated (to some extent) during past renovations.

Most of the exterior double-brick walls are uninsulated. This is very typical in houses this age and is usually not cost-effective to improve as there is limited available space. In older homes such as this, it is most cost-effective to concentrate on eliminating air infiltration through sealing/caulking/weatherstripping improvements. For example, the front door weatherstripping needs improvement.

Some old insulation board at the furnace room ceiling may have an asbestos component. This is very common in older houses and is not considered to be a health hazard if it is left undisturbed and there is no requirement to remove it. More information is available from the Health Canada website – http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/environ/asbestos-amiante_e.html.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Walls were spotchecked only.
- Continuity of air/vapour barrier not verified.

Plumbing:

The incoming City supply pipe has been upgraded to 1 inch copper (larger than current standards). The visible supply piping *within* the house is copper. Water pressure seems to be about average or slightly better.

The waste piping is a combination of cast iron, copper and ABS plastic. The 50-gallon direct-vent gas water heater is new.

Minor Deficiencies:

- An abandoned humidifier shut-off valve in the furnace room is dripping and needs repair.
- The basement bathroom faucets are stiff.

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 typical overall condition. Plaster shows typical cracking/bulging in various areas.

-The windows are generally original with storms. The windows were being cleaned at the time of the inspection, so it couldn't be verified whether all of the storm window components were present. Eventual replacement of some or all of the older windows is recommended – roughly \$40 and up per square foot.

-The main floor tile application is improper as the tiles are glued directly to a plywood underlayment without a reinforcing layer. The resultant floor flex has led to grout cracking. For now, the grout can be replaced on an as-needed basis, but eventually, the installation should be redone.

-Some evidence of (seemingly minor) dampness was visible at the front basement room in particular. It is suspected that the carpet installation (too long and curled up the wall) traps some moisture next to the drywall at the base of the walls, leading to localized mould growth. For now, these areas could likely just be cleaned and repainted (and the carpet installation improved).

The foundation walls of houses this age are not designed to be watertight, but basement dampness can be minimized by keeping eavestroughs and downspouts well maintained and preventing surface water accumulations near the house by promoting good drainage next to the foundations.

Minor Deficiencies:

- Improve the 3rd floor and basement stair railings for child safety.
- Old water damage was visible on the middle basement ceiling (completely dry when tested with a moisture meter). The vendor reports that this is due to a past incident of careless showering in the main floor tub.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- No comment made on cosmetic finishes.
- No comment offered on Fire Code/Retrofit status.
- CO/smoke detectors and appliances not inspected.
- Drainage tile not visible.
- In all houses, moisture problems may result in visible or concealed mold growth. Environmental Consultants can assist if this is a concern.

Notes:

This is the full inspection report for 587 Annette Street, Toronto – performed on December 19, 2007. For the purposes of this report, the front door of the house is considered to be facing north. 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.