

TERRY MILLICAN, R.F.L.S.
VICTOR ACUY, P.E.
RICHARD A. DORMIER, P.E.
JOHN D. GATTIS, A.I.A.
DAMIR LULO, P.E.
MICHAEL K. STACEY, P.E.
LARRY J. FREEMAN, P.E.

December 10, 2015

Mr. Steven Farmer
Mayor
City of Italy
101 W. Main Street
Italy, Texas 76651

RE: Observations and Recommendations for Existing Italy City Hall Building

Mayor Farmer,

On November 10, 2015, Freeman-Millican, Inc. (FMI) conducted a walkthrough of the City Hall building for the purpose of observing its condition and making preliminary recommendations regarding its suitability for renovation and continued use as municipal offices. We assume that any renovations the City might undertake would be for the purpose of bringing the building into compliance with existing building, life safety, and accessibility codes in addition to improving functionality for building users. We characterize our recommendations as preliminary because, if the City chooses to proceed with renovations, more technical analyses are advisable.

General Description of Buildings

Italy City Hall is at 101 W. Main Street, and occupies two adjacent buildings at the corner of Main Street (TX-34) and Houston Street. The buildings share a party wall. The municipal offices occupy the ground floor of a two story building on the east side of the party wall, at the street corner. The second story is unoccupied. The police department and council chambers occupy a one story building on the west side of the party wall. The north end of this building has a small second story storage area. In this report, the municipal offices will be referred to as the east building; the police department and council chambers will be referred to as the west building.

The party wall and exterior walls are load bearing masonry, primarily brick. The original roof structure appears to be wood joists spanning from the party wall to the exterior walls with a wood ceiling fastened to the bottom of the joists, and a wood deck fastened to the top of the joists. From the exterior, a metal roof is visible which appears to have been constructed over the original roof of the east building, and over the second floor storage area of the west building. The metal roof covers the tops of the exterior brick walls. We did not have access to the remainder of the west building's roof, but from aerial photography, it appears to be a patchwork of either metal or membrane roof coverings. We did not have access to observe the space between the original and existing roofs, but city staff recall that the original wood roof deck was covered with a built-up roofing (BUR) membrane which was subsequently covered with layers of foam roofing applied on two separate occasions.

Observations

We observed the following:

1. Water damage was visible in numerous locations including:
 - a. Suspended acoustical tile ceilings above the council chambers and municipal offices.
 - b. Wood ceilings both concealed by the first floor suspended ceilings and exposed on the first and second floors of the east building.
 - c. Exposed masonry walls inside the second floor storage area of the west building.
 - d. Gypsum board ceilings in the second floor storage area of the west building, men's restroom, and the second floor of the east building.
 - e. Walls of the second floor storage area of the east building, and the north end of the first floor of the east building.
2. Water staining was observed on some wood roof joists, although wood roof joists were generally concealed. We did not directly observe failing roof joists, but given the level of water damage observed on ceilings, the existence of some deterioration of the roof structure is possible.
3. We observed signs of mold in several locations including:
 - a. Gypsum board ceilings in the second floor storage area of the west building.
 - b. The wall at the base of the stairs from the second floor storage area of the west building.
 - c. Wood ceilings at the north end of the first floor, and on the second floor, of the east building.
 - d. Supply air diffusers on the first floor of the east building.
 - e. Supply air diffuser in the first floor men's restroom.
 - f. At the base of the gypsum board wall between the council chambers and break room, on the break room side.
4. Neither the stairway to the second floor storage area of the west building, nor the stairway to the second floor of the east building, is code compliant. The first floor doors into these stairways are not code compliant.
 - a. There is no second means of egress from the second floor of the east building. If this floor were to be occupied with offices, building and accessibility codes would likely require a second means of egress (second stairway), and an elevator.
 - b. The usable area of the second floor storage area of the west building is small enough that, if it was used only for storage, only one code compliant means of egress (stairway) would be required.
5. The rear exits from the east and west buildings are compliant with building code, the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Texas Accessibility Standards (ADA/TAS). They exit onto stairways which are noncompliant, and there is no accessible ramp to the ground level.
6. The second floor restrooms in both the east and west buildings are in a state of deterioration. Neither is compliant with ADA/TAS.
7. The first floor men's and women's restrooms are not ADA/TAS compliant.

8. Doorways and door hardware throughout the facility are not ADA/TAS compliant.
9. The counter height of the cabinets in the breakroom behind the council chambers needs to be verified. If it is over 34 inches, it is not ADA/TAS compliant.
10. The transaction counter in the public lobby of the east building is not ADA/TAS compliant.
11. Electrical wiring at the north end (back) of the first floor of the east building is insulated with plastic sheathing, but not in conduit. It is stapled to a wood ceiling. Wire splices are visible outside junction boxes. Generally, building code requires all electrical wiring in commercial construction to be placed in conduit, and all splices should occur within junction boxes.
12. Mortar is missing from joints in the exterior brick. At a minimum, tuck pointing will be necessary. Some damaged bricks need to be replaced.
13. Wood framed exterior windows at a minimum need to be repainted. The wood should also be examined for deterioration. On the first floor, window glass is single pane (non-insulating). On the second floor, the original window wood sashes have been replaced with metal or vinyl sashes with insulating glass.
14. The brick party wall and exterior walls on the second floor are covered with plaster which is cracked in several locations. This could be indicative of cracking in the underlying brick. One crack in the party wall appears to be a structural crack through the brick.
15. The original roof structure, and interior floors, walls, and ceilings are generally composed of unprotected combustible construction (wood with little or no fire resistant materials covering it). It is likely that a fire suppression system would be necessary to bring this into compliance with building and life safety codes.
16. Sanitary sewer drain/vent pipes are exposed on the exterior face of the north wall of the east building. One of these appeared to be leaking at ground level, inside the sallyport.

Exhibits are attached to provide a visual overview of our observations.

Recommendations

Given these observations, if the City commits to renovating and continuing to use these buildings for municipal offices, before proceeding with design or construction, we recommend engineering analysis to determine the structural integrity of the building, inspection to determine the presence of asbestos, mold, or other toxins or pollutants, and comprehensive code review to determine all areas of non-compliance and potential remedies. We believe these investigations are likely to reveal or confirm some or all of the following possibilities:

1. The load bearing brick exterior and party walls, and the foundations supporting them are generally intact, but require substantial tuck pointing and sealing, and some replacement of damaged brick to insure their long term stability and weather tightness. Abandoned wall openings enclosed with plywood should be replaced with properly sealed masonry, or some other more permanent, weather resistant material. Some repair of damaged exterior stucco may also be desirable.
2. Some of the wood floor and roof structure may need to be repaired or replaced, and protected with fire resistant material.
3. The roof coverings may need substantial repairs, or even replacement. If multiple layers of previous roof coverings are enclosed between the current metal roof, and the original wood roof deck, they may need to be removed to allow for new roof coverings and insulation, and to eliminate deteriorating material and/or trapped moisture within the roof assembly.

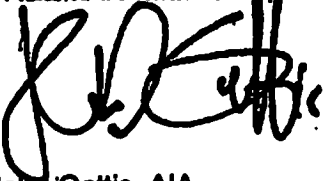
4. Exterior wood window casings need to be stripped and repainted, and possibly repaired. Climate control inside the building could be substantially improved by replaced single-pane glass with double-pane, insulating glass.
5. The leaking sewer drain pipe should be repaired, and exposed plumbing should be insulated and enclosed. Damaged cast iron pipe may need to be replaced with PVC.
6. Most of the original wood ceilings need to be removed and replaced with fire resistant material.
7. Wood wall coverings should be replaced, or at least covered with fire resistant material.
8. All other water damaged materials should be removed and replaced.
9. A fire suppression system may need to be installed.
10. The HVAC system may require improvements, or at least cleaning to eliminate mold and condensation.
11. All wiring of the electrical system needs to be placed in conduit and junction boxes.
12. The buildings should be made ADA/TAS compliant. This will likely require substantial remodeling of doorways, door hardware, cabinets, counters, and restrooms. Repositioning of light switches and other controls accessible to building occupants may be required. If the second floor of the east building is to be occupied, an elevator will likely be required to make it accessible. All required means of egress must be made accessible including an accessible route to ground level.
13. All required means of egress should be provided and made compliant with building code in addition to ADA/TAS. If the second floor of the east building is to be occupied, a second means of egress (stairway) will likely be required. Both existing stairways will need to be demolished and replaced to be code compliant. The new stairways will likely occupy more space than the existing stairways.

If the City wishes to proceed with the recommended investigations, FMI can estimate their cost, and assist in obtaining proposals from qualified professionals. We can also subcontract these professionals if the City prefers that we compile their findings in our own report.

Please contact us with any questions or comments. We appreciate this opportunity to work for the City of Italy.

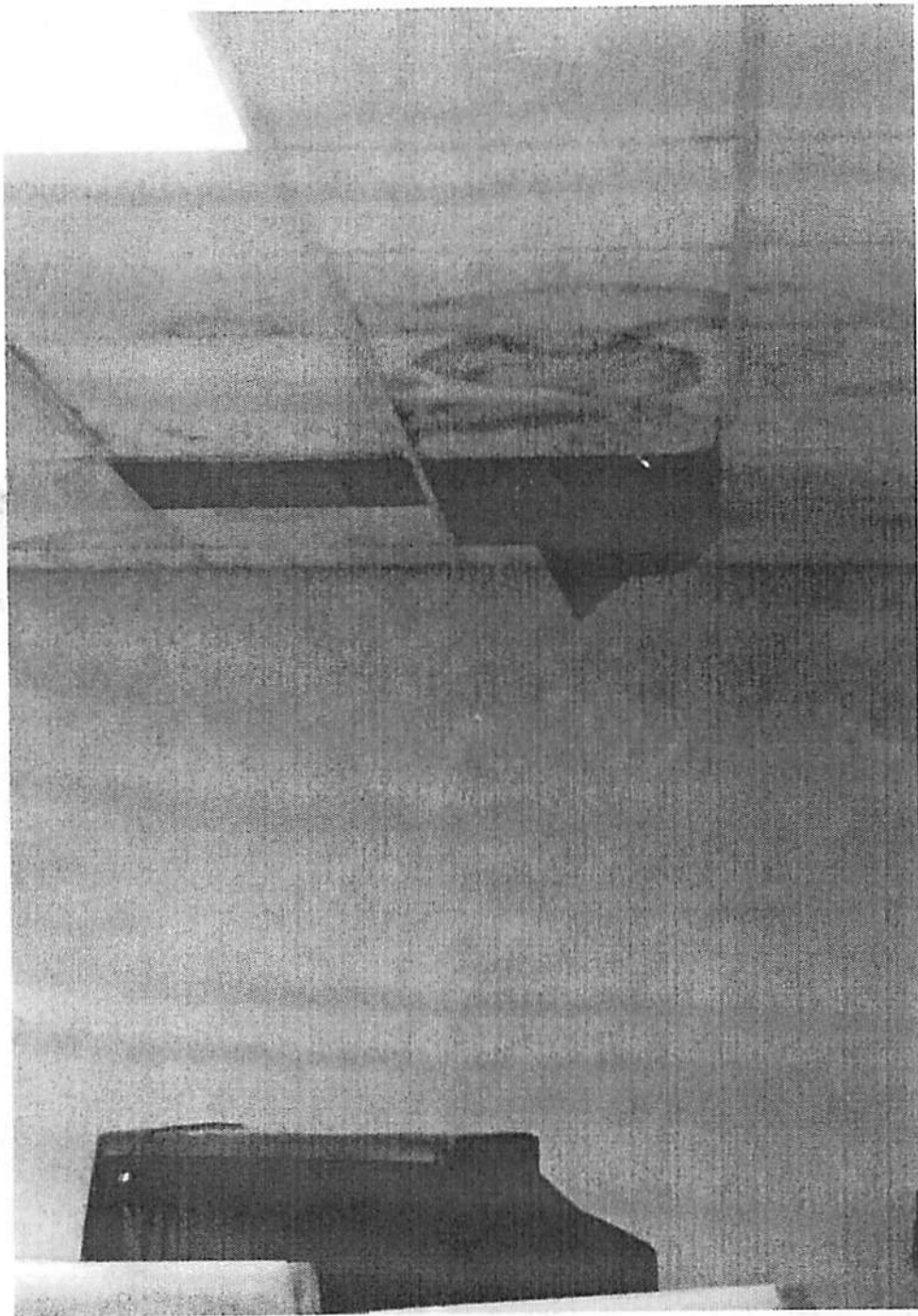
Sincerely,

FREEMAN-MILLICAN, INC.

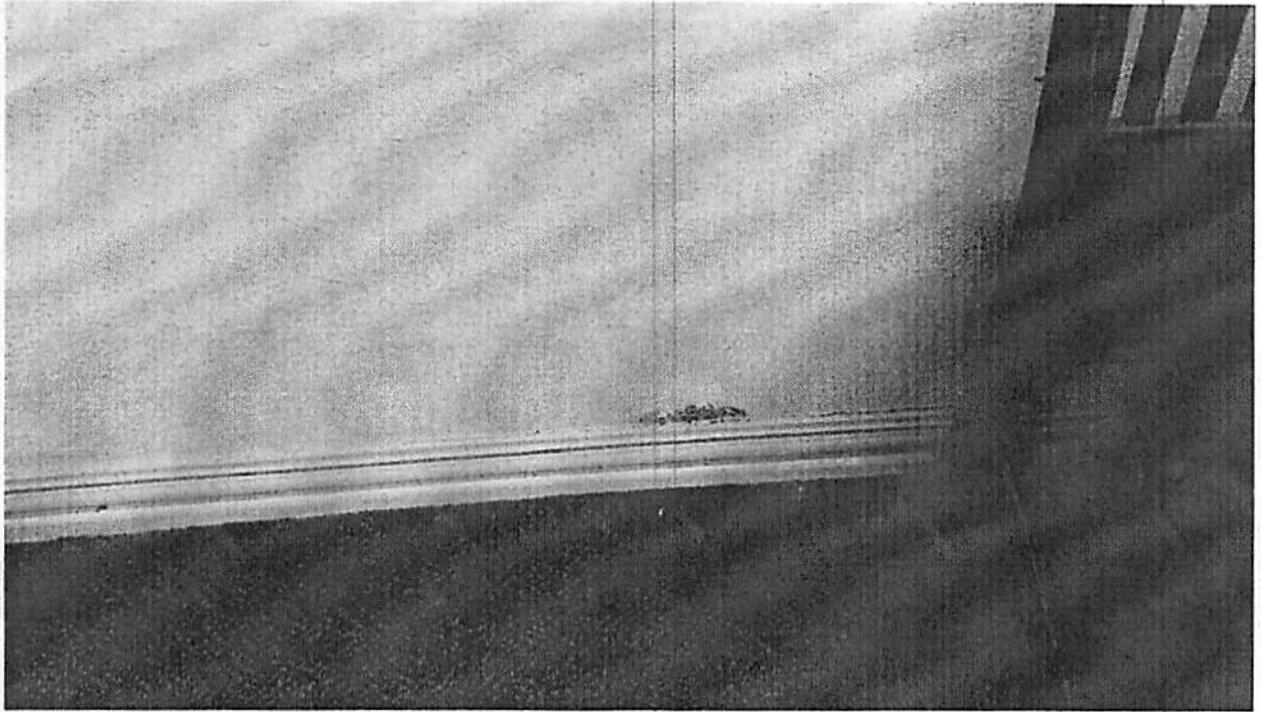
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Gattis', is written over the company name.

John Gattis, AIA

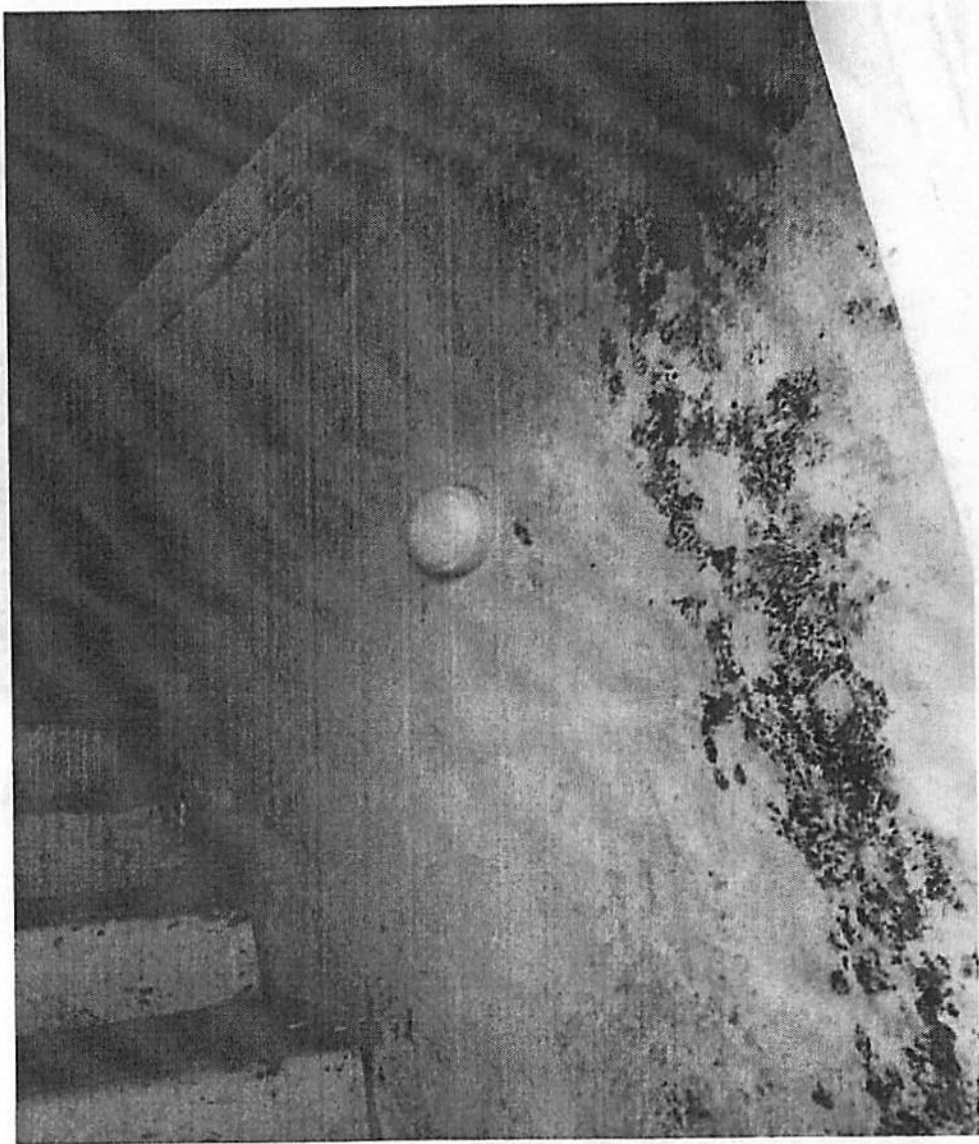
EXHIBIT A
WEST BUILDING



SUSPENDED ACOUSTICAL TILE CEILINGS



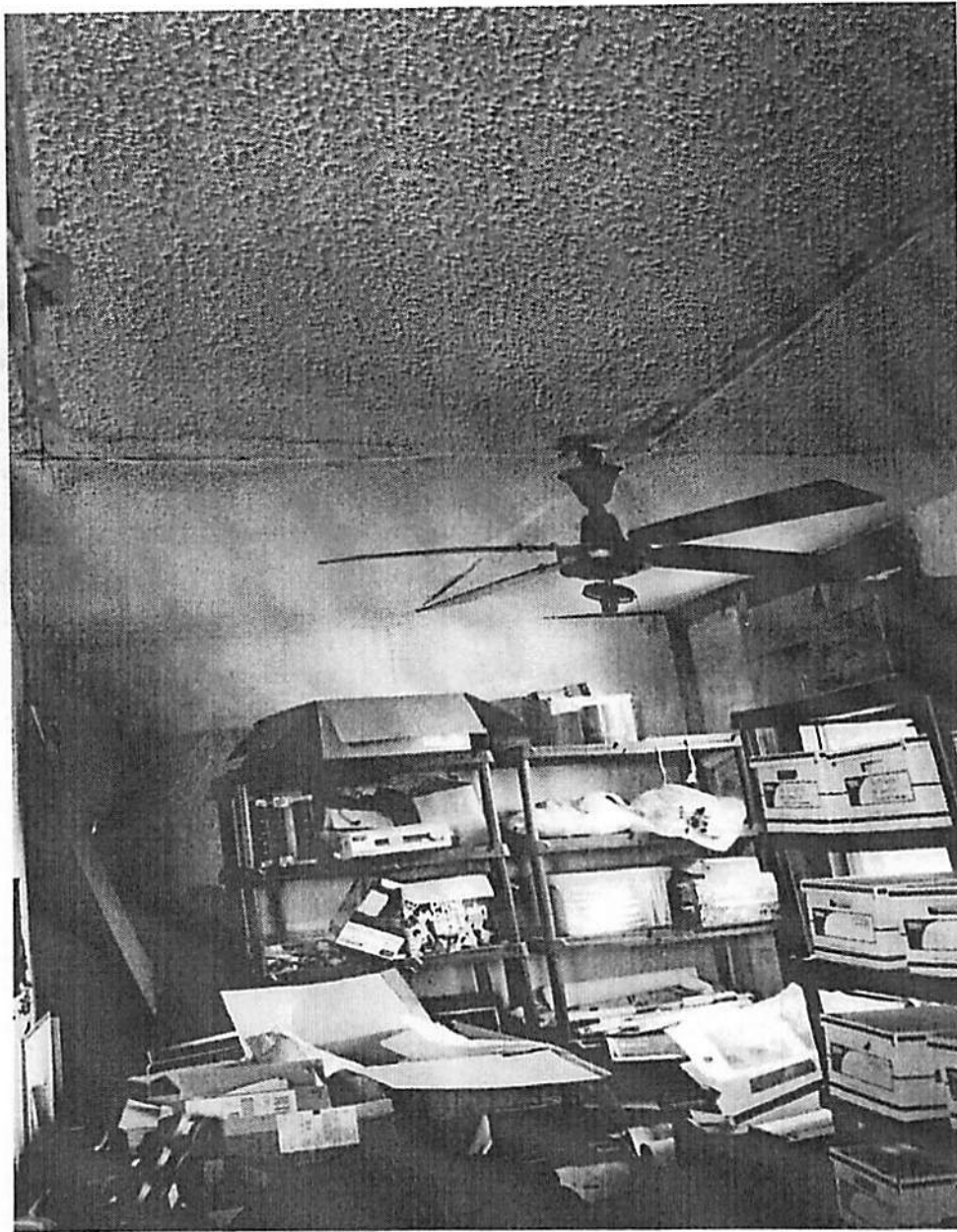
SIGN OF MOLD AT BASE OF GYPSUM BOARD



POTENTIAL MOLD ON WALL AT THE BASE OF THE STAIRS

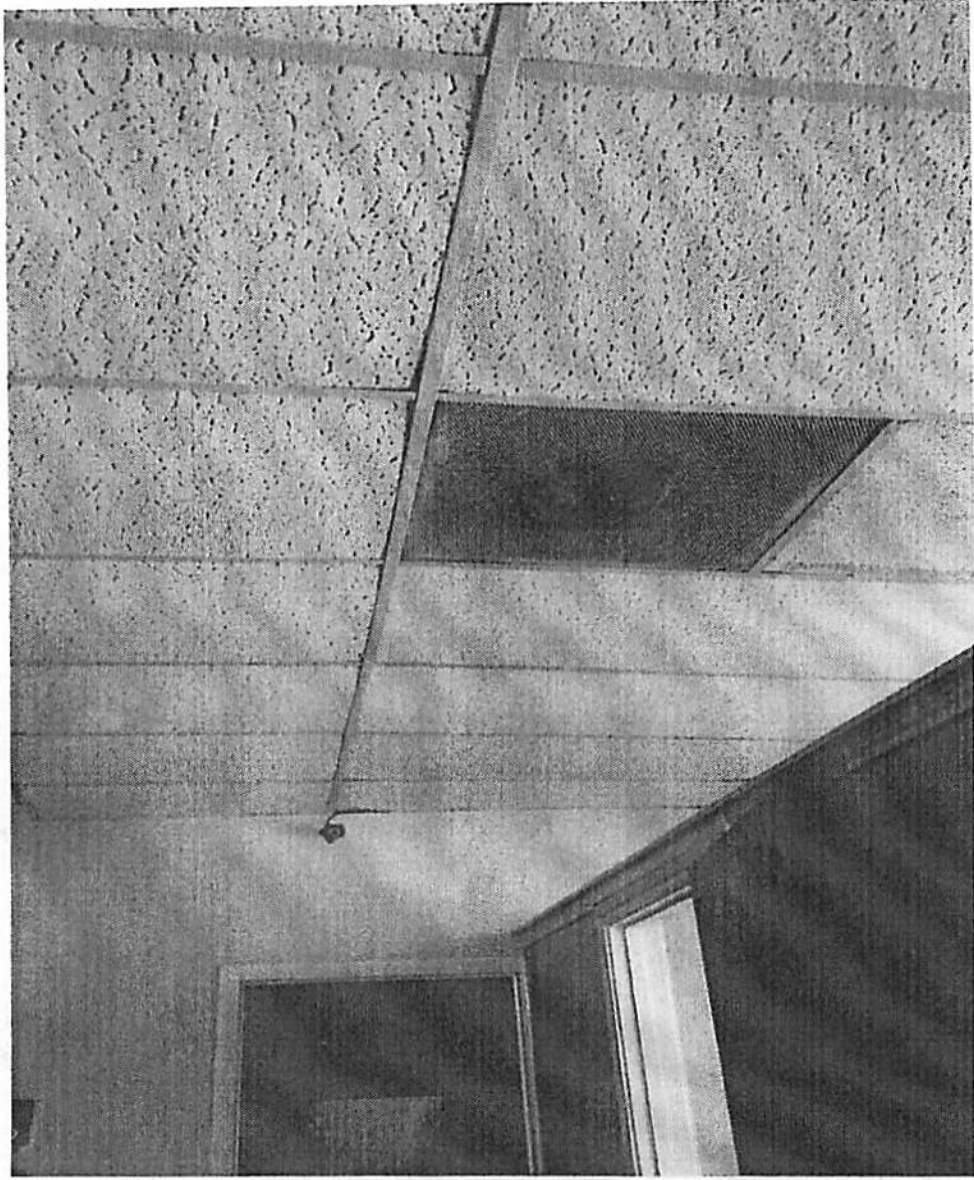


STRUCTURAL DAMAGE TO CEILING ABOVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

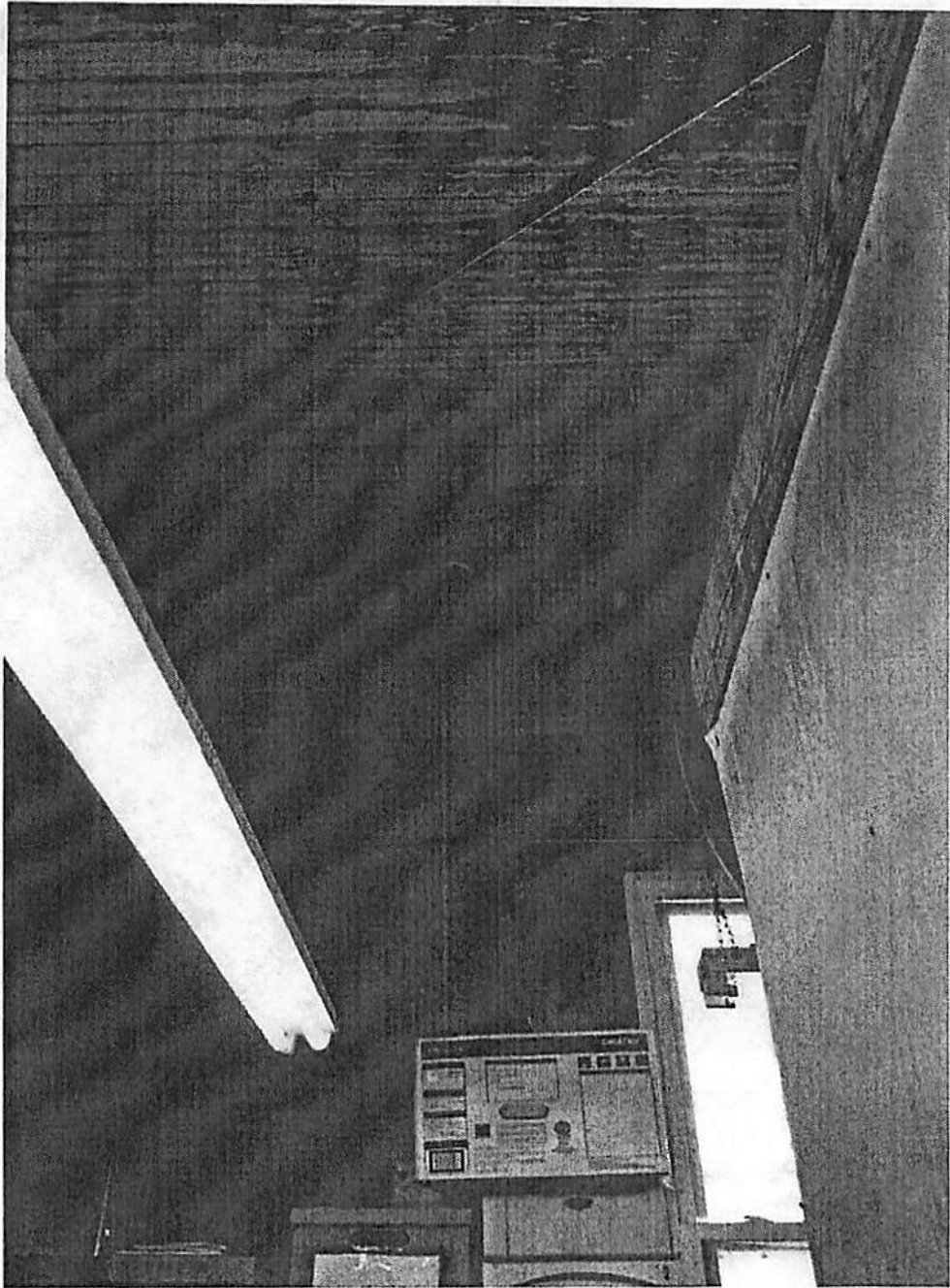


WATER DAMAGE IN STORAGE AREA ABOVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

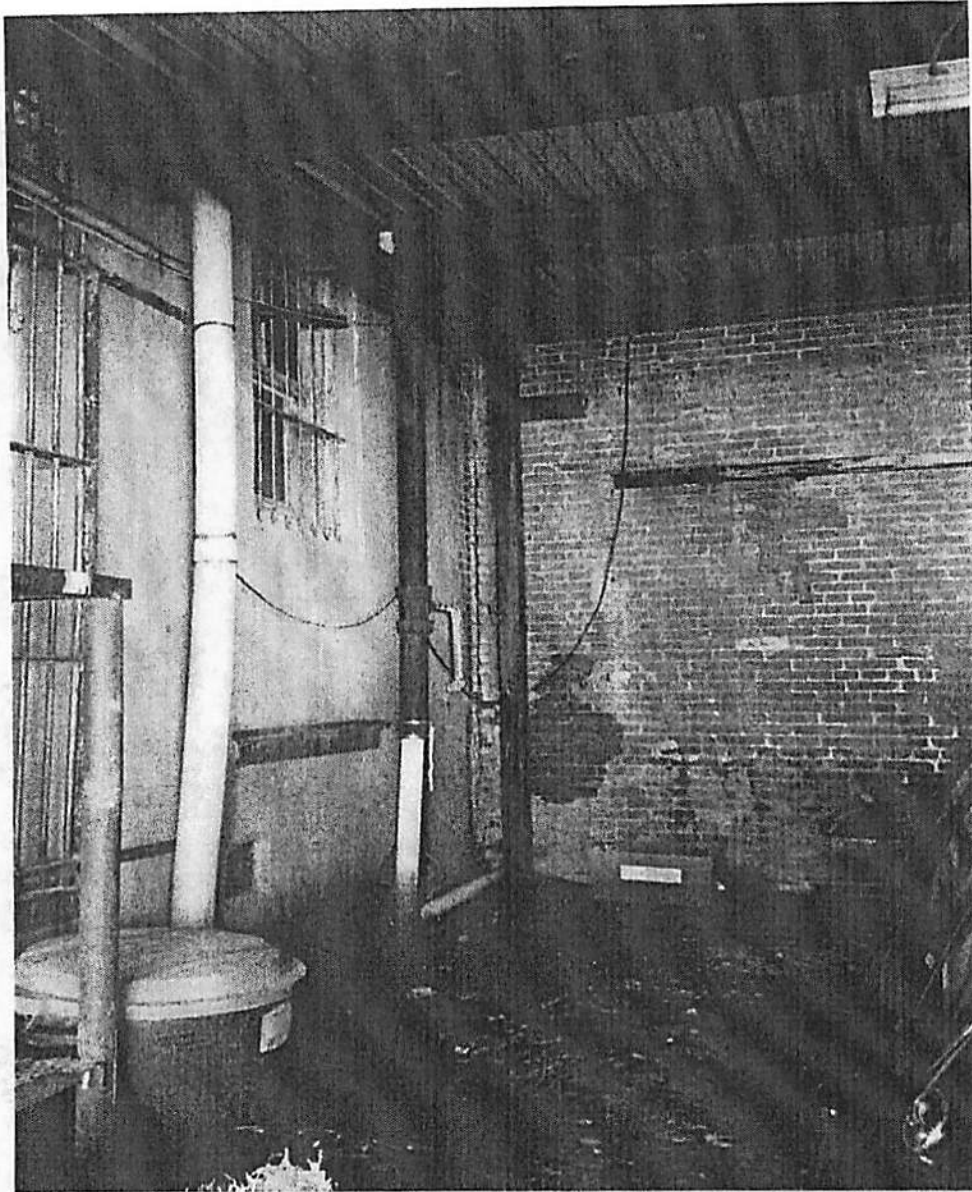
EXHIBIT B
EAST BUILDING



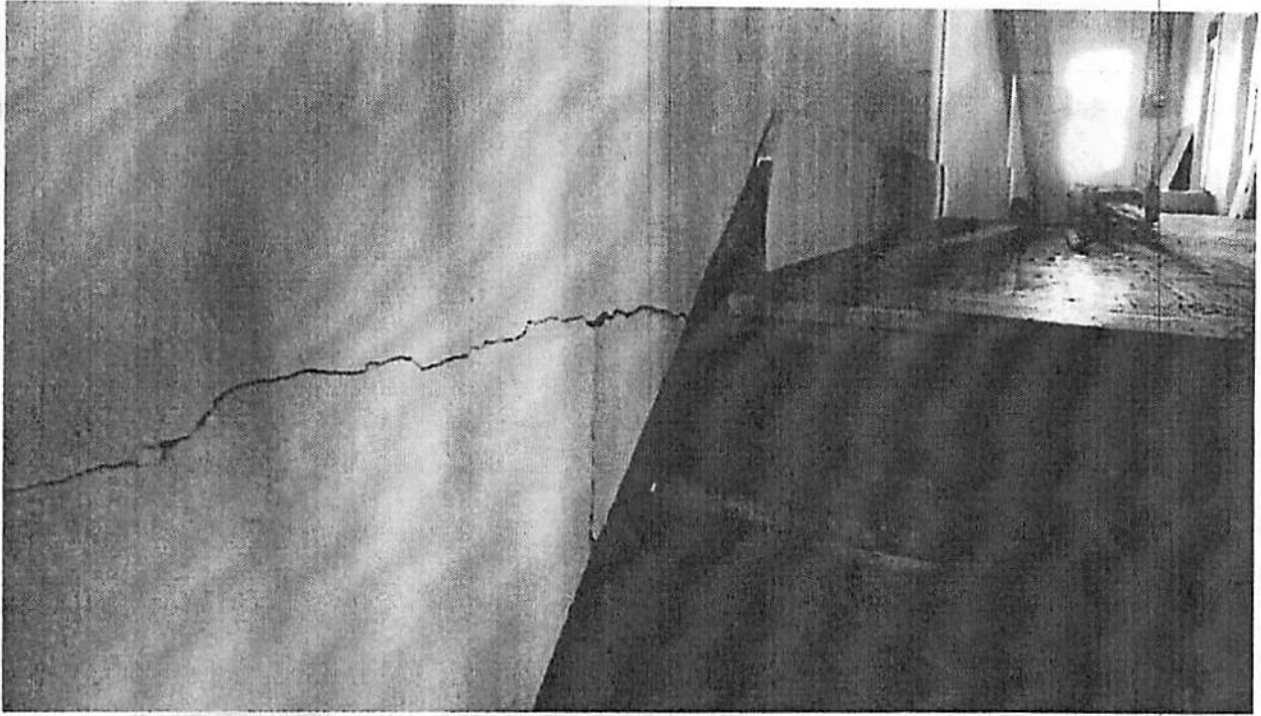
MOLD ON AIR DIFFUSERS



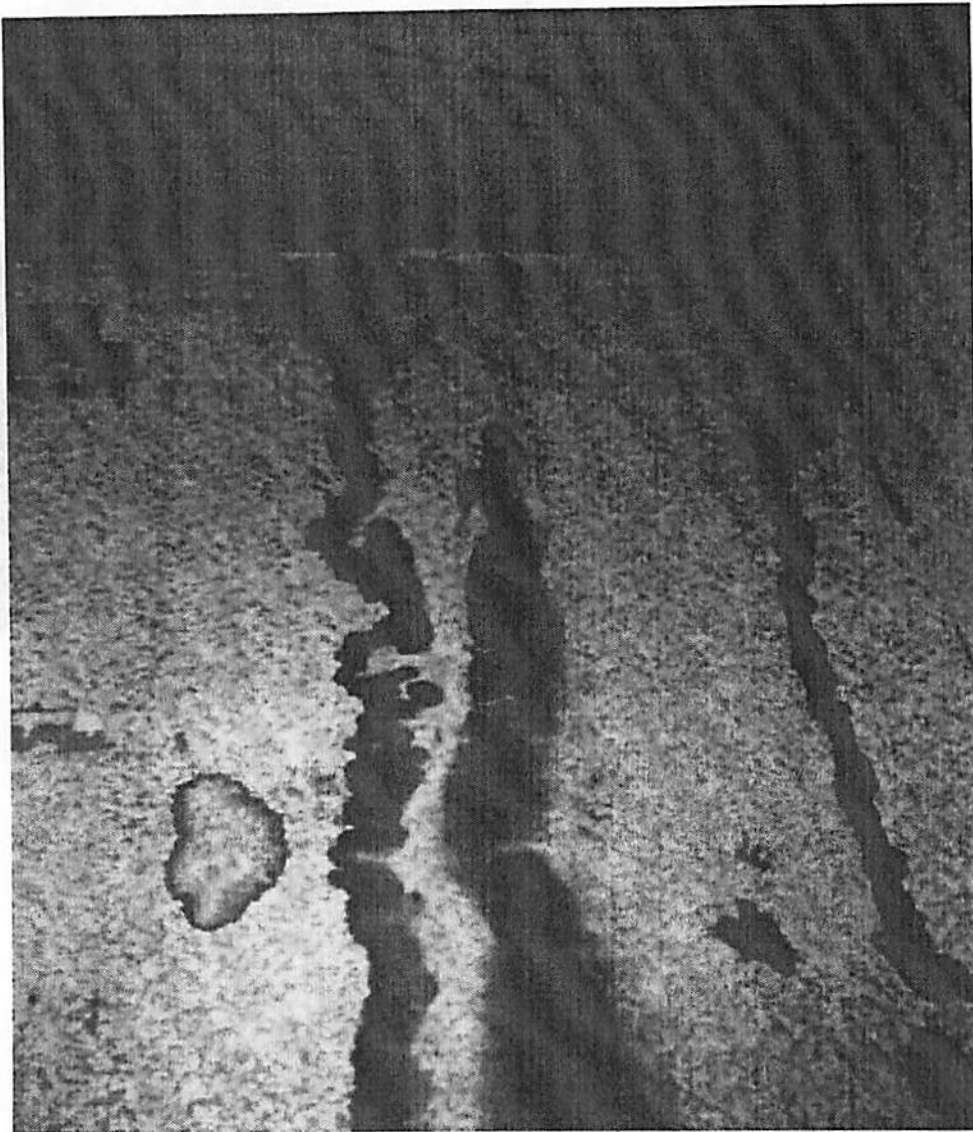
EXPOSED ELECTRICAL WIRING AND WATER DAMAGE



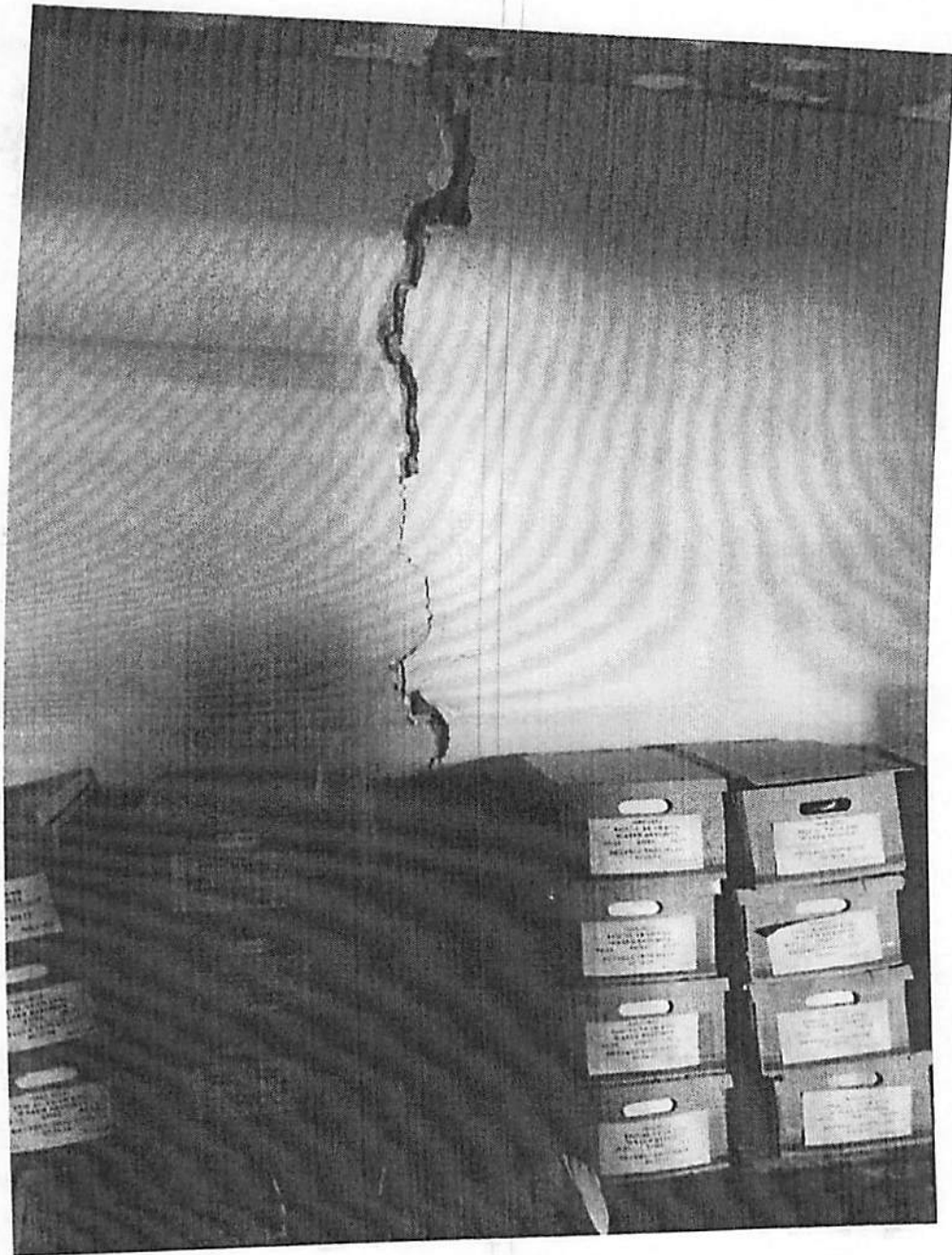
POTENTIAL SEWAGE LEAK IN SALLYPORT



STRUCTURAL DAMAGE ON STAIRWELL OF 2ND FLOOR



WATER DAMAGE ON 2ND FLOOR



STRUCTURAL DAMAGE IN PARTY WALL ON 2ND FLOOR