

March 21, 2022

Mr. James Horan
St. Peters Prep
144 Grand Street
Jersey City, NJ 07302

**Re: St. Peters Prep, Grammar School
Jersey City, NJ
B6024.00**

Dear Mr. Horan:

I have personally inspected the grammar school property on February 28th 2022. The following are my observations and recommendations.

First, I concur with the previous analyses by engineers from my firm; John Whelan and Brad Kiefer. Thus, three separate structural engineers have reviewed this building with the same independent conclusion.

The cellar slab is a grade-supported concrete slab which serves to laterally brace the column-foundation interface. This slab has settled excessively between the column foundations. The most significant contributing factor appears to be soil washout following the flooding from Superstorm Sandy. The slab in its current condition is not capable of acting as a brace which may render the column-foundation interface unstable or result in it becoming unstable.

The staircase in the cellar has so significantly settled that I was able to walk right onto the first step with only about an inch of rise above the cellar slab.

Portions of the upper floors exhibit significant sloping indicating that there has been settlement of the supporting walls, likely resulting from the wall foundations having settled. This is borne out by observations made from the exterior, particularly at the west side, where the entire West building structure is visibly tilting towards the west. From Grand Street a casual observer can see that the building is leaning. You don't need surveying confirmation as provided by Insite Engineering, just looking at it tells the story. However, subsequent surveys do show that the building has significantly moved twice over the last almost 10 years; once during Superstorm Sandy and then again years later. Thus, the building and supporting soils are continuing to move even without a historic weather event.

In addition, the degree of tilt which the west building has experienced is creating significant lateral loads on the structure that are due simply to gravity loads. Buildings such as these have very rudimentary, and often insufficient, lateral systems so this added load from the building lean is very concerning. The perimeter walls are not mechanically connected to the floor or roof framing. Wood joists are pocketed into the east and west walls (relying on friction of the joists bearing on the walls), and north and south walls appear not to be connected to the floor diaphragm at all. If the building were to settle or lean more, a collapse could be imminent.

I have also reviewed the reports by Richard Southwick of Beyer Blinder Belle, Thomas P. McGinty, AIA of Madonna Designs Architect LLC and Jan Cermak of Meuser Rutledge Consulting Engineers (geotechnical) and agree with their assessments. Given the advanced deteriorated condition of these buildings, the continuing settlement of the perimeter brick bearing walls, the unbraced pile caps, and the existence of asbestos in the building, the best course of action would be to demolish these structures.

Finally, as an engineer, all in our profession were all horrified by the collapse in Surfside, Florida where structural problems were not acknowledged and were left to linger resulting in a catastrophic collapse and the loss of 98 lives. We owe it to the people of Jersey City to take necessary and swift action here and demolish these buildings before a sudden, unplanned, collapse occurs.

Sincerely,
GACE Consulting Engineers DPC



Alyson Sikorski, PE
Principal