

# 150 Eureka

History and Current Status

March 27, 2014

# Why is it important to understand the status of the building at 150 Eureka?

- Nearer Term
  - We need accurate information about the building before committing resources to building maintenance and upgrades.
- Longer Term
  - We need accurate information in order to do strategic planning

# Building History

- Why was the building at 150 Eureka vacated in July of 2006?
  - The wall in room 108 was noticeably distorted and Penny Nixon hired a structural engineer, Patrick Boscovich, to evaluate it.
  - After an initial inspection, Patrick Buscovich informed Penny Nixon that the failed retaining wall “posed a significant life safety risk” and that the building needed to be vacated immediately and the retaining wall shored.
  - **Penny Nixon had no legal or moral option, other than to have MCCSF and other tenants immediately vacate the building.**
  - The building was vacated and temporary shoring was installed at the retaining wall to prevent further movement.

# Building History

After shoring was in place, Patrick Buscovich together with a Fire Protection Engineer and a Structural Pest Consultant performed a detailed evaluation of the building.

## Building Evaluation Results, July 2006

1. The Fire Protection Engineer suggested a “tear down” because the life safety work required from a fire hazard perspective would be more costly than the building was worth.
2. The Structural Pest Consultant suggested a “tear down” due to the water/dry rot/termite issues he found on the first floor.
3. Patrick Buscovich due to failed retaining wall said “the building should be considered for demolition”

The building at 150 Eureka  
was determined to be at its  
useful end of life in July 2006

# Building History

- Why was the building reoccupied in December 2008?
  - The discussion regarding returning to the building was not documented as far as we can tell.
  - We believe but have not confirmed that Patrick Buscovich had monitored the retaining wall in room 108 for 2 years and hadn't detected any further movement and so was no longer concerned about the potential threat to life. Patrick Buscovich then suggested that the church ask the city for a public assembly permit and see what the city inspectors would allow in terms of building use.

# Building History

- What was the reoccupation process?
- The city agreed to issue a public assembly permit for **just the sanctuary and bathrooms** if certain requirements were met.
  - Upgrade requirements from the city that were met included sealing rooms, adding exit and fire extinguishers etc...
  - The first floor offices to be available only to staff and board members
  - Room 108 and 208 to be sealed and all upstairs offices to be locked and a chain placed across the stairs to assure that no one could get into those parts of the building.
  - The reoccupation letter from the city states: “To ensure the continued safety of the building, Patrick Buscovich will conduct weekly inspections of the building and will keep a log of these inspections.”

# Building History

## Some Information

1. Stuart Lowe reported verbally that shoring like we have in room 108 is **ALWAYS** a temporary solution.
2. After the shoring was installed the city required us to have Patrick Buscovich do weekly monitoring because there is **NO WAY TO KNOW** when this kind of temporary solution may no longer work.
3. Patrick Buscovich has not been monitoring the building since it was reoccupied.
4. When the shoring stops working the retaining wall is likely to move again. The movement of the retaining wall can result in at least a partial collapse of the building which is why we keep hearing about “potential life risk”.
5. **Nobody has a crystal ball so inspectors will (appropriately) take a conservative stance on issues like the retaining wall.**



# Building Status Today

- The structural engineering firm Hoebach-Lewin was hired to provide an up to date, structural engineering assessment of the building in March 2014
- (Note: This is just structural assessment and does not include fire and pest inspections like those done in 2006)
  - In preparation for the inspection, facing was removed from a number of walls on both the first and second floors so that the structure of the building could be evaluated.
  - Stuart Lowe (structural engineer) spent 2.5 hours on site evaluating the building from the foundation to the roof, including room 108 and 208.
  - Stuart Lowe was provided with all existing paperwork regarding why the building was vacated and the terms of re-occupation.

# Building Status Today

## **Structural Engineering Report**

### 1. The Retaining Wall

There is a failed retaining wall within the middle addition, at the southern side of the property. This wall appears to be on the property line, and is serving as a retaining and gravity support structure for the floor and roof framing adjacent to it. The wall was reviewed in a draft letter (dated July 31, 2006) by Patrick Buscovich & Associates, and deemed a “significant life safety risk” at that time.

Temporary shoring has been placed against this wall in an attempt to stabilize it, and the areas adjacent to and above it are currently not being occupied. The soil below the floor framing in the immediate vicinity of the wall is very wet, and several of the observed floor joists exhibited signs of dry rot and/or termite infestation.

# Building Status Today

## Conclusions / Recommendations

**The failed retaining wall is a serious concern. Although the wall may have not exhibited signs of movement recently, there is no guarantee that movement will not continue.**

- Furthermore, the shoring used to stabilize the wall is relying on the existing floor framing members for support, many of which have reduced structural capacity due to dry-rot and termite damage.

We must concur with the July 31, 2006 letter from Patrick Buscovitch & Associates that the failed wall poses a significant life safety risk.

# Building Status Today

- Why did the life safety risk in 2006 mean vacating?
  - The wall was not shored to prevent further movement
  - Once the wall was shored it had to be monitored to assure that the shoring was working
- Why does the “life safety risk” in this new report mean that we have to start making plans to leave the building, but do not have to vacate immediately?
  - The shoring is currently working
  - An engineer just looked at it and verified that right now the shoring is working

# What does the current report mean?

- **Re-occupying this building was (and is) a temporary solution.**
- **We need to proceed thoughtfully, but with a sense of urgency.**

# Talking Points

1. In 2006 the building was found to be at the end of its useful life. The shoring of the failed retaining wall was (and is) a temporary solution.
2. Renovation is not an option: dryrot/termite, retaining wall, fire upgrades
3. The city allowed limited reoccupation of the building contingent on monitoring by a licensed engineer which has not happened until the recent inspection by Stuart Lowe.
4. We need to urgently, but thoughtfully, move forward with plans for housing MCCSF

# Some Next Steps

- Arrange for ongoing inspections of retaining wall shoring as long as we are in the building.
- Pray and vision as a community about our mission....our mission will determine the kind of building and location we need.