

241 Quebec Avenue, Toronto

Inspection Report

February 17, 2010

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INSPECTIONS

COMPANY INFORMATION

- Professional Engineer (Professional Engineers of Ontario)
- B.A.Sc. - Civil Engineering (University of Toronto)
- 25 years inspection experience
(14+ years with *Carson, Dunlop & Associates*)
- Over 10,000 homes inspected



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Overall Condition:

This is a good quality solid masonry home that has had several mechanical updates over the past 5 or 6 years and is currently in above-average condition compared to similar homes in the area.

Roofing, Flashings and Chimneys:

Most of the roof is surfaced with asphalt shingles. The shingles are in good condition and are less than 5 years old. The modified bitumen membrane on the front porch roof is newer and in good condition.

The old metal garage roof should be monitored for leakage. If the leakage is localized, patching *may* be possible.

The masonry chimney is in good repair.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Roof inspected with binoculars (as it was wet and freezing and couldn't be accessed directly).
- Some areas of the roof were not visible (e.g. chimney flashings) due to the proximity of neighbouring houses.

Exterior:

Despite minor localized deterioration, the exterior brickwork is in good overall condition. The aluminum eavestroughing is in good overall repair, as well. The north neighbour is so close that there is no room for eavestroughing on that side.

The garage is a fairly typical wood frame structure for the area (i.e. not high quality, but generally serviceable for the purpose). The garage door is in poor repair and should be replaced - \$1,000 and up.

Minor Deficiencies:

- The way the roof line is set up, there is some potential for squirrel access at the corners. Monitor and improve as necessary.
- Portions of the porch at porch trim have yet to be painted.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Exterior inspection from ground level.
- The north wall is inaccessible.

Structure:

The stone foundations support solid masonry exterior walls. The house is in good overall structural condition.

Many years ago, there was a fire in the attic and some of the rafters got charred. The roof rafters have since been doubled up and collar ties and mid-point struts have been added. The resupported roof structure is considered to be sound (and is likely stronger than it originally was).

Minor Deficiencies:

- Some basement joists below the kitchen refrigerator would benefit from resupporting – a ballpark estimate would be \$400 and up.
- The notch in the 1st floor joist below the kitchen sink (visible in the basement) is not ideal. Monitor and resupport as necessary (or before finishing the ceiling).

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- The attic was inspected from the access hatch.
- Walls were spotchecked only.

Electrical:

The house has a 200-amp electrical service with a circuit breaker panel. This is a more than adequate service size. The wiring is newer grounded copper. The wiring appears to have been entirely replaced – although its absence cannot be guaranteed, no active knob-and-tube wiring was visible or found during various spotchecks of various outlet and switch boxes.

Minor Deficiencies:

- The garage wiring has been disconnected.
- The cover over the electrical panel should be hinged (or similar) instead of screwed on – for easier access.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Main disconnect cover not opened.
- Concealed electrical components cannot be inspected.

Heating:

The house is heated by an 88,000 BTU/hr high-efficiency forced air gas furnace that is 6 years old. The furnace was operable at the time of the inspection. Typical life expectancy is 15 to 20 years.

Minor Deficiencies:

- The 2nd floor water closet has no heat register, but the outside wall area is small and the door is usually kept open so it is probably ok as is.
- The heating vents are older-style (shared ducts on inside walls) that reduce heating/cooling efficiency and allow noise to pass between rooms, but are probably not cost-effective to replace.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- Heat exchanger not visible.
- Safety devices not tested.

Air Conditioning:

Cooling is provided by a 6-year-old central A/C system that is rated at 24,000 BTU/hr. The unit could not be tested due to cold outside temperatures. Typical life expectancy is usually about 15 years.

Insulation:

Attic insulation should be upgraded to R-40 to R-50. A rough cost estimate would be \$1,000 to \$1,500. An insulated attic hatch should be provided (and if it could be made larger, that would be good too).

If an eco-energy audit of the house is performed, government rebates will become available to help offset the cost of insulation improvements and other energy-saving related items. More information is available at <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/home-improvement.cfm>.

The solid masonry walls were built without insulation and with no space to add more insulation. This is typical for the era. Since adding more insulation is not easily done, it is best to concentrate on reducing air infiltration through caulking/sealing and weatherstripping as much as possible.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- The attic was inspected from the access hatch.
- Checking for asbestos (which may be present in many products and materials) is not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice.

Plumbing:

The incoming City supply pipe has been upgraded to 1" copper. The visible supply piping *within* the house is also copper. Water pressure is considered to be good.

The waste plumbing is mostly cast iron, copper and ABS Plastic. The 40-gallon rental gas water heater is 2 years old.

Minor Deficiencies:

- The kitchen sink waste plumbing has no visible vent. If drainage problems/gurgling/siphoning are an issue, a mechanical vent could be installed fairly inexpensively. Also, the waste plumbing drainage slope in the basement (below the kitchen sink) is less than ideal – improve as necessary.
- The way the 2nd floor bathtub is laid out, it is not well-suited for showering. Water landing on the edge of the tub can't make it back into the tub and will run onto the floor. A wrap around shower curtain could work. The bathtub needs caulking.
- The waste plumbing vent pipe in the attic was never extended up through the roof so humid air from the plumbing system is getting vented into the attic. Although not as ideal a solution as extending the vent through the roof, installing a mechanical "studor" vent on the open pipe would be a lot less expensive.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

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

Interior:

- Interior finishes are in good overall condition. Some flaws typical of old plaster were noted. Repair the damaged ceiling above the stair landing.
- Most of the windows were replaced in the late 1980's. Most are in serviceable condition. The 2nd floor front window has lost its seal (foggy between the panes). While this is much more of an aesthetic rather than functional concern, it can only be corrected by replacing the glass.
- The fireplace is not an operable unit (used to be gas and has no chimney).
- For an original basement, the downstairs seemed reasonably dry. This is partly due to the good overall lot slope and sandy soil. Some staining and efflorescence was noted at the rear wall in particular. As with all homes, 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. In the latter respect, the slope of the soil below the rear deck could stand to be improved. Also, dryness requirements are certainly reduced with a mostly unfinished basement. If the basement is to be finished, we recommend installing a watertight, drainage membrane such as [Delta MS](#) on the interior foundations prior to framing/insulating/drywalling. Also, the old single-pane basement windows should be replaced if the basement is going to be finished.

Inspection Methods and Limitations:

- No comment made on cosmetic aspects of interior finishes.
- CO/smoke detectors and appliances not inspected. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are required on every level of the house.
- Drainage tile not visible.
- The raised "dri-core" basement floor tended to restrict the inspection.
- 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 not included in the inspection or the Standards of Practice.

Notes:

This is the inspection report for 241 Quebec Avenue, Toronto – performed on February 17, 2010. For the purposes of this report, the front of the house is considered to be facing west. 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.