

Morrison Home Inspections
www.AIMorrison.com
978.851.6315
morrisonhomeinspections@gmail.com
“Each house tells a story. We write ‘em down”

Mr. and Mrs.

Subject:

Dear:

This narrative will supplement our report on the subject premises which was inspected today. It is confidential and has been prepared for the proposed transaction between you and the current owner(s). This report cannot be relied upon by any third party.

You can download a copy of the Massachusetts Home Inspection Standards of Practice here:

http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=ocaterminal&L=6&L0=Home&L1=Licensee&L2=Division+of+Professional+Licensure+Boards&L3=Board+of+Registration+of+Home+Inspectors&L4=Statutes+and+Regulations&L5=Rules+and+Regulations+Governing+Home+Inspectors&sid=Eoca&b=terminalcontent&f=dpl_boards_hi_cmr_26_6cmr600&csid=Eoca

I am not an exterminator, so I cannot certify that this property is ‘pest-free’. However, I do report any evidence of insects or their damage that I observe during the inspection. Since there is carpenter ant frass behind the insulation in the framed basement wall you should employ a professional exterminator to examine the premises and advise you regarding treatment strategies. To learn more about household pests, visit www.yankeepestcontrol.com

I strongly recommend that you go to the City of _____ Building Department and ask to see the folder for this address. It is public information to which you are entitled access. This will tell you what work has been done on the property that has been approved by the Municipality.

The grounds and roof were covered with snow so they were not completely visible for inspection.

GROUND

1. Areas next to the foundation which are flat or sloped toward the house will pond water which contributes to basement dampness, wood decay, the growth of allergens, and can saturate the soil that supports the foundation walls. These flat and depressed areas of soil next to the foundation should be regraded to

maximize the distance between the soil and all wood members, and to slope and drain water away from the house now. This is an important component of the overall strategy to keep the area around the house as light and dry as possible.

2. Shrubs should be trimmed back to provide 2-3' of clearance between the house and the shrubs to allow for more air circulation around the house to reduce the risk of moisture damage.

3. Cracks in the bituminous concrete driveway should be sealed to slow the deterioration of the pavement and to prevent a tripping hazard. The settled and heavily deteriorated areas will need to be cut out and replaced on a new sub base.

4. There are a few areas of settled paver stones in the front walkway. The pavers will need to be reset on a new level compacted section of sub base if they continue to settle and become a tripping hazard.

ROOF

5. The lichen growth on the north side of the roof should be chemically removed to prevent premature deterioration at these areas.

6. The areas of snow and ice that remain on the roof display ice dams at these areas. If ice dams are an ongoing issue on this roof warming cables may have to be installed to prevent further formation and the risk of water seepage.

7. Several cap shingles on the dormers are torn and damaged over the rake boards. A shingle over the right side dormer has approximately a 3” diameter hole in it. I recommend the damaged cap shingles on the dormer peaks be replaced now to prevent water entry at these locations.

8. One shingle tab on the left (east) facing roof slope is missing and four have slipped out of place and are also in danger of falling off the roof. The shingle tabs should be replaced by a roofer now to prevent water entry at these locations.

9. The vent pipe flashings on the rear low sloped roof have been covered with roofing cement, which is a temporary patch.

10. The stone caps on top of the right chimney are not secured to the mortar bed on top of the brick pilasters and are loose. The stone chimney caps should be secured in place soon before they fall and cause property damage or personal injury.

11. The rear roof over the master bath is subject to ice damming and leaks due to its low slope. I recommend that when it needs to be replaced you consider a more suitable roofing material for low slope roofs.

12. The nails securing the ridge vent have backed out of the roof resulting in loose sections of ridge vent. The nails should be reinstalled soon to properly secure the vent in place.

13. I recommend gutters be installed on all of the roof edges that lack them and 90-degree elbows and horizontal extensions be attached to the bottom of the downspouts. The elbow should be installed high enough to provide a proper slope for the extensions. This will keep the soil surrounding the house drier, as we discussed. Every effort must be made to keep the area around the house as light and dry as possible.

14. In my opinion the front roof draining onto the closed balcony is a poor design. I recommend that at a minimum you consider installing an overflow scupper out the front wall of the balcony to permit drainage to flow off of the balcony in the event the drains get blocked up. In addition, the warming cables currently in place are not correctly installed and require installation to manufacturer's recommendations. I also recommend you consider installing gutters at the roof edges as the primary means of drainage to prevent water from even accumulating on the balcony surface or consult with a contractor for other alternatives.

GARAGE

15. The left side entry stairs are a hazard as the riser height is excessive. I recommend a set of stairs be installed that meet today's building standards for safety.

16. The garage door hardware should be tightened and lubricated for better door operation.

EXTERIOR

17. The exterior lawn sprinkler should be open and closed annually by a landscaping company.

18. The peeling paint on the exterior trim should be prepped and repainted.

19. A graspable handrail should be installed on the front entry stairs for safety.

20. The front entry stairs have irregular riser heights which is a tripping hazard. I recommend the walkway be built up at the bottom stair so all the stairs have equal riser heights as required for safety.

21. The railings and trim at the rear balcony are water damaged and decaying and should be replaced by a carpenter soon.

22. I recommend joist hangers be installed at the flush framed connections below the rear balcony to provide positive support from below at these structural members.

23. The GFCI receptacle at the front entry is defective and should be replaced by an electrician.

24. The missing light fixture at the garage’s side door, and the damaged light fixture at the rear deck, should be replaced by an electrician.

25. Wood members too close to the ground at the right side of the house are very susceptible to damage from decay and wood-boring insects. The necessary carpentry repairs and regrading work should be completed to ensure that all wood members are kept at least 6 inches above the soil.

STRUCTURE

26. The broken basement and dining room windows should be replaced.

27. There is an active water leak in the rear wall of the basement below the rear deck’s stair platform. A carpenter should be employed now determine the location of the leak so the necessary repairs can be made to prevent additional damage to the structural components at this area.

28. There has been seepage and dampness in the basement as evidenced by the staining on the sill above the foundation repair and efflorescence on the foundation walls. In this area it is not uncommon for basements to leak water, even if they never have before. For this reason, all important storage should be kept several inches off the floor. I also recommend that you operate a dehumidifier in the basement during the summer.

29. An epoxy repair has been completed on a crack at the right foundation wall. I recommend you obtain the warranty information on this repair.

30. Balusters should be installed on the basement stairs for safety.

31. The basement ceiling should be insulated to increase the efficiency of the heating and cooling systems and for your comfort.

PLUMBING

32. The old gate valves that display corrosion at the joints should be replaced with ball valves by a plumber.

ELECTRICAL

33. I recommend that you turn every circuitbreaker in the electrical distribution panel off and on once each month. This will help keep the breaker contacts clean and reduce their risk of failure.

34. Anti-oxidant compound should be applied to the ends of the aluminum wires where missing in each electrical distribution panel by a qualified electrician- as required.

35. Several circuit breakers in the distribution panel serve more than one circuit, (often referred to as ‘double taps’). Each circuit breaker was designed to serve just a single circuit. The wires should be separated and reconfigured by a qualified electrician as needed to eliminate the double taps now.

36. One of the double taps mentioned above is also over fused, meaning a 20 amp circuit breaker is serving a 14 gauge wire which is only rated for 15 amps. The wire should be correctly fused by an electrician when the double taps are corrected.

37. General Electric and Murray, the manufacturers of the electrical distribution panels, require that only certain brands of circuit breakers be used in these panels. There are currently circuit breakers from other companies installed in the panel which voids the warrantee and UL rating and can be unsafe. Every circuit breaker in these panels which are not recommended by the manufacturers for use in these panels should be replaced by a qualified electrician.

HEATING/COOLING

38. The heating and cooling systems must be thoroughly cleaned and serviced annually by a qualified heating and cooling specialist. Regular maintenance is vital to the safe, efficient operation of all combustion and cooling equipment.

39. I recommend the heating pipes in the basement be insulated to increase the efficiency of the system.

40. The three return air filters should be replaced with a properly sized, pleated media filter seasonally, because when a dirty filter is left in place:
- a) The a/c equipment is being forced to remain in operation for longer periods of time due to the restricted air flow through the return air filter. This raises your energy costs.
 - b) A dirty filter allows a buildup of dust and dirt in the ductwork, creating a favorable climate for allergens.
41. Air conditioning equipment was not operated during the inspection, because the outdoor temperature was too cold. Temperatures must be at least 60 degrees for 24 hours prior to turning on the equipment to avoid damage to the compressor. I recommend that you request the owner to provide you with a warranty that the Air Conditioning system is functional.
42. I recommend an overflow switch be installed in the pans below the attic air handlers to alert you to an issue with the condensate drainage in the event of a backup.
43. The attic airhandler’s condensate drains are piped into the sewer vent piping which is not permitted as it can allow sewer gases to enter the a/c system and attic thru the condensate drains. The drains should be removed from the vent pipes and repiped to the exterior now as required.

INTERIOR

44. The stovetops left front burner is not functional and should be replaced.
45. The casement windows are difficult to operate and should be lubricated to ease their operation. The missing crank should be replaced.
46. The cracks in the walls and ceilings should be patched and repainted.
47. There are stains that appear to be water stains in the dining room and entry foyer ceilings. I recommend you consult with the owner to determine the cause and if any repairs were completed to prevent further occurrences.
48. The living room’s gas fireplace was off so I did not operate it.
49. The closet door in the hallway rubs the tile floor and should be planed as needed.

50. The toilet in the second floor main bathroom is loose and should be secured to the floor to prevent it from leaking.
51. The broken drain stop in the second floor bathtub should be repaired for your convenience.
52. Doors that do not close and latch at the strike plate should be adjusted as needed.
53. The cracked and loose tiles at the master bathroom shower are probably due to moisture seepage under the tiles at this area.
54. The Jacuzzi tub should be disinfected every month if it is not used regularly to prevent a buildup of mold in the piping.
55. The casement windows in the bedrooms do not meet current building requirements for egress windows in a bedroom and are not required too, but when they require replacement I recommend the opening be reconfigured to accommodate a larger window that meets egress requirements for your safety.
56. There are stains in the ceiling of the left front bedroom's left wall. I recommend you consult with the owner to determine the cause and if any repairs have been made to prevent further occurrences.
57. The cabinet door on the countertops corner cabinet does not fit the opening correctly.
58. The compactor was not operated.
59. The recessed light above the kitchen sink requires installation.
60. The water heater is producing 132 degree hot water which is a hazard. The temperature controls should be adjusted so no more than 125 degree hot water is produced.
61. The master bedroom toilet runs and should be adjusted as needed.

ATTIC

62. The bathroom exhaust fans vent into the attic space. The fans are required to be vented to the exterior of the house and should be redirected to the exterior now.

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63. There are areas in the attic missing insulation and several areas with minimal amounts of insulation. I recommend you consult with an insulation contractor to install an insulation R value of 38 for your comfort and to improve the efficiency of the heating and cooling systems.

FINAL WALK THROUGH

I recommend that you conduct a final “walk through” inspection before you purchase this property. You should satisfy yourself that there have been no unanticipated changes in the property since our inspection.

Good Luck! I enjoyed working with you. Please call me at any time should you have any more questions and I'll try to answer them for you. There is never any charge for telephone or email advice. You can also visit our Web Page at: www.AIMorrison.com for articles and more information on issues mentioned in the report.

If someone you know is purchasing a home, we'd appreciate it if you'd tell them about us. All of our clients are referred to us by someone like you. Your referral is the highest compliment of all and you can be sure that they will receive the same level of professionalism and service that you did. Thanks very much for calling us.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin K. Morrison
MA Home Inspector License #491
MA Construction Supervisor License #085478

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Massachusetts 266 CMR requires the inspector to notify the Client that answers to the following questions should be ascertained from the Seller and/or the Seller's Representative because they are important and relevant to the purchase of the inspected dwelling and may not be Readily Observable through inspection.

- (a) Does the dwelling have a history of seepage, dampness, and/or water penetration into the Basement and/or Under Floor Crawl Space? If so please explain.
- (b) Has a sump pump ever been installed or used in the Basement/Under Floor Crawl Space?
- (c) Do you use any type of dehumidification in any part of the dwelling?
- (d) Are you aware of any mold and/or air quality issues in the dwelling?
- (e) Is the dwelling on a private sewage system?
 - 1. If the waste system is private, has a Title V inspection been completed, and is the completed Title V Report available for review?
 - 2. Has the dwelling ever been inspected and/or treated for insect infestation?
 - a. If so, when?
 - b. What were the chemicals used?
- (f) Has the dwelling ever been tested for radon gas and/or lead paint?
 - 1. If so when?
 - 2. What were the results?
- (g) Has the dwelling ever been inspected by an Inspector?
 - 1. If so, when?
 - 2. Were any problems noted?
 - 3. Is a copy of the inspection Report available?
- (h) Are the Seller/ Seller's Representative aware of any structural, mechanical, electrical or other material defects that may exist on the property?
- (i) Has there ever been a fire in the dwelling?
 - 1. If so, when?
 - 2. What areas were involved?
 - 3. What chemical cleaners, if any, were used for cleanup?
- (j) Has there ever been a hazardous waste spill on the property?
- (k) Is there is an underground storage tank on the property?

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REQUIRED HANDOUT PURSUANT TO 266 CMR 6.08

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 13, s. 97A, and 266 CMR 6.08 Home Inspectors and Associate Home Inspectors are required to provide a document outlining the procedures and benefits of a home energy audit to all Clients purchasing a single-family residential dwelling, a multiple-family residential dwelling with less than 5 dwelling units or a condominium unit in structure with less than 5 dwelling units.

CONCERNED ABOUT RISING ENERGY COSTS? MASSSAVE CAN HELP.

There are so many great reasons to make energy-saving changes to your home—reduced energy costs throughout the year, improved home comfort, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

- MassSave may provide you a no-cost home energy assessment to identify the energy-saving improvements that are right for you.

- MassSave may provide money toward the cost of purchasing and installing approved energy-saving measures and money-saving rebates when you install qualifying energy efficient equipment.

Get started today. Call MassSAVE at 866-527-7283 or go to www.masssave.com for more information or to schedule your home energy audit.