

Construction Update #1

August 6, 2021

Demolition

We are pleased to announce that renovation has begun.



After years of planning, the renovation project began its active phase on July 12. The first steps included erecting a fence to keep people safely away from the work site and removal of hazardous materials such as asbestos insulation and siding.



Our contractor, Ideal Builders, delivered an industrial size dumpster to facilitate proper handling of demolition waste.

As we chafed at delays in city approval of our building permit, Ideal Builders kept the project moving under an “early start” permit that allowed Ideal to remove non-structural walls and the old stage. Final approval of the building plans was granted on July 29 and the city finally issued our building permit.



In the back yard, the hazardous materials abatement crew removed asbestos shingles from the north side of the building during the week of July 12. Soon after abatement was completed, a work crew began demolishing the earth berms along the north wall of the building. This work will make way for the addition that will house our new classrooms, hospitality spaces and elevator.



As the rotting railroad ties and old concrete patio were torn up a small fork lift carried the refuse up to the parking lot.



Removing the deeply rooted walnut tree stumps has been one of the biggest challenges.



By using small equipment like this fork lift and running it on the sidewalk, Ideal has taken significant steps to protect the maple tree on the northeast corner of the building. Most important, instead of running a large, heavy cement truck into the back yard, they plan to pump cement over the roof of the Meetinghouse.



The old portico ceiling was removed due to water damage and discoloration from roof leaks. Fortunately, most of the superstructure was found to be sound. Only a few outer timbers near the post showed signs of water damage and will have to be replaced.



The wall between the coat racks and the sunroom is being removed to create the new lobby.



Excavation along the furnace room wall revealed that the wall did not reach the basement floor level or have a footing. This area will need to be underpinned with concrete to provide adequate support for the existing wall and to create an adequate base for the new addition.



A view of the main level bathroom (left) and corner of the office (right) after initial demolition.



The morning after Ideal discovered that the sandstone wall needed structural underpinning, Architect David Ferch and his structural engineer met with Ideal's site superintendent and safety manager to discuss the issues and details for underpinning the foundation wall. David has already completed the necessary plans. The work is complicated and will require considerable care.



Sue is sporting the latest in Quaker fashion. Rick was hoping for one in grey with a broad brim. On a more serious note, renovating any building requires one decision after another. Sue is seen here on an impromptu visit to the work site requested for consultation by our architect.

With Rick often in Champaign, we enlarged the team of people available to be involved in decision-making should Sue be unavailable. To the existing team (Sue Kummer, Rick Pifer, Kay Stevens), we have added Lynn Entine from the B & G Committee.

Finally, as of this writing, we are pleased to announce that Meeting has received all of the necessary city permits. As construction moves forward, look for future updates and hold us all in the light.
Rick and Sue