# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

February 14, 2007

## HOME INSPECTION REPORT 101 Best Lane Desirable, NJ

The following are the findings of a **Home Inspection** of the subject property done on February 10, 2007. This report is for the use of Mr. & Mrs. W. B. Homeowner.

Conditions on date of inspection: Occupied home. Weather was clear, and approximately 30 Deg. F.

Present at the inspection: D. Meyers, Home Inspector; Mr. & Mrs. Homeowner, buyers; real estate representatives; and, for part of the time, a representative from Terminite, Inc. for the wood destroying insect inspection.



101 Best Lane, Desirable, NJ

<u>Description of Property</u> Wood frame, one family, two story home. The first floor has an entry hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, family room, den, and half bathroom. The second floor has four bedrooms and two full bathrooms. There is an unfinished basement beneath part of the home. There is a one car detached garage.

This home has had significant additions and renovations, including the extension of the rear of the home for the family room and a second floor bedroom.

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Advisory Note Regarding Construction and Renovation Permits This home has undergone significant reconstruction and renovation, including structural work modifications. We do not have any knowledge of municipal inspections, permits, and/or approvals. We do not inspect nor do we have access to building plans or permits or approvals, and therefore this inspection should not be taken as an endorsement or certification of this work.

### **Exterior Facades**

Front, Type: Brick and wood clapboard. Condition: Functional.

Rear, Type: Wood clapboard. Condition: Functional. Left, Type: Wood clapboard. Condition: Functional. Right, Type: Wood clapboard. Condition: Functional.

Trim, Type: Wood. Condition: Functional.

### Windows

Type: Replacement wood double hung, double glazed units.

Location: First floor.
Condition: Functional.

Type: Replacement vinyl double hung, double glazed units.

Location: Second floor.
Condition: Functional.

### **Exterior Doors**

Front: Wood and glass, in functional condition.

Rear: Sliding glass and swinging glass, in functional condition.

<u>Interior Doors</u> Wood, in functional condition.

Type & Condition of Foundation Walls & Structural Supports This home is built partly over a full basement, with crawlspaces at the rear. There are two crawlspaces accessible from the interior of the basement, at the left rear and right rear. There appears to be an additional **inaccessible** crawlspace, at the right rear corner. This space is surrounded by textured plywood on the exterior.

The right front portion of the home appears to be built on wood "sleepers" set on a concrete slab. This portion of the home is the den, which is built in what was at one time an interior or attached garage.

Foundation Wall Material: Concrete block, with a cement parge coating on much of the interior.

Condition: Functional where visible.

Crawlspace Wall Material: Concrete block and probably concrete piers for the right rear corner area.

Condition: Functional where visible.

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Intermediate structural supports: Concrete filled steel tubular columns.

Condition: Functional condition where visible.

Note: Finish materials in the basement significantly limited access to the foundation walls and structural supports, and our findings are limited by this.

Advisory Recommendations:

• See Roof Drainage section – make sure water around the home is well controlled, with no accumulation near the base of the home. This can help reduce the possibility of foundation settlement in the future.

## Type and Condition of Structural Framing

Structural floor framing: Dimensional lumber floor joists, resting on the foundation walls and on multiple wood main beams.

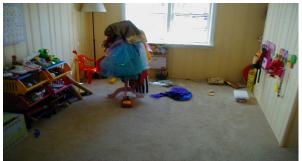


Drilled Beam has been Weakened

### **Condition:**

- o Flooring throughout the home is adequately level and stiff.
- A main beam end has been drilled for a pipe in a position which weakens the support.

Note: Floor framing or support beneath the right front former garage room is not accessible or visible. This type of wood sleeper floor frequently sustains insect and water damage, due to the proximity of wood framing to grade level.



The right front room (den) is built on wood sleepers

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35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Structural wall framing is dimensional lumber, with wood or wood product sheathing on the exterior and plaster or drywall on the interior.

Condition: Walls throughout the home are adequately true.

Structural roof framing: Dimensional lumber for a pitched roof.

Roof Sheathing: Wood and wood product board and panel.

Condition: Visible portions of roof framing and sheathing were functional.

Note: Finish materials in the upper floors significantly limited access to the structural framing, and our findings are limited by this.

### **Recommendations:**

- See separate wood destroying insect report from Terminite, Inc.
- Monitor the beam end where drilled for evidence of additional cracking or other failure. Install a support column at this weakened end of the beam if any additional cracking or movement occurs.

<u>Wood Destroying Insects</u> We do not inspect for wood destroying insect infestation, however as a convenience and as a matter of expedience, an inspection for the presence of wood destroying insects has been ordered by us for this property. The official results of this wood destroying insect inspection will be sent to you under separate cover by the provider of this service, Terminite, Inc, Tel: 908-353-6938. A copy of this separate report is included with the home inspection report for reference.

### **Recommendations:**

• Carefully read the separate wood destroying insect report from Terminite, Inc. and be guided by the recommendations therein.

## Exterior Soil Grading and Drainage

Soil clearance to wood frame structure -

Front: Adequate. Left: Adequate. Right: Adequate.

Back: Inadequate – a section of crawlspace at the right rear is surrounded by textured plywood, in contact with soil. This is conducive to wood destroying insect entry.



Plywood in contact with soil surrounding a crawlspace

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35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Adverse Drainage Conditions: No unusual drainage conditions found on the date of inspection.

## **Recommendations:**

 Modification of arrangement and material surrounding right rear corner crawlspace, either with non-organic material, or so that wood does not contact soil.

<u>Landscaping</u> Several trees and shrubs are very close to or in contact with the roof edge and siding. This is conducive to wood destroying insect entry, and could cause damage to the siding and roof.



Tree in contact with the house

#### **Recommendations:**

 Have trees and shrubs trimmed back so that they are no longer in contact with the home.

<u>Roof Drainage System</u> Roof drainage is by metal gutters and leaders (downspouts) attached to the roof and siding.

Some downspouts are not adequately diverted away from the base of the home. Some areas of the home, such as the central back section, may not have sufficient downspouts to adequately drain the roof.



Inadequately diverted downspout

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35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Some downspouts from upper sections of gutters discharge onto lower roof areas. The gutters on these lower roof areas may become overwhelmed during heavy rains.

Inadequate or defective roof drainage systems can lead to water entry into the basement, foundation damage and/or roof leakage.

### **Recommendations:**

- Direct all downspout discharge points as far away and downhill from the base of the home as is practical.
- Monitor drainage from gutters during heavy rains, and have additional downspouts added as necessary.
- Consider extending upper downspouts all the way to the ground.
- Have the roof drainage system cleaned and maintained on a regular basis by a qualified gutter maintenance company.

Roof The roofs, flashings and penetrations were inspected by the following methods:

- o Visual observation from the ground with the aid of field glasses.
- o Partially from within attic crawlspaces.
- o Finish materials on ceilings and walls on the upper living level were tested where possible with a moisture meter.
- o The underside of the roof was tested where possible with a moisture meter.

Roof type and description: The roofs are pitched and covered with asphalt shingles.

#### **Condition:**

- o Roof shingles appeared to be functional on the date of inspection.
- Water staining was seen on roof sheathing, near the roof edges.



Staining on roof sheathing at the roof edge

Skylights: Skylights are present over the family room addition. No signs of leakage

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

were seen around skylights on the date of inspection.

Significant amounts of leaf debris have collected around one of the skylights. This could retain water and lead to skylight leakage.

Note: Skylights are vulnerable areas in roofs, and leakage can often develop around skylights, especially during extreme weather conditions. For this reason, skylights should be carefully monitored, and kept clear of debris on the exterior.

#### **Roof Ventilation:**

- Gable end vents.
- o Power gable end fan.
- o Ridge vents.

Roof ventilation appears to be adequate.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Have debris removed from the roof area around the skylights, and keep this area clear of debris in the future.
- Stains seen in the attic suggest possible leakage. Have the roof evaluated for leakage by a roofer, with repairs made as necessary to assure a leak free condition.

Our roof evaluation consists of an inspection of the exterior surface covering, including an inspection of visible flashing details. A steeply pitched roof is usually inspected from the ground by use of binoculars. If safely accessible, a moderately pitched roof will be mounted and walked for close inspection. The underside of the roof decking is also closely inspected where accessible, and we use a professional moisture meter to evaluate stained areas that may be evidence of leakage. The interior finished surfaces of the home, especially ceilings and walls at the top or attic floor, are also inspected for evidence of leakage, and a moisture meter is used to evaluate suspect areas.

If we see evidence of roof leakage, we will say so in our report, and recommend that further evaluation and repair or roof replacement be done. Often we see stains on the underside of the roof deck or at ceilings that strongly suggest that the roof has leaked. Depending on the season of the year and recent weather, as well as recent painting or repair done by the owner, we may not be able to say if the roof is currently leaking. What we can say with certainty, is that all roofs eventually leak, and for older homes, parts of the roof system such as flashings in valleys or at the chimneys and plumbing vents may never have been replaced even if the roof surface has been re-covered. Consequently, our inspection report should not be taken as a guarantee that the roof will not leak, but simply as a report on the condition of the roof as we found it on the date of inspection.

## Driveway & Paths

Driveway Type: Asphalt. Driveway Condition: **Significant wear and cracking**.

Path Type: Concrete, pavers. Path Condition: Functional. Sidewalk Type: Concrete. Sidewalk Condition: Functional.

**Recommendations:** 

• Have the driveway re-paved.

Deck None present.

#### Patio

Type: Pavers. Location: Rear.

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Condition: Functional.

## Description & Condition of Entrances

Front Entry Area: Brick steps, with some cracks and gaps in brick and mortar.

Back Entry Area: Wrap around wood steps. **No handrail is present on these steps at the doors. This is a falling hazard.** 

Side Door: Wood and glass door to brick steps, in functional condition.

### **Recommendations:**

- Have a mason repair gaps and cracks in brick steps.
- Have a handrail installed along the wood steps at the rear.

## Condition of Masonry Chimney

The exterior of the masonry chimney was inspected by the following methods:

- o Visual observation from the ground with the aid of field glasses.
- o Partially from within the basement, attic and/or other interior spaces.

### **Condition:**

 Chimney flashings appear to be older. Leakage can occur around older chimney flashings.

Our inspection can not properly evaluate the condition of the interior components of the chimneys, and we do not include this in our service.

The National Fire Protection Association and the National Chimney Sweep Guild recommend that chimneys more than 20 years old be given a Level 2 inspection to rule out hidden safety defects.

## **Recommendations:**

- Have a qualified chimney contractor conduct a level 2 inspection on the interior of the chimney flues.
- Have a qualified chimney contractor evaluate the chimney exterior and flashings, and perform maintenance as required.

## **Fireplace**

Location: Living Room. Type: Wood Burning.

Hearth area Condition: Functional Flue Damper Condition: Functional

Other Conditions: Some deposits of creosote are present in the lower sections of the chimney flue and fireplace. This can result in chimney fires.

## **Recommendations:**

- See Chimney section.
- Have a qualified chimney / fireplace contractor clean the fireplace and chimney flue(s).

## Electrical System

Voltage: 240/120 volts Current capacity: 200 amperes

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Capacity is adequate for present usage of this home.

Feed cable type: Overhead.

Electrical Grounding: Metallic water main.

Circuit Breaker and/or Fuse panels:

o Circuit breaker main panel located in the basement.

Circuit Breaker/Fuse inspection methods:

o Removal of panel cover with inspection of wiring on the interior.

Conditions: Wiring within circuit breaker panel was found to be functional.

### Branch circuit wiring:

- o Plastic sheathed cable (Type NM)
- o Metallic sheathed cable (Armored, BX)

Branch circuit conductor material is copper for all 15 and 20 ampere solid conductor circuits.

### **Conditions:**

• Some open unenclosed connections and/or junction boxes were found in the basement. This is a hazard.



**Hazardous Electrical Connections** 

Receptacles are partly grounded three pin units and partly older two pin units.

A representative number of three pin outlets were tested, with no wiring defects found.

GFCI electrical outlets are NOT present in all wet areas of all bathrooms with electrical outlets. GFCI electrical outlets provide protection against electric shocks in wet areas.

### **Recommendations:**

- Have a licensed electrician enclose all open junction boxes and any other exposed electrical connections.
- Have a licensed electrician install functional GFCI electrical outlets in all wet areas of the home including kitchens and bathrooms that lack them.

## Plumbing System

Water Main Material: Copper tubing.

Water Main and Main water shutoff valve Location: Basement.

Water Main Condition: Functional

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Main Shutoff Valve Condition: The main water shutoff valve is older. Leakage can occur from older shutoff valves.

Visible Water pipe material: Copper tubing. Visible Water pipe Conditions: Functional.

Waste Disposal system type: Waste disposal appears to be a public system (sewer system), however this could not be confirmed.

Drain and vent pipe material: Iron; PVC.

**Drain pipe Conditions**: Functional where visible. *Note that old iron sections of the drain are now very old, and may have significant internal corrosion, and have limited additional service life.* 

#### **Recommendations:**

- Have a plumber evaluate the main water shutoff valve and replace as necessary.
- Have a plumber video scan older, iron drain pipe sections to determine their condition.

<u>Natural Gas Piping</u> Visible rigid and flexible natural gas piping was in functional condition on the date of inspection.

## **Heating System**

System Type: Forced air furnace. Number of Zones: 1. Fuel: Natural Gas. Location: Basement. **Estimated age: 18 years**. Typical service life: 20 years, although maintenance is often required before this time.

**Condition:** When possible, operation of the system is done using normal controls, and this was done on the date of inspection. The heating system activated when heat was called for by the thermostat, and warm air was supplied to vents.

- o Some corrosion is present within the furnace case.
- o Approaching the end of its designed service life.
- o The currently installed air filter was very dirty on the date of inspection.

Heating System Venting: Metal flue pipe to masonry chimney, drafting adequately.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Inquire with the local gas utility about "worry free" service contracts, to cover minor maintenance and repairs to the heating system.
- Change the furnace filter regularly, at least once in the Spring and once in the Fall.
- Budget for replacement of the heating system in the near future.

## Heating Equipment Clearance & Combustion Air

Heating System Location: Basement.

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Ventilation and Combustion Air: Adequate. Clearance to Combustibles: Adequate.

## Central Air Conditioning

AC Equipment Age (Estimated): 10 years

Typical central AC compressor lifetime: 12 to 15 years, however failure before this time is not uncommon.

Compressor Location: Exterior.

Compressor Condition: Displays some weathering, and requires cleaning. The AC system could not be tested on the date of inspection, as the outside air temperature was too low.

Air Handler Type: Integrated with the forced air furnace.

### **Recommendations:**

- Have the AC system serviced and tested at the start of the next cooling season and serviced annually by an AC technician.
- Consider replacing the AC system and heating system together, when replacement of either system is planned.

<u>Asbestos</u> This inspection can not guarantee that asbestos materials, which have been commonly used for insulation and some finish material, are present or absent from this home. To determine with certainty if asbestos is present, sampling and lab testing is required, which is not included in this inspection.

<u>Fuel Oil Storage</u> The heating system for this home currently uses natural gas.

The history of this property is not known by us, and therefore we can not assure you that a hidden buried oil tank does not exist on this property. If a higher level of confidence regarding the presence or absence of buried tanks is desired, then a tank search utilizing specialized equipment would be required.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Specialist search for abandoned buried tanks.
- As leaking oil tanks can result in significant expenses, we advise careful review with legal counsel of any documents or statements relating to the oil tank(s). Further evaluation by tank specialists may be advisable.

### Domestic Hot Water Heater

Water Heater Type: Standard Tank. Water Heater size, gallons: 50 Heating Method/Fuel: Natural Gas

Age: 4 years. Typical Service Life: 8-10 years

Condition: Functional

#### General Interior Condition

Wall and Ceiling Material: Drywall and/or plaster.

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

Wall and Ceiling Condition: Functional – only minor cosmetic defects.

Floor Surfaces: Wood, Carpet, Tile

Floor Condition: Functional – only minor cosmetic defects.

### Kitchen

Kitchen Sink: Functional Stovetop and Oven: Gas.

Condition: The igniter for the right front burner does not work. This is a hazard.

Garbage Disposal: The garbage disposal appears to be an older unit.

GFCI electrical outlets: Present and functional at wet areas.

GFCI electrical outlets protect against shocks in wet areas.

Dishwasher: Functional.

Water pressure at the sink was adequate. Drainage at the sink was adequate.

Kitchen cabinets and countertops are in functional condition.

### **Recommendations:**

• Have an appliance service technician repair the right front burner igniter.

Laundry Room A washer and dryer are located in the basement.

The washer discharges into an older, small basin. If the drain for this basin becomes even partially clogged, the basin could easily overflow.

## **Recommendations:**

Discharge washer water into a larger laundry sink.

Note: We do not inspect or operationally test laundry appliances during a home inspection due to the multiplicity of different cycles built in to these units and the large amount of time it takes to complete these cycles. We recommend that any laundry equipment that is to remain in the home be demonstrated to be in satisfactory operational condition before you close on this property.

### Bathrooms

First Floor: Half, with sink and toilet, in functional condition.

Second Floor, Main: Full, with sink, toilet and shower over tub. The sink and toilet are in functional condition. The tub and tub/shower faucets and plumbing are older. Leakage or breakage should be anticipated.

Second Floor, Master: Full, with sink, toilet and stall shower with tile base. The sink and toilet are in functional condition. The stall shower has a tile base and tile door sill. Leakage can occur through tile bases and door sills if a correctly installed waterproof liner is not present. It is not possible to determine from a single inspection whether a tile shower base or door sill is leaking.

GFCI electrical outlets: Present in the master bathroom, **NOT present in the main bathroom.** 

GFCI electrical outlets protect against shocks in wet areas.

Water pressure and local drainage were adequate in all bathrooms.

## **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

#### **Recommendations:**

- Budget for replacement of the tub/shower faucets and plumbing.
- Have a plumber conduct a "leak down" test of the tile stall shower tile base to ensure that it is not leaking.
- Consider having the tile door sill replaced with a solid piece of material, such as marble.
- See Electrical section.

<u>Interior Stairs</u> Functional.

## Insulation

Visible areas of insulation:

- o Fiberglass in attic floor.
- o Fiberglass in rear basement crawlspace ceilings.

#### **Insulation Condition:**

- Functional in attic, however insulation may be blocking ventilation at the roof edges.
- Sections of insulation in the basement crawlspace have dropped out of position.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Have insulation in the rear basement crawlspace replaced and placed securely back into position as necessary.
- Install insulation baffles in the attic so as not to block ventilation from roof edges.

Note: Most homes of this age and type were not insulated well enough to meet current standards for energy efficiency. Consequently, you may find that exterior walls feel cold, and the cost for heating this home may be higher than for a similar size home built to modern construction standards

<u>Basement</u> The basement is unfinished space, with the exception of the basement ceiling. Crawl areas: There are two crawlspaces accessible from the interior, one at the right rear and one at the left rear. *The right rear crawlspace is essentially inaccessible, as an air duct blocks entry*. **Insulation in the right rear crawlspace has fallen out of position.** 

Sump Pump: Present.

Condition: The sump pump discharges into the house plumbing drainage system. This may not be permitted by the local municipality. In addition, if drain plumbing, becomes clogged, the sump pump may back up and discharge water into the basement.

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090



Sump pump discharging into drain plumbing

#### **Basement Condition:**

Signs of water entry are present on some sections of foundation walls.

#### **Recommendations:**

- See Roof Drainage section proper maintenance of gutters and downspouts can reduce the possibility of water entry into the basement.
- Modify ductwork and/or crawlspace entry to allow access to the right rear crawlspace.
- Re-direct sump pump to discharge to the exterior of the home.

Please be aware that the lower level interior space is near or partially below grade level, and foundation walls and the floor slab floor in this home are not perfectly water proofed, and therefore the possibility of water entry with consequent damage to stored materials or current and future finish materials exists, especially during extreme weather conditions.

<u>Attic Space</u> There is an unfinished, partially floored attic, accessible by pull down stairs one the second floor. The attic spaces were entered and inspected where safe access was possible.

The pull down stairs does not stay down reliably. The bottom section folds up, and cannot be put down from above. This is a hazard, and could lead to someone becoming trapped in the attic.

There is a vent discharging directly into the attic. Moisture from this vent can cause premature failure of the framing and roof.

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35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090



Improper Venting into the Attic

### **Recommendations:**

- Have the pull down stairs adjusted so that they stay down reliably.
- Re-direct the vent to the exterior, or close to an existing vent opening in the attic.

## Garage One car detached.

Vehicle Doors: One overhead door.

Power Openers: None Present.

Vehicle Door Condition: Vehicle door was operated. Door and door hardware were found to be in functional condition.

Garage Floor Slab: Some cracks and settlement.

Garage Structure: Some carpenter ant damage is present at the right rear of the garage.

No gutters or downspouts are present on the garage. This is allowing water to run down the side of the garage, and accumulate at the base.

Vine growth on the garage sides and into the siding is present and causing damage.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Have vine growth removed.
- Have gutters and downspouts installed on the garage.
- See separate wood destroying insect report from Terminite, Inc.

Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors & Fire Safety Devices Installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors as per local code are recommended for this one family residence. We do not test fire safety devices, since these must be checked on a regular basis for proper operation, and this should done prior to closing on this property and regularly according to manufacturer advice thereafter.

<u>Carbon Monoxide Tests</u> Carbon monoxide (CO) is produced when fossil fuels are burned. Properly operating gas, or fuel oil burning heating systems normally produce very low levels of this toxic gas, and it is normally vented to the outside of the home. The best protection against carbon monoxide poisoning in a home is regular maintenance

# **Licensed Home Inspectors**

35 Glenside Road, South Orange, NJ 07079 O (973) 763-7090

of the heating systems and chimney and flue connections, as well as properly maintained carbon monoxide detectors/alarms in the home. In the course of our home inspection the inspector wears a CO meter/alarm for his protection and yours, and all areas of the home that are entered are therefore automatically checked during our inspection. If the CO meter indicates a high level of this gas, we alert occupants and state the condition in the report.

<u>Lead Paint</u> Homes built prior to 1978 may have surfaces covered with paint containing lead oxide pigment, and under certain circumstances this lead-based paint can become a health hazard. This home inspection does not include testing for lead.

#### **Recommendations:**

Testing for the presence of lead paint.

Mold & Fungal Conditions Mold and other fungal organisms are a natural part of our environment and can not be completely eliminated. Certain types of construction and wet conditions in a home can, however, allow excessive growth of mold, and damage to the structure and a health risk may occur. Wet insulation in attics and finish and stored materials in basements or below grade areas may be especially prone to accelerated mold growth when water penetration occurs. We are not certified mold inspectors or mold experts, and this inspection does not include testing for mold or other fungal organisms.

Ordered Tests Radon, results pending laboratory analysis.

General Disclaimer The observations and findings presented in this report are based upon what was visible on the date of inspection. Many unseen problems can exist in a home without visible evidence present. It is recommended that a qualified technician in the various fields be used to do invasive testing whenever a problem is suspected. Costs of repairs or replacement can not be accurately determined by this inspector. While every attempt has been made from a professional standpoint to disclose deficiencies in the home that is being considered for purchase, due diligence must be assumed by the buyer, as they alone will bear the financial burden to correct unforeseen or hidden problems that may occur after purchase.

All separate reports from other inspections for wood destroying insects, testing laboratories, septic system and/or well experts, mold experts, etc. should be carefully read and considered as well.

Please Note: This is a Home Inspection with defined terms, conditions and limitations as set forth in the "Inspection Agreement", previously sent to you. The inspection is limited to accessible visible components of the home as found on the date of inspection, with no guarantees implied. The inspection is done by, or under the direct supervision of, a professional home inspector licensed to practice in the State of NJ. As consultants for the buyer(s), we affirm that we have no proprietary interest in this property, nor do we have any other agreement with or business relationship with the principals involved in the sale of this property.

This home inspection report has been provided to you by the Meyers Inspection Team

Meyers Home Inspection Services
R. R. Meyers, Inspector of Record, Lic. 24GI00010700