



North Point Tower Restoration Project July 18, 2017 Update

The contractor has installed two of three new stone finials on the tower. The finials were manufactured with approved materials similar to the originals. The third finial on the northeast corner is not yet completed. The fourth finial was in good condition when inspected and was not replaced. The contractor also is continuing tuckpointing the masonry.

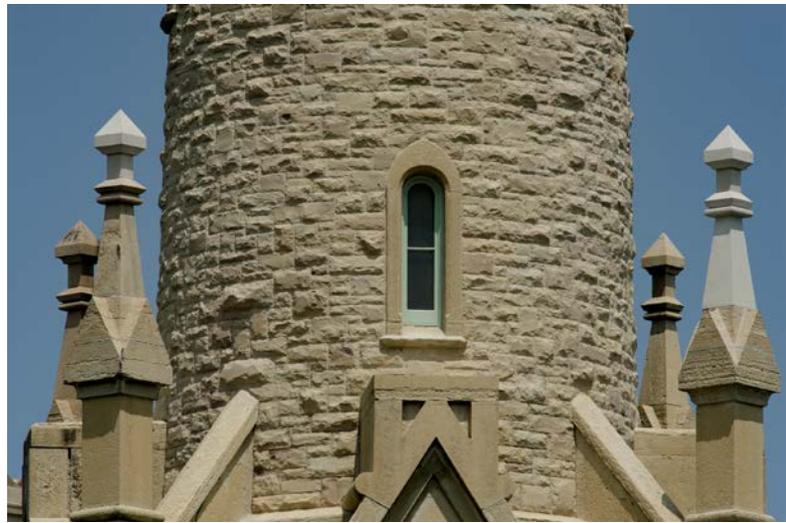
All repairs match the existing materials and architecture of the historic structure.

Consulting firm exp US Services, Inc. provided design and contract documents, having inspected the tower in 2014. The general contractor is Marion Inc. Finial placement photos taken by Butch Jorgenson.



Masonry work on ornate stone façade on the south, west and north sides of the upper portion of the tower is complete. Repairs included removal of organic debris, replacement of damaged stone, tuck pointing of mortar and crack repairs. The east side of the tower was found to require the most repair and additional stone replacement.

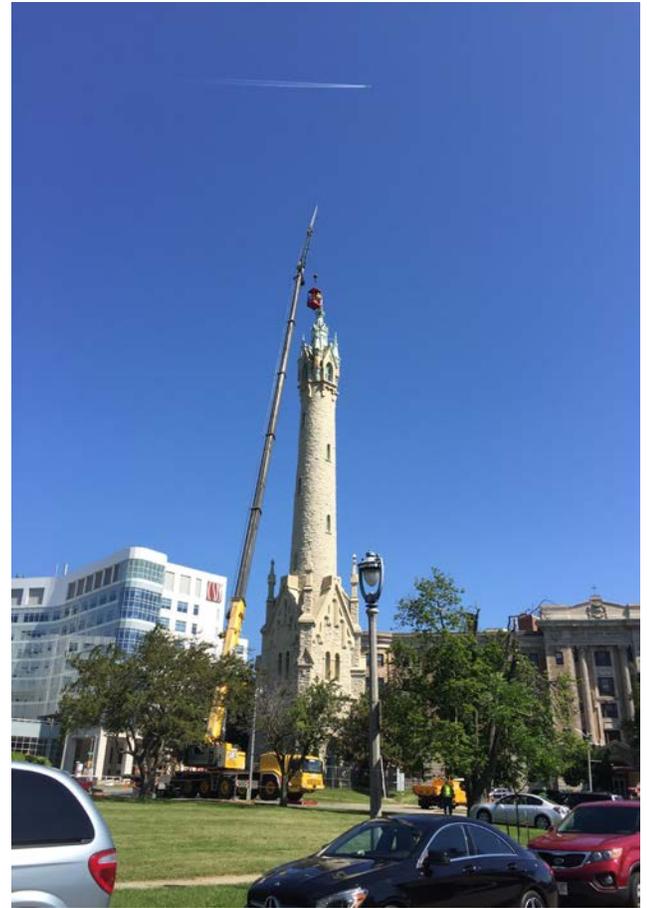
The wood windows were repaired, painted and sealed. Some of the glass was replaced. The work was intended to prevent water infiltration that previously degraded the masonry.



The weather vane from atop the tower is now in safe storage, awaiting its reinstallation after repair of the area on top of the tower that held it in place.

The weather vane had recently taken on a decided lean to the side. Project coordinators suspect a severe, early spring storm exacerbated an existing but hidden deteriorated and weakened condition. Although the roof is in good shape, there is rusting visible in the interior of the peak. The ornamental sheet metal above the peak hid three or more feet of the rod holding the weather vane upright, and the cause of the leaning was not readily apparent. Because the cause of the deterioration appears to be within the structure of the roof, a permanent fix was not possible at this time.

Project coordinators determined the weather vane could fall and pose a safety hazard. On June 27, a crane was used to allow the contractor to reach the weather vane and lift it and the steel pole on which it swung from the peak of the roof.



(Photos by Rosalind Rouse and Sean Schutten)

The repair of the roof structure will be included in the scope of roofing and repainting work proposed for the Department of Public Works 2018 capital budget.



The interior of the peak of the roof and the area that held the steel rod on which the weather vane rested.



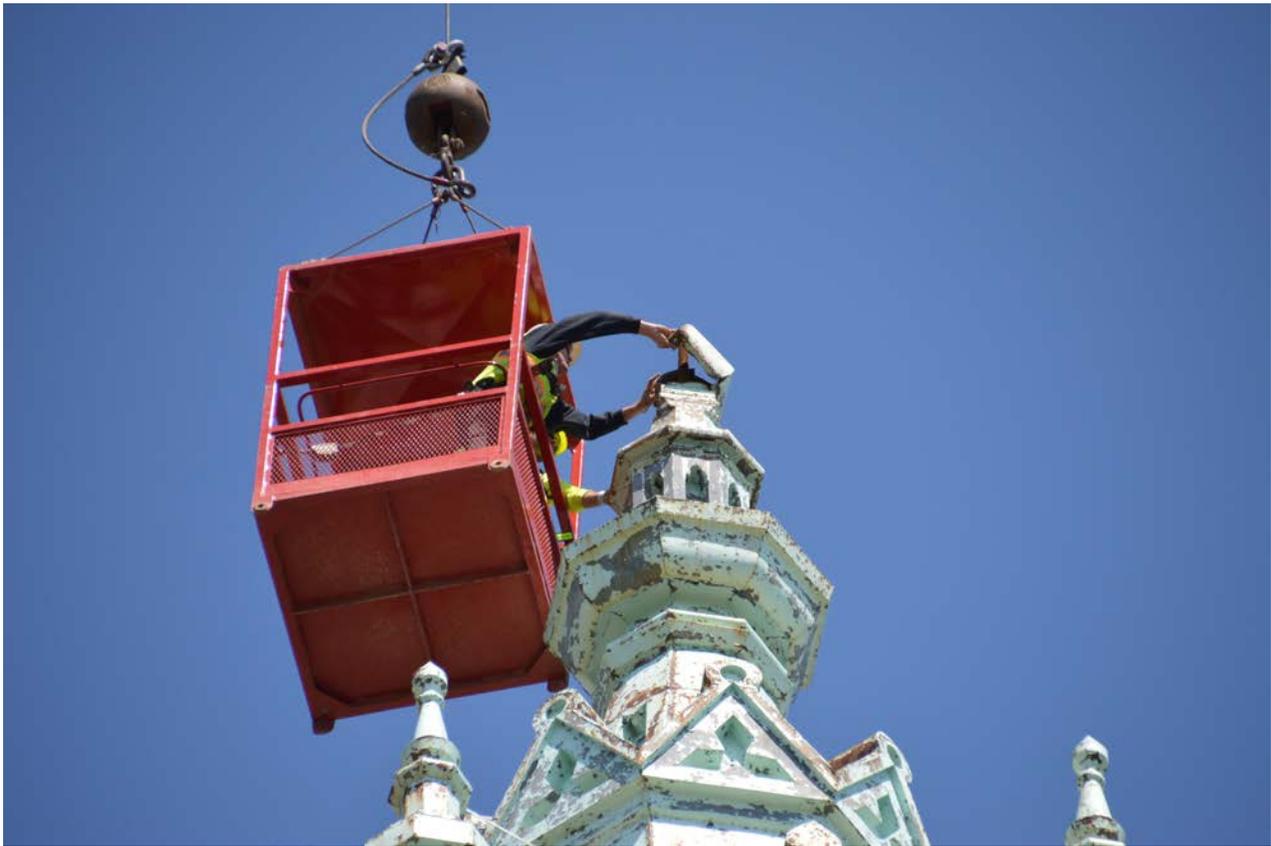
(Photo by Butch Jorgenson)



(Photo by Sean Schutten)



(Photo by Butch Jorgenson)



(Photos above and next page by Sean Schutten)



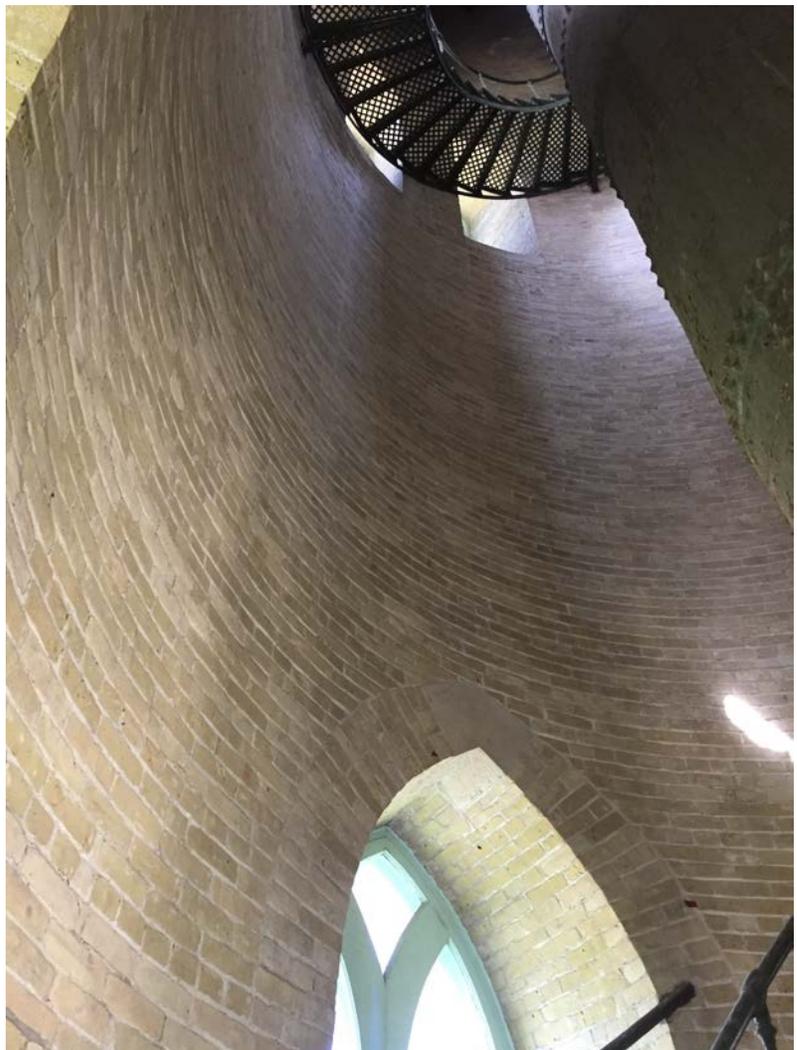
The weather vane is back on solid ground after 143 years and was found to be in good condition. It measures six feet long, 14" wide and weighs just under 30 pounds. The vane swung from three loops that encircled the steel rod in the foreground. The loops are visible on the left side of the rectangular piece with the cutout at the right. (photo credit Sean Schutten)

Interior work

Tuck pointing, repairs and cleaning of the brick have been completed.

The contractor replaced the original cast iron floor plates with galvanized plates, and made interim repairs to selective cast iron stair treads and partial repairs to the stringers which support the treads and risers.

The 142-year-old staircase is not sound enough for public traffic, and for liability reasons, only City of Milwaukee employees preparing to perform maintenance at the tower are allowed to climb the stairs.





A closeup view reveals cracks in one of the old finials.

A visitor to Doors Open 2014 at the tower provided this photo of her distant relative. Michael Reichert was a mason who helped build the tower, which went into service in 1874. The handwriting is found on the back of the photo.



Michael Reichert

b. Jöhlingen, Baden,
Germany

25 Jan 1839

d. Milwaukee, WI

24 Nov. 1894