



HOUSE OF THE TEMPLE

• Renovation Update for June 2011 •

DURING JUNE 2011, the Renovation Team focused on the cleaning and restoration of the Entrance Plaza and Entrance level facade. Preparation is also underway to investigate the ceiling of the Atrium to determine how fire sprinklers can be routed in a manner which does not visually impact the historic appearance. Design of the mechanical system is ongoing with additional consideration given to alternatives to heat and cool the building including the use of geothermal wells. Analysis of the decorative painting is scheduled to begin following session in August.



Before this current cleaning/restoration effort, heavy soiling was noted at the cornices and parapets of the west elevation. Additionally, four panels directly above the inscription on the building were inconsistent with the adjacent stone. Documentation indicated these panels were replaced with new in the last 25 years.



Scaffolding was temporarily installed on the north and south sides of the entrance to provide access to the stone walls.



Following cleaning, the sphinx and walls are brighter with the heavy soiling removed as part of the cleaning. Malleable joint covers were installed on the top part of the wall to keep water from tracking down the joints.



Where joints between the limestone were missing, new pointing mortar was installed. Once the overall building renovation is underway, the colonnade level and stepped roof will also be cleaned and restored.



As the masons carefully cut out the joints of the stone panels to be replaced, they discovered that the surface was not stone but rather a mortar patch. Behind the mortar layer, was a later of stone, another layer of mortar, another later of stone mortared directly onto the brick back up wall which is inconsistent with the original drawings.



Once the non-original stones were removed, the original detail of the stone and brick was identified. Typically, the stone is six inches thick with a layer of mortar between stone and brick . Stone anchors were also identified in the construction of the wall.



The joints between the stones on the plaza had deteriorated or were missing allowing water to migrate to the space below. After several mortar tests, the remaining material in the joints was removed and new mortar was installed.



Damp burlap sheets where placed over the new mortar to allow the mortar to cure properly.

