



**GROUND****EDED**  
Engineering Services

April 4, 2019

Be Our Guest, LLC  
1144 Piedmont Avenue  
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

VIA Email to [GMacquisitions@gmail.com](mailto:GMacquisitions@gmail.com)

Attention: Ms. Katherine Drolett  
Member

RE: Engineering Review and Observations  
Soulshine Renovation Project  
1071 Piedmont Road  
Atlanta, Georgia  
GROUND EDED Project 19JMW001

Dear Ms. Drolett:

GROUND EDED Engineering Services, LLC (GROUND EDED) has prepared this letter detailing the results of our review of documentation and our field visit to the above project in Atlanta, Georgia where a “void” / “sinkhole” has been identified during renovation.

The purpose of this letter is to provide a review of the details of the project to present, and to provide recommendations regarding future building activities and potential remediation options that will allow for the continuation of the project without continued fear of additional damages and future delays.

Early July 2018 during demolition activities for the existing slab a “void” was encountered in the middle section of the planned Soulshine space; which is between a Willy’s Restaurant facility and a reported daycare center. Subsequent to the discovery, several observations have been made and are summarized as follows:

1) July 13, 2018                      Piedmont Engineers

Site was visited and Piedmont recommended that further investigations be performed to find the root cause of the “void” particularly given that a combined sewer (storm and sanitary) ran beneath the structure in the vicinity or the void area. They were contracted to Be Our Guest, LLC and did not perform any testing at this time.

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- 2) July 23, 2018                      Correspondence between Be Our Guest, JM Williams, and Piedmont Park Conservancy (PPC)

The void was reported and the City of Atlanta Watershed Management was alerted and apparently had visited the site and deemed that the sewer was likely not the problem. City of Atlanta also indicates that additional resources would be needed to make repair.

- 3) July 25, 2018                      M2Structural

On this date a structural engineer from M2Structural visited the site on behalf of the project architect to assess the void and potential remedial measures required. The recommendations including shoring of existing columns and reiteration that finding the root cause of the void was paramount. This report also highlights the potential that other void areas could exist in other portions of the structure. Further observation and consultation was again recommended.

- 4) August 7, 2018                      PPC, Be Our Guest, LLC, and JM Williams

PPC indicates in email correspondence that City of Atlanta will provide shoring and repair of the sinkhole.

- 5) September 18, 2018              Palmer Engineering

Palmer Engineering visited the site on this date and also recommended underpinning and/or shoring of existing columns, that the voids be filled, and that work continue as they believe the void to be localized to this area.

- 6) October 7, 2018                      JM Williams

In a letter to Be Our Guest, LLC, JM Williams expresses concern continuing the project due to lack of identification of the “root” cause of the void and subsequent sinkhole activity. Further, this letter cites differences between the Piedmont and M2Structural Reports and the Palmer report regarding the additional testing and observations required.

7) October 10, 2018 City of Atlanta DWM

In a report the City indicates that CCTV testing, smoke testing, and dye testing were again conducted and the results of all indicate that the sewer is intact and not the likely cause of the void. The city also reports in this document that cellular grout was utilized to fill the void, again with no indications as to the cause of the void and sinkhole observed.

8) November 7, 2018 Piedmont Geotechnical

Again, in this report, concern is raised as to the lack of testing in the soils to determine the root cause of the void and sinkhole encountered. Concern is again raised for the overall integrity of the structure and the potential for other voids to exist or to develop.

9) November 15, 2018 Palmer Engineering

The site conditions were again re-visited by Palmer and in this letter the structure is pronounced safe and the void fill installed by the City is blessed. The letter does indicate that Palmer is still unaware of the cause, timing on formation, and un-certain of additional potential issues, however, are confident in the structural integrity of the building.

10) February 26, 2019 Be Our Guest, LLC

In a letter to Palmer Engineering concern is again raised as to the methodology of the findings, lack of pertinent test data, exploration, etc. are raised and as of this date no further information is available.

11) March 15, 2019 GROUNDED

On this date the undersigned visited the property and met with Ms. Drolett to review the issue. The site was also visited, and the sinkhole/void area observed. It appears that the grout fill is either shrinking, which would be typical of wet concrete, or may be continuing to subside.

From the time of our visit, GROUNDED has reviewed the available correspondence, visited the site, and spoken with Ms. Drolett. It is apparent, in our opinion that additional testing is both warranted and necessary to ensure the protection of the investment that is to be made during the renovation of Soulshine.

It is unsettling, to us, that no cause of the void/sinkhole has been identified, and that no wholesale measures have been taken to ensure the structural integrity of the building. It is our experience that natural sinkholes do not generally form in the geologic province that the site is located in and are almost always the result of flowing water in some manner. It is unlikely that additional voids are not forming at present or may have already formed under the structure and it is further likely that additional damages could be encountered. It should be noted that this is an opinion based on our experience and observations with other situations such as the Soulshine issue.

GROUNDED does recommend the following to both eliminate the potential future issues and to ensure that the structure and slab areas are suitable for the planned purposes:

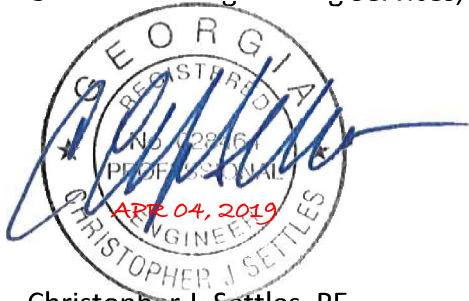
- 1) Low pressure grout injections should be performed to both fill any voids that may be encountered and to eliminate the question as to their potential existence. The grout injection rods, approximately 1 ½ inch diameter steel pipe are driven with hand methods as deeply as possible and then retracted on approximate one (1) foot intervals with grout injected at low pressures into the soils. This both “consolidates” softer soils; which may be in-place and serves to fill the voids that may be either forming or have formed. Where necessary, small holes will be hammer-drilled through the existing slab.
- 2) During installation of the low-pressure grout injections, GROUNDED recommends that they be monitored by a representative of Geotechnical Engineering Firm that is familiar with the process to review the grout takes in-progress as a means of ensuring that the voids have been adequately filled as encountered.
- 3) The City should be contacted to assist in monitoring down-stream of the sewer line to ensure that grout does not infiltrate the sewer. Based on the results of their testing and observations this shouldn’t be a concern, however, exercising of care in this matter is recommended to avoid further damages.
- 4) A report should be prepared detailing the results of the grout injections that can be provided to the lenders, General Contractor, and PPC to serve as final notification that proper due diligence and remedial measures have been completed.
- 5) Additional void areas are likely to be encountered that may require additional void fill and grout injection beyond the Soulshine space. If this is need arises during installation of the grout injections, PPC should be prepared to provide access to ensure that the voids are completely filled and the structure is secured.

If this recommended remedial measure is to be executed, GROUNDED recommends that a meeting on site be conducted with a Pressure Grout Contractor, representatives of our firm and Be Our Guest to discuss scope, costs, and schedule.

In conclusion, GROUNDED generally concurs with M2Structural and Piedmont in that until the root cause is found; or a wholesale remedial solution is completed the current status of the structural integrity of the building should be considered in question. Given the lack of test data presented, explorations performed, and minimal remedial measures performed at this time, it is NOT our OPINION that this can be considered a localized failure requiring no additional measures.

Should any question arise regarding this letter, or if we may be of further service in any manner, please contact our office at your convenience. As always, GROUNDED is pleased to have provided service to your project.

Respectfully submitted,  
GROUNDED Engineering Services, LLC



Christopher J. Settles, PE  
Principal