

CHERRY HILL WEST – JONES GYM ENTRANCE PROJECT

Community members have asked about the construction project at the entrance to Cherry Hill High School West's Jones Gym. This project has taken longer than expected, as the issues with the structure were more complicated than originally projected. The most serious conditions, all requiring replacement/remediation, were concealed behind the existing building finishes. District Architect John Middleton, of Becica Associates, offers a thorough explanation:

The project was configured as a masonry restoration project that was to remove, repair and reset the architectural precast concrete (APC) surround at the Jones Gym entrance (along with related work). Allowances were built into the contract in the event that some unforeseen conditions were encountered and had to be addressed during the project.

When the APC was removed, the back-up concrete masonry (block) construction was found to be in poor condition. The contractor was directed to remove the concrete masonry (this was the back-up material concealed behind the APC). When the concrete masonry block (CMU) was removed, defects in the primary structural steel columns were exposed at two columns and repairable deficiencies were exposed at two other columns. These deficiencies caused several significant changes to the project. First, emergency temporary shoring (support) was required to be installed to support the structure until permanent modifications could be put in place; next, the replacement structure had to be engineered to replace the faulty structure.

Once the engineering was completed, replacement steel was ordered and fabricated; it was delivered the week before winter recess. Work could not proceed until the new structural steel was in place. Now that the steel columns have been installed, the contractor continues to proceed with the installation. Weather has been an issue – construction had to be cancelled for several days because of snow, rain and cold. The contractor indicates that the work will be completed by approximately the second week of February (dependent on weather).

The revised design was targeted to minimize cost impacts on the project. The construction contract amount will not be increased due to the revised construction. This means that although the project was expanded and took longer than planned, it will not cost the District any more money than was originally budgeted.