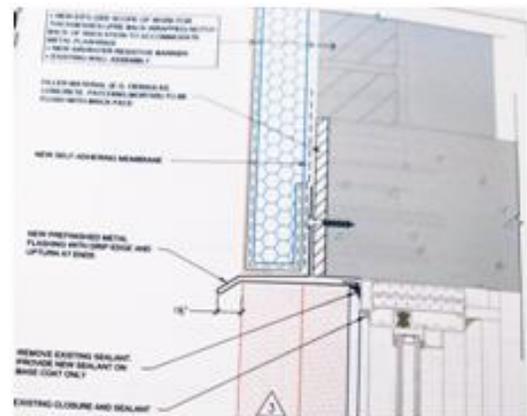## The Benefits of Over-cladding

Many property managers are turning to the Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS) form of over-cladding to address structural problems with the brick veneer in their buildings. Three independent property groups, including Homestead Land Holdings, of 125 Parkway Forest, Toronto, Lansdowne Properties with 1011 Lansdowne (Toronto), and the Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation of 2455 Rivard (in Windsor) have found that properly specified, the EIFS system can solve structural problems, save energy, and present a much more attractive building facade.

Having reviewed different forms of over-cladding, many now choose EIFS system in preference over other forms such as steel or light weight concrete panels. The choice is one of aesthetics and cost. Early EIFS installations were prone to difficulties with adhesion and water ingress, but improved systems and detailing have proven to have solved these problems. EIFS now offers an attractive solution, with a life expectancy of approximately 30 years.

Typical detail, EIFS

The cost of the EIFS system falls in the $15 to $20 per square foot range, and by itself does not provide an attractive payback against energy savings. However if we assume that part of the cost can be written off against the ongoing maintenance costs of a failing brick veneer, and poor aesthetic appeal, then over-cladding starts to make sense financially.

Over-cladding creates an attractive building facade

If we allow an approximate 30 year life expectancy, then from the point of view of energy conservation, the cumulative energy savings will provide an offset to the capital cost of the project. Typically, gas savings from the 3" EPS insulation could amount to 1 m3 per year of gas per ft2 of over-cladding.

 With careful specification, over-cladding is proving to be an effective means of arresting and preventing serious structural problems, while at the same time providing energy savings, and aesthetic improvements to the building envelope.
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