



PROJECT PROFILE

Farnsworth House

Preservation Services | Plano, IL



CLIENT

National Trust for Historic Preservation

BACKGROUND

The Farnsworth House, designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in 1951, is an internationally significant example of modernist domestic architecture. Built as a country retreat for Dr. Edith Farnsworth, the steel and glass house faces the Fox River within a flood plain and is raised above the ground approximately 5 feet.

As a result of flooding, condensation, and water leakage, the steel elements of the house had corroded, causing damage to the glass windows and travertine pavers. WJE was retained to investigate the distress and assist in designing repairs.



SOLUTION

WJE has assisted the National Trust for Historic Preservation with the long term preservation of the Farnsworth House since the Trust acquired the building in 2004. WJE architects, engineers, and conservators have conducted investigations of the curtain wall, glass, coatings, and travertine terrace. Work has included physical investigation, in situ analysis of the glass and coatings, and structural analysis.

Working with Krueck and Sexton, WJE designed a trial repair for the curtain wall, which was implemented in 2012. Subsequently, several glass panes were cracked. The repair of additional sections of the curtain wall is continuing in 2014.

