



CITY OF PONTIAC
Department of Building Safety & Planning

Mayor Deirdre Waterman

CITY OF PONTIAC
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
SIDING REPLACEMENT GUIDELINES

The Pontiac Historic District Commission hears many requests to replace character-defining historic siding. Per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the City of Pontiac's Historic District Commission review criteria, siding replacement is often not permitted because of the impacts upon historic features of the structure.

Installation of new vinyl or aluminum siding over original historic fabric (e.g. clapboard, cedar shakes, or other material) is strictly prohibited. Replacement of existing aluminum siding with vinyl siding is also not permitted.

SIDING REPLACEMENT CRITERIA

In applying the City's Historic District Commission review criteria, proposed siding replacements do not meet the following:

- 74-55 (b)(1) "historical or architectural value and significance of the structure...to the surrounding area" will be impacted with the installation of new siding that does not match the appearance of the original siding and these changes impact the appearance of the structure in relationship to other buildings in the area and will have an impact on the overall historic integrity of the district;
- 74-55 (b)(2) "relationship of the exterior architectural features...to the rest of the structure" will be impacted by the new siding as the new siding often significantly differs in width of board, profile of the individual clapboard, flatness of the material, lack of diversity in the material, sheen, and other visual characteristics which impacts the overall appearance of the structure;
- 74-55 (b)(3) "general compatibility of exterior design" will be negatively affected by the proposed work as it will impact the original exterior design of the home. Exterior cladding is integral to the overall design of the building and exterior cladding selection is often a key part of the architect's or designer's building design process;
- 74-55 (b)(5) "avoid, where possible, the removal or alteration of any historic building materials" – the proposed replacement siding will remove historic building materials and is not what was original to the building;
- 74-55 (b)(7) "where reasonably possible, will repair rather than replace deteriorated architectural features and where replacement is necessary, whether such replacement is similar in composition and texture...and reasonably accurate duplication of the architectural feature" requires repair over replacement and replacement materials must match composition, texture and detail of original where vinyl or aluminum siding does not meet this criteria;
- 74-55 (b) (11) "alteration will be done in such a manner as to not impair the essential form and integrity of the structure" - proposed new exterior cladding will impact the overall essential form of the

structure by changing an important character defining feature, its exterior cladding and replacement of the exterior cladding damages the building's overall historic integrity.

For the Historic District Commission to approve new siding, the applicant must provide evidence that: 1) the siding cannot be repaired; or 2) the historic siding has already been removed from the structure and is not still underneath the newer material. These requirements will allow the Commission to ensure compliance with review criteria #5 and #7 that prevents damage to historic building materials.

SIDING TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Historic District Commission will authorize the approval of siding work under the following conditions, in order of desirability:

- 1) Repair/Uncovering of Existing Siding/Shakes
- 2) Replacement of original historic materials with materials that match
 - a. Use of the same materials
 - b. Matching existing configuration – for example, clapboard on the first floor and cedar shakes on the second floor
- 3) Replacement of original damaged materials or removal of vinyl or aluminum siding and replacement with cement board products (like Hardie Board) that mimic the width and pattern of the original materials

If the original siding still exists under later alterations, it is the policy of the Commission to require the restoration of this material over all other options.

If an applicant proposes to replace like with like, that is deemed repair work, and it may be administratively approved. For instance, replacing existing vinyl or aluminum with vinyl or aluminum is permissible, but switching from one material to another is not permitted.