



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date: 5/6/2019
Ald. Milele Coggs District: 6
Staff reviewer: Tim Askin
PTS #114717 CCF #190027

Property 214 E. VINE ST

Owner/Applicant NATHALIE GATTO
214 E VINE ST
MILWAUKEE WI 532123932

Nathalie Gatto
830 E. Fairy Chasm Rd.
Bayside, WI 53212
Phone: (414) 507-9215

Proposal Re-clad house with LP Smartside product throughout including all trim for a 6-7/8" reveal.
Replace side door trim and all window trim with LP Smartside.

Staff comments Photos provided do not necessarily indicate that the siding is beyond repair and patching. A seven-inch reveal would be atypical for siding of this period, but not impossible for a modest house like this. There is also not adequate evidence for a wholesale replacement of all siding and trim.

LP Smartside is an engineered wood product of chips, glues, and resins first introduced in 1990 and reformulated under the current name in 1997 after a class action lawsuit regarding longevity of the earlier product (InnerSeal). The product is maintenance heavy and difficult to install correctly due to the requirement that no portion of the wood material is rated for environmental exposure. All nail holes and cut edges must be caulked and painted to prevent rot and water damage. Installation must be done very carefully. Staff opposes the use of this material. It has been rejected by this Commission numerous times for garages. Review of the product for use on a house may be new, but does not change the issue. For consistency and fairness, the Commission cannot approve this material on a primary building (house) if it has repeatedly rejected it for garages.

Guidelines

2. Exterior Finishes

c. Wood

i. Retain original material, whenever possible. Avoid removing architectural features such as clapboards, shingles, cornices, brackets, half-timbering, window architraves and doorway pediments. These are in most cases an essential part of a building’s character and appearance that should be retained.

ii. Repair or replace deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the appearance of the old as closely as possible. Avoid covering architectural features with new materials that are inappropriate or were unavailable when the building was constructed such as artificial stone, brick veneer, asbestos or asphalt shingles, vinyl or aluminum siding.

4. Porches, Trim and Ornamentation

a. Retain porches and steps visible from the public right-of-way that are historically and architecturally appropriate to the building. Avoid altering porches and steps by enclosing open porches or replacing wooden steps with cast concrete steps or by removing original architectural features, such as handrails, balusters, columns or brackets.

b. Retain trim and decorative ornamentation including copper downspouts and guttering, copings, cornices, cresting, finials, railings, balconies, oriels, pilasters, columns, chimneys, bargeboards or decorative panels. Avoid the removal of trim and decorative ornamentation that is essential to the maintenance of the buildings historic character and appearance.

c. Repair or replace, where necessary, deteriorated material with new material that duplicates the old as closely as possible. Avoid using replacement materials that do not accurately reproduce the appearance of the original material.

Smartside, in even its smooth form has a sandy texture to its finish. The sheets of shingles bear no resemblance to a cedar shake that is the period-appropriate and present material in the gable ends.

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“Do not cover original siding and trim”, p. 5

Recommendation Recommend HPC Denial

Conditions

Previous HPC action

Previous Council action A sampling of cases where use of Smartside was denied in Brewers Hill for garages in 2018, file numbers: 180822, 180807, 171822, 171821