DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING DIVISION
REPORT: 1000 Albany Avenue, Hartford, CT 06112
For consideration: October 21, 2020

STAFF REPORT

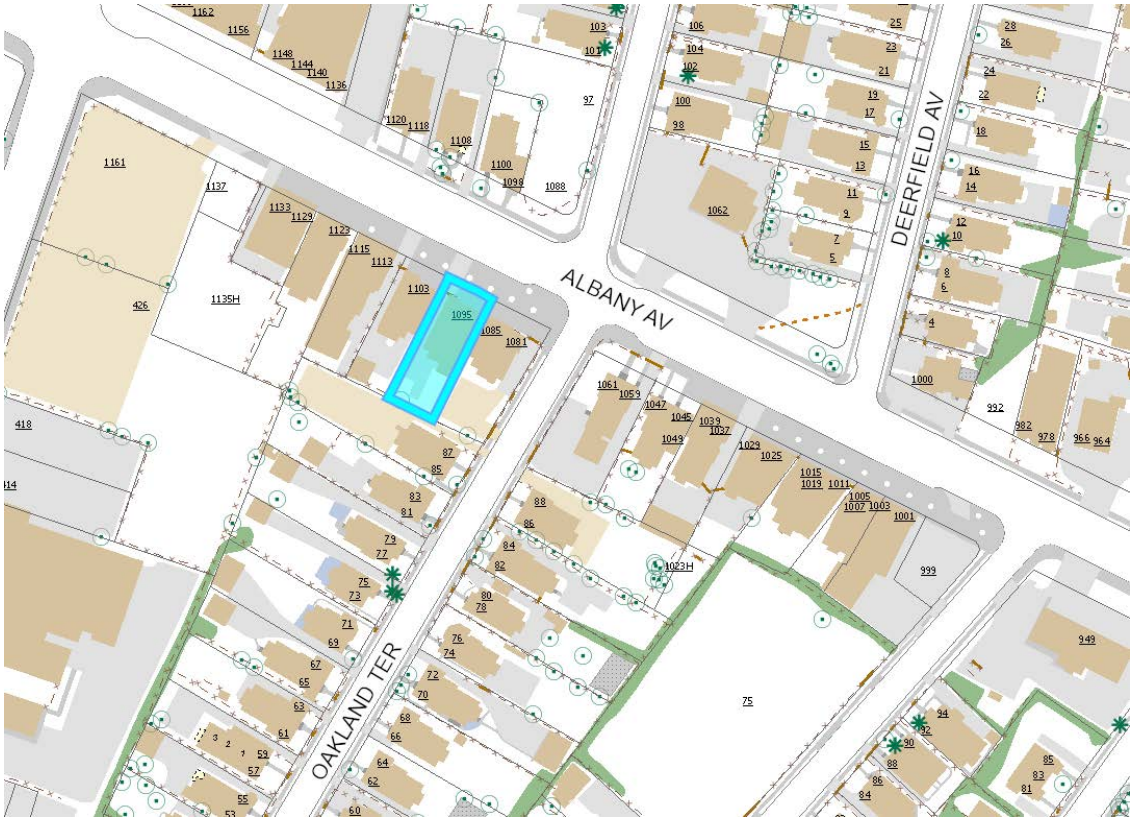
TO: **HARTFORD PRESERVATION COMMISSION**
FROM: Kate Montgomery, Consultant
Email: oneplan@hartford.gov

PROJECT: 1000 Albany Avenue
PARCEL ID: 198-201-008

ZONE: NX-3 **HISTORIC DISTRICT:** Upper Albany National Historic District

TYPE: **ARTICLE XII HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**
Sec. 28-170 through 28-221

APPLICANT: John Feliciano, John's Roofing Siding And Windows, LLC
OWNER: Manuel Mota, M&M Properties Management LLC.



Location Map

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The site in question is located at the corner of Albany Ave and Deerfield Street, and it's original front entrance is on Deerfield St. Over the years this mixed-use building has been significantly altered, including the removal or covering of window sills, molding, and porches, and bars have been added to some windows and entrances. Based on historic permits, in the 1950s the front porch was removed and replaced with concrete steps and the office space was added to the rear of the building to expand the dentist office. Sometime prior the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the house was resided on the front and corner side with four-inch vinyl clapboard and the window details were encased. Older clapboard remains on the rear and side of the building which is similar dimension but is not the original wood siding. This synthetic siding was once painted and now has the appearance of wood siding in need of painting and repair. Per the property record card, parcel was last sold in 2009 to the current owner M&M Properties Management, LLC. Recent improvements to the property include the recently painted foundation, new pavement, walks, and plantings concurrent with the Albany Ave streetscape improvements.

Proposed Project: The Applicant seeks to cover the remaining 12" synthetic clapboard siding on the rear and interior side of the building with 4" vinyl siding to match the existing vinyl on the front and corner side of the building. This work would also include encasing the existing wood window hoods, casings, and sills with aluminum coil capping.

Excerpt from the contract for the proposed work, for a total of $17,100:

We hereby propose to furnish the materials and perform the labor necessary for the completion of:
New Vinyl Siding installation for partial part of the house:

- *Install Insulation over existing wall and tape all seems (This will increase your insulation factor and R-Value and act as moisture barrier.)*
- *Install adaptable mounting Split blocks, Light blocks, Dryer, and Gable vents to coincide with vinyl siding.*
- *Create pocket holes in soffit areas for ventilation and install Soffit vents and solid soffits (where needed)*
- *Install J-Channels and traditional Outside Corner Post (color _____)*
- *Install Mastic Mill Creek Vinyl Siding to the designated areas to match the existing siding (color_____)*
- *Wrap all rake boards, facia boards, doors and windows with coil capping.*
- ***PARTIAL GUTTER INSTALLATION:** change the damaged gutter*
- ***PERMITS:** All permits pertaining to the work being performed will be pulled by John's Roofing Siding & Windows. LLC.*

LEGAL STANDARD

The Commission reviews and acts upon all applications for Document of Suitability. No person or entity may, without first applying and obtaining the approval of the Commission, file an application for a demolition permit, or for a building permit for any protected property as designated in the Historic Preservation Ordinance Sec. 28-219.

STANDARD SPECIFIC TO THE USE

The Commission shall adopt the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Hartford Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings.

According to page 18 - *"Wood Siding and Trim"* of the adopted ***Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings*** *"Not Recommended. Enclosing existing wood siding in vinyl or aluminum siding [because it] Covers historical detail… Traps water vapor in old walls encouraging rot and mold… Requires replacement to renew the look each 20 years or so… Is difficult to repair if dented or cracked… If vinyl siding is used, try to avoid covering wood detail and be sure to vent behind vinyl or aluminum siding."*

According to page 19 - *"Windows and Doors"* of the adopted ***Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings;*** *"Not Recommended…Covering window trim with metal or vinyl cladding."*

FINDING OF FACTS

CURRENT USE:	Commercial & Residential	**PROPOSED USE:**	No Change
YEAR BUILT:	1904 or 1920 (record card)	**STYLE:**	Queen Anne/Neoclassical Revival

Particular Mention in historic nomination: The property appears to have been historically listed as 2 Deerfield St on the National Register application and previous permits. In the National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the Upper Albany Historic District, entered September 29, 1986, 1000 Albany Ave is not listed on Item 7 page 4 of the nomination. Item 7, page 6 lists 2 Deerfield Avenue as a contributing building dated to 1904, 2-1/2 stories, gable roof, Queen Anne.

Current Conditions: While many of the historic details and porches no longer exist, the remaining structure is in fair condition with recent improvements to the building and landscape since the installation of the Albany Ave Streetscape. The remaining siding appears to be a 12" reveal synthetic clapboard, which matches the scale of the original wood clapboard, but was painted white and is now in need of repainting or replacement. Most of the original window hoods, casings, and sills are missing, covered, or surrounded by previous layers of installed vinyl or synthetic siding.

Condition of other properties in neighborhood: This historic district is characterized by large, middle class, 1 and 2 family homes built between 1900 and 1920. Most are residences located on the side streets are in fair to good condition but have various alterations or vinyl siding.

Properties on Albany Ave have a wide range of Mixed, Commercial, Religious, and Multi-Family Residential uses. Many buildings on Albany Ave are residential Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style with storefront additions that have replaced the porches on the front street level façades. The form and windows on the upper levels of these modified buildings still somewhat contribute to the character of the neighborhood. However, many are listed as non-contributing in the historic nomination. These non-contributing buildings include the several of the cottage commercial buildings on the Southside of Albany Ave across from this parcel. Other buildings range from poor to good condition.

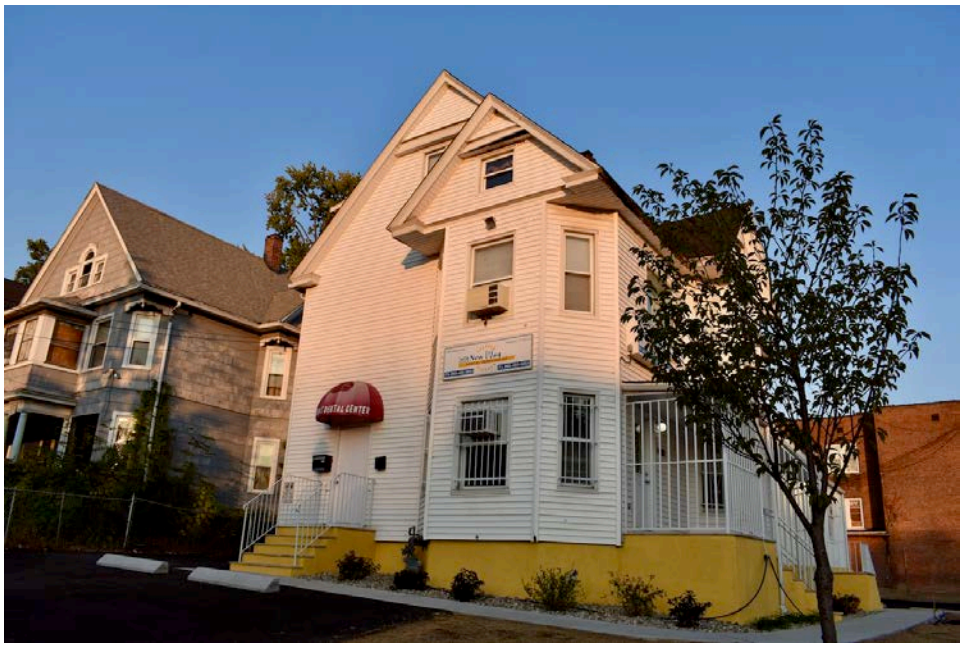


Figure 1. Image taken by Staff October 9, 2020. View of the subject property from the corner of Deerfield and Albany Ave showing the two sides which already have 4" vinyl siding. The entrance pictured is on Deerfield Street.

Figure 2. Google Streetview, dated June 2019. View from Subject Property looking northeast on Deerfield Ave; prior to recent site improvements. 4 and 6-8 Deerfield in background were constucted in 1904. As seen in Figure 1, the foundation has since been repainted and foundation platings were added.

DEERFIELD AVENUE

2	1904	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne
4	1904	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
5-7	1901	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
6-8	1902	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
9-11	1901	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
10-12	c1900	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
13-15	1901	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
14-16	1901	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
17-19	1901	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival
18-20	1901	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/ Colonial Revival

910-912	1909	2-1/2	gable	Shingle Style
978-982	1926	3	flat	(brick comm/apt. building)
~~992~~	1902	2-1/2	hip	Foursquare
~~1001-1007~~	c1910	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (added storefronts)
~~1011-1019~~	c1910	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (added restaurants)
~~1023~~	c1910	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (added storefront)
~~1037-1039~~	c1910	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (added storefront)
1045-1049	c1910	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial Revival
~~1059-1061~~	1903	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (added front)
~~1081-1097~~	1904	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (store & 2 houses)
1088-1090	1908	2-1/2	hip	Queen Anne/Colonial Revival
~~1098-1102~~	1909	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (added store)
~~1101-1107~~	1904	2-1/2	gable	Queen Anne/Colonial (added storefront)
1108-1110	1909	2-1/2	gable	Colonial Revival

Figure 3. Listing of contributing properties from the 1986 Historic Nomination, left 2 Deerfield is listed but not 1000 Albany Ave. Right, crossed out numbers on Albany Ave no longer stand or are non-contributing.

Figure 4. Hartford GIS. 2 Deerfield Ave was likely the original address associated with 1000 Albany Ave.

Figure 5. Image 3 from the National Historic District Nomination. The the red circle indicates the the subject building in the background, 992 Albany Ave in front of it no longer remains, the brick apartment building at 978-982 Albany Ave still stands, Church's resturant is now Popeye's.


Figures 6&7. Left, rear of home from Google Streetview June 2019. Right, enlargement of image 3 from the 1986 historic nomination, the house in the background is the subject property shown with the original 12" clapboard and windows hoods, casings, and sills.

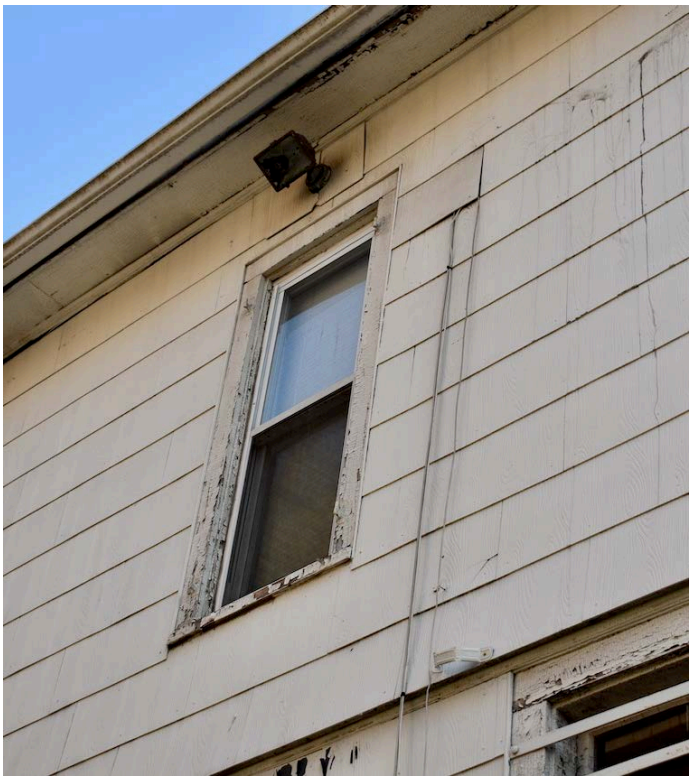



Figure 8&9. Images taken by Staff October 9, 2020. The interior side of property has older 12" siding, reminiscent of the original wood siding. It is unlikely that this is the original siding, however, as evidenced by locations where the siding is flush with the original wood window sill and casing.

Figure 10. Image taken by Staff October 9, 2020. Rear/side of the structure perpendicular to Albany Ave has the older painted siding and the side facing Albany Ave (left) is vinyl.


Figure 11. Image taken by Staff October 9, 2020. Showing the rear of the subject property on the left with synthetic shingles the same scale as the wood clapboard on the structure on the right, 4 Deerfield Street.

Figure 12&13. Images taken by Staff October 9, 2020. Up close look at the 12" synthetic, painted clapboard on the side and rear of the structure and an original window visible from Albany Ave. This is not the original wood clapboard but appears to be nailed over the original and later painted.

Figure 14. Image taken by Staff October 9, 2020. The building's gable roof and third floor triangular pediments over the bay windows still remain as a defining feature, despite the lack of original porch, details, and ornamentation. The front and corner side were previously covered with 4" vinyl siding and the wood window sills, casings, and hoods were enclosed with aluminum coil.

Figure 15. Image taken by Staff October 9, 2020. Non-contibuting cottage commercial buildings on the south side of Albany Ave, across the street from the subject parcel. Buildings such as Kamora's Cultural Corner, are aiming to establish a new character and identity for the neighborhood.

Figure 16. Google Streetview June 2019. Looking east on Albany Ave, the street has lost many of its original buildings and new developments such as Popeyes at 964 Albany Ave and the Shell Gas station at 949 Albany Ave have taken their place.

Figure 17. Images taken by Staff October 9, 2020. Looking northwest towards the subject parcel, showing the stame structures as Figure 5, from the National Historic District Nomination. 992 Albany Ave is now a parking lot for the subject parcel.

COMMENTS RECEIVED (None received as of October 12, 2020)

ANALYSIS

Per the image from the 1985 National Historic District nomination, the home had simple window hoods, casings, and sills, and butted clapboards rather than corner boards. The original wood clapboards were 12" and better suited the scale of the building than the 4" vinyl siding installed on the front and side of the property. Much the wood detail was lost when the front and corner side of the house was covered in vinyl. The remaining window sills, casings, and hoods visible on the rear and side of the structure are surrounded by the synthetic clapboard that appears to have been nailed onto the original wood clapboard.

As stated in the 1986 Historic District Nomination, "approximately one-third of the houses have been sided and/or remodeled." Since then more homes, including the subject parcel, have replaced their original siding with vinyl. The adopted Historic Preservation guidelines do not recommend "enclosing existing wood siding in vinyl or aluminum siding." Original wood siding may be repairable with the strategies outlined in the appendix of "Technical Guidance for Homeowners," pages 48-52 of the adopted *Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings*. However, this is not an option for this property as two sides of this structure were already enclosed with 4" white vinyl siding several years ago and the remaining two sides appear to be 12" synthetic clapboard, such as asphalt or another material, rather than the original wood siding. The guidelines also state, "if vinyl siding is used, try to avoid covering wood detail and be sure to vent behind vinyl or aluminum siding." As depicted in the work description on the application and provided contract, the contractor plans to install insulation and vents in the new siding.

The intention of the contractor is to enclose the existing wood window hoods, casings, and sills with aluminum coil is not consistent with of the adopted *Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings.* While not recommended, "*covering window trim with metal or vinyl cladding,"* would match the treatment of the windows on the front and corner side where siding was installed prior to the adoption of the Guidelines.

Staff believes that the proposed work is not the preferred solution, but given the situation, finishing the remaining sides with proposed 4" vinyl siding is a reasonable solution for a property that has not received regular maintenance. The proposed vinyl siding installation is concurrent with the installation methods set forth in the *Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings*. However, the siding proposed to be covered is not the original wood and therefore typical insulation and venting may not be adequate for protecting the wood below.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends tabling this application until the Applicant can provide the following information:

1. Additional details on the existing siding material on the side and rear of the subject structure and it's intended treatment.
   More information is needed to understand if the proposed additional layer of vinyl siding and insulation are to be added on top of this synthetic layer already in place and what effects that would have on the wood structure below. It is also unclear if the painted synthetic clapboard could be safely removed to reveal the original wood clapboard.

A draft resolution follows.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Application, provided by the Applicant.
2. Work Contract, provided by the Applicant.
3. Siding Specification, provided by the Applicant.
4. Images of the property, provided by the Applicant.
5. "Technical Guidance for Homeowners" section 1. Siding Material, pages 48-53 of the adopted *Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings*.

REVIEWED,

Digitally signed by Aimee Chambers
DN: cn=Aimee Chambers, o=City of Hartford, ou=Director of Planning, email=aimee.chambers@hartford.gov, c=US
Date: 2020.10.15 19:54:12 -05'00'

Aimee Chambers, Director

CITY OF HARTFORD
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION
1000 ALBANY AVENUE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROPOSAL

Whereas, The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the proposal for the installation of vinyl siding at 1000 Albany Ave; and

Whereas, The property is located in the Upper Albany National Historic District; and

Whereas, The structure is a 2-1/2 story wood frame, gable roof building reflecting the Queen Anne/Neoclassical Revival styles; and

Whereas, The structure is in fair condition with recent improvements to the building and landscape since the installation of the Albany Ave Streetscape, the façade at the rear and side of the parcel are in poor condition; and

Whereas, The front and corner side clapboard is covered with 4" vinyl siding and the remaining 12" siding is not the original wood clapboard and is in need of repainting or residing; and

Whereas, The window hoods, casings, and sills are missing or remain surrounded by the synthetic clapboard on the side and rear of the structure and those on the front and corner side were covered when the 4" vinyl siding was installed; and

Whereas, The Applicant proposes the following work on the rear and side of the property:

- Install insulation over exiting wall and tape all seams.
- Install adaptable mounting split blocks, light blocks, dryer, and gable vents to coincide with vinyl siding.
- Create pocket holes in soffit areas for ventilation and install soffit vents and solid soffits (where needed).
- Install J-channels and traditional outside corner post.
- Install Mastic Mill Creek Vinyl Siding to the designated areas to match the existing siding color.
- Wrap all rake boards, facia boards, doors, and windows with coil capping.
- Change the damaged gutter; and

Whereas, Page 18, *"Wood Siding and Trim"* of the adopted *Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings* states "Not Recommended. Enclosing existing wood siding in vinyl or aluminum siding [because it] Covers historical detail… Traps water vapor in old walls encouraging rot and mold… Requires replacement to renew the look

each 20 years or so… Is difficult to repair if dented or cracked… If vinyl siding is used, try to avoid covering wood detail and be sure to vent behind vinyl or aluminum siding"; and

Whereas, Page 19, *"Windows and Doors"* of the adopted *Guidelines for Renovations and Additions to Historic Buildings;* states "Not Recommended…Covering window trim with metal or vinyl cladding"; and

Whereas, The proposed work is not consistent with the City of Hartford's Historic Design Principles;

Now therefore Be It

Resolved, The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission hereby tables the proposed work until additional information can be provided on the existing siding on the side and rear of the structure and how the proposed work will address this condition.

Be It Further,

Resolved, This 21st day of October 2020.

Attachment 1.

DDS- Planning & Zoning: Historic Review Application

Submission date: 26 August 2020, 12:09PM

Receipt number: 34

Question	Response
Property Information	
Property Address	Street: 1000 Albany Ave City: Hartford State: CT Zip Code: 06112
Zoning District:	
Parcel ID:	
Property Owner:	Manuel Mota
Property Owner's Address:	Street: 163 Newington Rd City: West Hartford State: CT Zip Code: 06110
Phone:	8605432949
Email:	johnremodeling79@yahoo.com
Applicant	
Please check if “Applicant” is the same as “Property Owner”	
Name of Applicant:	John Feliciano
File Date:	8/26/2020
Address:	Street: 9 Lori Rd City: Bolton State: CT Zip Code: 06043
Phone:	8604908952
Email:	johnremodeling79@yahoo.com
Primary Point of Contact	
Name:	John Feliciano
Phone:	8604908952
Email:	johnremodeling79@yahoo.com

Describe your application action(s) and provide as much detail as possible.	Install Insulation over existing wall and tape all seems (This will increase your insulation factor and R-Value and act as moisture barrier.),Install adaptable mounting Split blocks, Light blocks, Dryer, and Gable vents to coincide with vinyl siding.Create pocket holes in soffit areas for ventilation and install Soffit vents and solid soffits (where needed) Install J-Channels and traditional Outside Corner Post, Install Mastic Mill Creek Vinyl Siding to the designated areas to match the existing siding, Wrap all rake boards, facia boards, doors and windows with coil capping. PARTIAL GUTTER INSTALLATION: change the damaged gutter
Proposed work:	Repairs
Current materials being repaired/replaced:	Siding, gutters,
Materials/products being used in work:	Install Insulation over existing wall and tape all seems (This will increase your insulation factor and R-Value and act as moisture barrier.),Install adaptable mounting Split blocks, Light blocks, Dryer, and Gable vents to coincide with vinyl siding.Create pocket holes in soffit areas for ventilation and install Soffit vents and solid soffits (where needed) Install J-Channels and traditional Outside Corner Post, Install Mastic Mill Creek Vinyl Siding to the designated areas to match the existing siding, Wrap all rake boards, facia boards, doors and windows with coil capping. PARTIAL GUTTER INSTALLATION: change the damaged gutter
Please upload all supporting materials and photographs below.	Manuel Mota signed contract.HEIC
Signatures	
Signature of Applicant:	Link to signature
Name of Applicant:	John Feliciano
Date:	8/26/2020
Signature of Property Owner:	Link to signature

Name of Property Owner:	Manuel Mota
Date:	8/26/2020

Attachment 2.

Proposal

John's Roofing Siding & Windows, LLC
9 Lori Rd, Bolton, CT 06043
Phone: (860) 490-8952
Email: johnremodeling79@yahoo.com
License #HIC.0651368

Proposal Submitted to:
Manuel Mota
163 Newington Road
West Hartford, CT 06110

Job location:
1000 Albany Ave, Hartford, CT 06112
Date Plans: to be determined (June 2020)
Phone: (860) 543-2949
Email: newwaydental@hotmail.com

Job Name:
Partial Siding Replacement

Architect: John Feliciano

We hereby propose to furnish the materials and perform the labor necessary for the completion of:
New Vinyl Siding installation for partial part of the house;

- *Install Insulation over existing wall and tape all seems (This will increase your insulation factor and R-Value and act as moisture barrier.)*
- *Install adaptable mounting Split blocks, Light blocks, Dryer, and Gable vents to coincide with vinyl siding.*
- *Create pocket holes in soffit areas for ventilation and install Soffit vents and solid soffits (where needed)*
- *Install J-Channels and traditional Outside Corner Post (color _____)*
- *Install Mastic Mill Creek Vinyl Siding to the designated areas to match the existing siding (color_____)*
- *Wrap all rake boards, facia boards, doors and windows with coil capping.*

- ***PARTIAL GUTTER INSTALLATION:*** *change the damaged gutter*

- ***PERMITS;*** *All permits pertaining to the work being performed will be pulled by John's Roofing Siding & Windows, LLC.*
- ***DUMPSTER:*** *is for the sole use of John's Roofing Siding & Windows, LLC. All work related debris will be removed from job site, drag magnet will be used to pick up stray nails after complete installation. Dumpster and its removal are part of contract.*

- NOTE:
- All extra materials are the sole property of John's Roofing Siding & Windows, LLC
- John's Roofing Siding & Windows, LLC, is not responsible for any damage done inside of the home due to the vibrations caused from work being performed. It is recommended for any fragile or valuable items to be removed from the walls before work begins. (Customer Initial _____)

We propose hereby to furnish material and labor — complete accordance with the above specifications for the sum of: seventeen thousand one hundred dollars ($17,100.00) with payments to be made as followed; $8,550.00 down and $8,550.00 at the completion of work performed.

Any alteration or deviation from above specifications involving extra costs will be executed only upon written order, and will become an extra charge over and above the estimate. All agreements contingent upon strikes, accidents, or delays beyond our control.

Respectfully Submitted: *John Feliciano*
Date: ***6/17/2020***
Note – this proposal may be withdrawn by us if not except within 3 days.

ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL

The above prices specifications and conditions are satisfactory and are hereby accepted. You are authorized to do the work I specified. Payments will be made as outlined above.

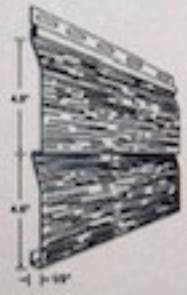
Date of Acceptance: 8/17/2020 Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Attachment 3.

VINYL PRODUCTS

Mill Creek®

Product Code/Description		Color Availability	
MC40 **Mill Creek** **Double 4"** Nominal .040" Thick Length: 12' 6" 24 Pcs./Ctn. 2 Sqs./Ctn. 90 Lbs./Ctn.		White **Light Colors** Almond Cameo Classic Cream Desert Sand Sandtone Silver Grey Tuscan Olive Victorian Grey Wicker	**Classic Colors** Everest Pebblestone Clay Scottish Thistle
MCD40 **Mill Creek** **Double 4" Dutch Lap** Nominal .040" Thick Length: 12' 6" 24 Pcs./Ctn. 2 Sqs./Ctn. 93 Lbs./Ctn.		White **Light Colors** Almond Cameo Classic Cream Desert Sand Sandtone Silver Grey Tuscan Olive Victorian Grey Wicker	**Classic Colors** Everest Pebblestone Clay Scottish Thistle
MCD45 **Mill Creek** **Double 4.5" Dutch Lap** Nominal .040" Thick Length: 12' 1" 22 Pcs./Ctn. 2 Sqs./Ctn. 88 Lbs./Ctn.		White **Light Colors** Almond Cameo Classic Cream Desert Sand Sandtone Silver Grey Tuscan Olive Victorian Grey Wicker	**Classic Colors** Everest Pebblestone Clay Scottish Thistle

Notes:

Attachment 4.


CHILDREN'S DEN

Attachment 5.

Technical Guidance for Homeowners

GENERAL

Whether completely renovating an older building, or simply maintaining one, the information on the following pages will help you get started. Once your house is in good shape, adopt a strategy of preventive maintenance. Attending to repairs when needed and before deterioration occurs will always save you time and money.

Water, sunlight and air are the forces primarily responsible for building damage. Wood, when dampened, will rot as microorganisms feed on it. Stone and brick mortar absorb water and then split when the moisture freezes. Roofing, cornices, siding and foundations can all be damaged by water erosion. Water vapor, ultra-violet rays from the sun and air pollutants cause paint to deteriorate.

To combat these forces here are three basic rules to follow when renovating a building:

1) Use quality materials which are not easily damaged.

2) Seal materials (i.e., paint, caulk, flash) so water cannot easily reach them.

3) Shape materials so water will not seep in but will run off.

Some basic facts and helpful hints on the following are included in this section: .

1) **Siding Materials:** pros and cons of various materials and some hints on maintenance.

2) **Masonry:** comparison of masonry cleaning techniques and facts on repointing and replacing bricks.

3) **Painting:** reasons for paint deterioration, hints on caulking, recommended types of paint and preparation techniques.

4) **Roofing/Flashing/Gutters:** facts on roofing deterioration and replacement and hints on flashing and gutters.

5) **Details:** ways of restoring or replacing trim, hints on weather-stripping, and suggestions on storm windows and doors.

SIDING MATERIALS

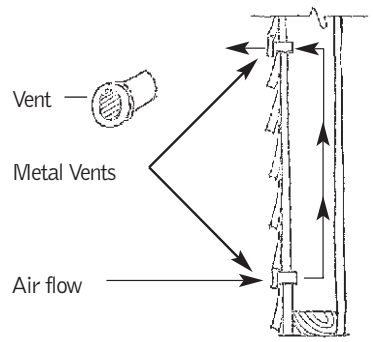
Siding functions as a protective skin enclosing the structure of a building and insulating the interior from excesses of heat, cold and moisture. The maintenance of this “skin” or lack of it, not only significantly affects the appearance of your building, but is one of the largest individual decisions affecting the investment your building represents. Most property owners will sooner or later be faced with the task of repair or replacement of sidings.

Clapboard

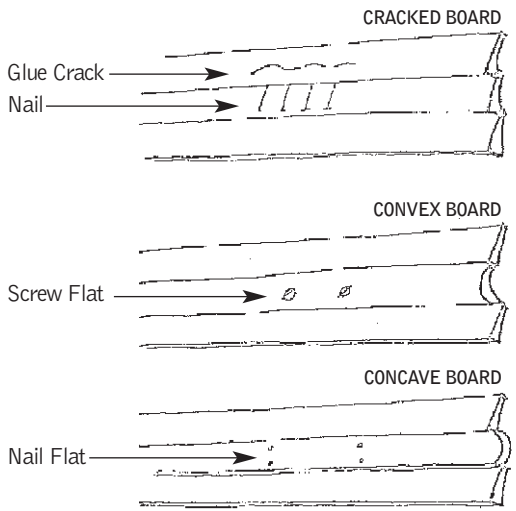
The most popular type of exterior covering for many of Hartford’s early buildings was narrow wood clapboard siding attached to a layer of wood sheathing which, in turn, was nailed to the framework of the building.

Though inexpensive and relatively durable, clapboard siding requires regular inspection and maintenance to keep it in proper condition. But even if a wall of clapboards seems deteriorated beyond repair, the situation probably looks worse than it actually is. Most clapboard siding can be rejuvenated with a few simple techniques and a little patience.

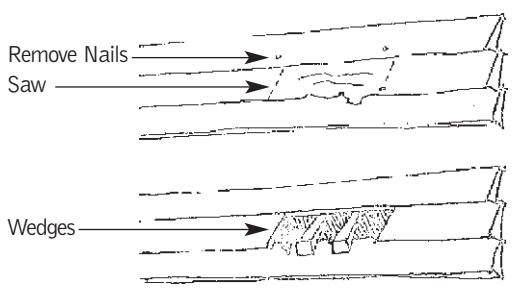
Split clapboards can be repaired by prying open loose pieces with a putty knife and applying strong wood glue along the edges of the crack. Press the sections



REPAIRING CLAPBOARDS



REPLACING PART OF A BOARD



back together and hold them in place with several finishing nails placed under and up into the split areas. Allow the glue to harden before removing any nails. Smooth the surface with putty or wood filler, let dry and then apply one or two coats of primer type paint.

With luck and persistence, a homeowner can sometimes coax warped clapboards back into position. Convex bulges are remedied by drilling several holes along the center of the board and then inserting wood screws. The screws are gradually tightened causing the board to regain its original shape. To avoid splitting the wood, wet the board several times during this process.

Concave boards can sometimes be straightened by drilling two sets of holes along the board. Finishing nails are driven into these holes to unwarp the clapboard.

All screws and nails should be countersunk (recessed below surface level). These recesses are filled with putty to achieve a smooth surface.

Sections that appear especially ragged or rotten can be replaced. Locate the damaged section and make several vertical cuts through the board with a small saw. Next, remove all nails within the involved portion and also the nails in the boards directly above.

The damaged board or boards can now be taken out in pieces with a hammer and wood chisel. After all visible wood has been removed, insert a few wedges under the remaining upper board. Now pry out any additional left over pieces.

If tar paper is present between sheathing and siding, be sure to patch any holes and visible tears with asphalt cement.

The final step involves cutting a length of matching clapboard to fit the gap. Remove the wedges, slip the new board into position and reinstall the nails. Putty or wood filler should be applied over the new seams.

Shingles

Locally, wood shingles did not achieve wide popularity as a siding material until about the middle of the 19th century, when builders of Queen Anne and other style homes created inventive patterns on the surface of the building, often using different shaped shingles. This special surface texture should be preserved as it is an irreplaceable element of the building's style.

As with clapboard, deterioration of shingles is seldom so severe as to require total replacement; single shingles can be removed and replaced when necessary.

Synthetic Siding

Despite its current popularity and, when properly applied, its appropriate appearance for older homes, it would be a mistake to unequivocally endorse synthetic siding.

The long term effects on the underlying wooden structure are now becoming known. Wooden siding "breathes," allowing moisture caused by temperature differences on either side of the walls to escape gradually to the outside before it can build up and condense within the wall. Vinyl or aluminum siding may not have this quality. Thus rot or deterioration of wooden members can become a problem. Furthermore, synthetic siding will hide such problems until they become severe. If you do use synthetic siding you must provide openings to vent the walls or risk serious deterioration

Installing aluminum or vinyl siding requires a substantial initial investment and once installed the homeowner cannot change his mind without incurring considerable expense. The commonest rationale for installing synthetic siding is to avoid the task and expense of painting a building. However, it is important to note that this type of siding may itself need painting after about 15 years. Further, the cost of maintaining synthetic siding, once painted, is not significantly less than that of wood clapboards. Remember too that you still have the annual maintenance chore of checking and recaulking where necessary the sealant around the critical edges of doors, windows and cornices on your building.

Another objection to synthetic siding, as mentioned in the forgoing guidelines, is the potential loss of architectural detail when it is carelessly applied. Application of synthetic siding may also add to the expense of replacing roofing materials at a later date because it must be removed at the sides of dormer windows and above porch roofs to install new roof flashing.

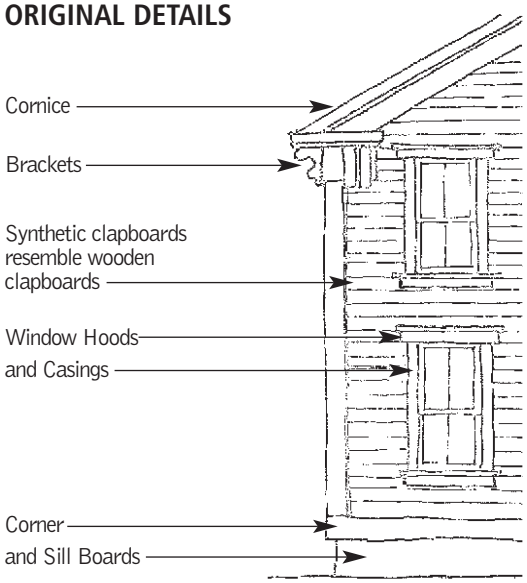
Synthetic siding can create unsuspected fire hazards. In a fire, aluminum siding will act like an oven wall, holding in and intensifying the heat. Vinyl siding does melt, allowing the heat to escape, and fire fighters to get at the fire; however, there is evidence that vinyl emits noxious gasses as it burns. Synthetic siding can hide the path and direction of fire as it travels within the walls, with fatal results. These facts should be weighed carefully if you are contemplating covering the original siding of your home.

Energy conservation is an important issue today because of the ever increasing cost of fossil fuels. Many people assume that it is more expensive to heat an older home than a newer one. This need not be the case. Installing insulation and making leaky windows and doors tight can make a substantial difference.

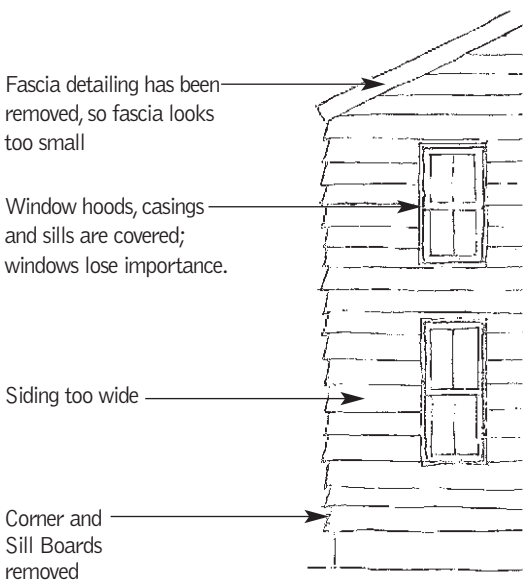
The greatest heat loss in any home (over 80%) is through the roof, because warm air rises. It is unrealistic, therefore, to believe that the installation of aluminum or vinyl siding will substantially increase the heating efficiency of your home. While it will help somewhat, the installation of standard insulation between wall studs and/or re-caulking of exterior clapboards will be at least as effective, while the appearance of the building will be maintained at a lower cost. Twelve inches of insulation placed beneath the roof or in the attic floor will do more to save your heating dollars, and will help keep your home cooler in the summer. You can easily install such insulation yourself. Re-caulking aluminum storm windows, weather stripping wood windows and doors, and re-puttying each pane of glass in window sash are also well worth doing.

Wood has been the most traditional siding material in Hartford. Wood is easily worked, has natural insulating qualities, is adaptable, plentiful, relatively inexpensive and resistant to denting. It can be patched, refinished, and repainted or stained. And it has its own singular beauty. For all of these reasons every reasonable effort should be spent to keep the original siding on your home. If replacement is absolutely necessary, new wood clapboards will look better than any synthetic material and will, with care, last longer.

IF USING SYNTHETICS, RETAIN ORIGINAL DETAILS



AVOID COVERING TRIM



If you are considering changing the siding material on your home from the original, compare available alternatives carefully. The following list summarizes the basics.

Wood Clapboards:

- Almost always historically appropriate—can last over 100 years if kept up.
- Require painting every 5–10 years and minor periodic maintenance.

Wood Shingles (Not Shakes)

- Used originally on Shingle Style and Queen Anne Style homes; conditionally appropriate on homes of other styles—should be used with original trim.
- Can last to 100 years with maintenance.
- Require painting every 5–10 years and minor upkeep.

Vinyl or Aluminum Siding:

- Conditionally appropriate if 4" horizontal "boards" are used and original trim is retained.
- Life expectancy may be longer than wood clapboards, but long-term effects on structure beneath can be serious.
- May require periodic painting after 15 years; may dent or scratch; may crack when cold; potential rot problems in structure behind; potential fire hazards,

MASONRY

If properly maintained, buildings constructed of masonry can last for centuries. Water is the primary cause of masonry deterioration but air pollutants, bird droppings,climbing vines and rusted iron surface details also contribute to masonry decay. The best way to fight these forces is to keep the surface of the building clean.

There are four basic methods of masonry cleaning: (1) water cleaning; (2) steam cleaning; (3) chemical cleaning; (4) abrasive cleaning. Before any technique is chosen, consult an expert (easy to find in the yellow pages) to determine the composition of your masonry and, if possible, to analyze the dirt present on the surface. This information will help in deciding which cleaning materials and techniques are appropriate for your building. Next, we advise testing the cleaning materials and techniques on several patches located in an inconspicuous area of the building.

Water Cleaning

Water cleaning softens the dirt and rinses it from the surface. Water is sprayed on the building and the pressure is adjusted to suit the exterior surface. High pressure spraying (600-800 psi) should only be done on extremely hard masonry surfaces (marble, granite) while low and moderate pressure washes (200-600 psi) should be applied to softer wall surfaces (brick, limestone). When lower pressures are used, the surface can also be hand scrubbed with bristle brushes. Never use wire brushes because they abrade the surface and deposit shavings which may cause rusting.

Finally, do not apply a wash if there is any possibility that the water will freeze before the saturated wall is completely dried.

Wash techniques require little equipment and, if properly done, neither the building nor the environment is adversely affected. While problems can arise if water seeps too far into the walls, overall this method is recommended. The cost is relatively low, there are few negative side effects and the results are generally good.

Steam Cleaning

Although once quite popular. steam cleaning is now used less and less. Steam is generated in a flash boiler, then applied to the surface through low pressure (10-30 psi) nozzle. While this technique minimizes the possibility of water damage, the equipment is expensive and hazardous to operate and the process is extremely slow.

Chemical Cleaning

Chemical cleaning is a highly technical procedure which should not be undertaken without professional advice. The cleaning agents may be composed of a variety of chemical compounds, but they are either acidic or alkaline. Acid solutions containing hydrofluoric, phosphoric or muriatic acids can be used on granite, sandstone or brick. White alkaline cleansers such as sodium, potassium hydroxide or ammonia are formulated for use on acid-sensitive surfaces like limestone or marble. These cleansers are applied to the surface with brushes or a low pressure spray and after a wait period they are rinsed away with water. While chemical cleaning can be extremely effective in removing dirt, if improperly mixed or applied they can pose a serious threat to the building's surface and the surrounding environment.

Abrasive Cleaning

Abrasive cleaning should be avoided because this method causes serious damage to masonry surfaces. The most widespread abrasive cleaning technique is sand blasting. Typically, the process involves an aggregate of silica sand propelled by a high velocity stream of air at 20 to 100 psi against the masonry surface. The scrubbing action of the air/abrasive jet removes dirt but also causes erosion and pockmarking of the masonry surface. For brick, the loss of the hard outer surface formed by firing is extremely damaging since the exposed soft inner core is more susceptible to deterioration. Many soft stones also have a protective crust which is easily damaged by grit blasting.

While water cleaning is generally the recommended procedure, consult an expert to analyze the masonry and dirt. The pertinent cleaning methods should then be tested and the results reviewed. However, the visible results of test patches should only be one factor in choosing the most appropriate cleaning method. A clear understanding of the cleaning techniques and a knowledge of possible harmful side effects are important considerations. Below is a checklist for comparing alternative cleaning methods:

- effectiveness of cleaning method
- cost
- time
- possible damage to the building
- potential health and safety hazards
- potential environmental damage

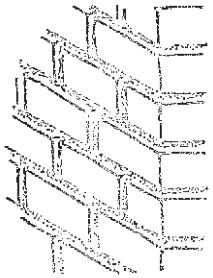
Although extremely durable, a masonry surface can deteriorate considerably with weathering and lack of periodic maintenance. Repointing is a weather-proofing technique extremely important to masonry maintenance. Lime mortar joints generally deteriorate more rapidly than masonry units. Periodically it is necessary to point or repair these joints to ensure that a building remains sound and weatherproof.

Repointing begins with removal of old, loose mortar from the joints. Carbide blades and power chisels are sometimes used for this work, but there will be less chance of damage if only hand tools—a hammer, cold chisel, or in the case of very soft mortar, a hardwood chisel are used. The old mortar should be removed to a depth of 1" to 1 ½". Loose particles should then be flushed from the joint with a water spray to insure a proper bond to both the masonry and the old mortar.

REPOINTING BRICK

Deteriorated Joints

Mortar joints have crumbled and have washed away



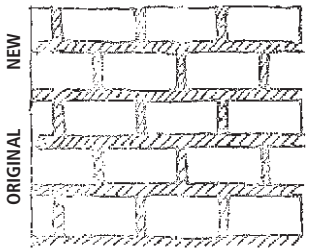
Repointed

When repointing, match existing mortar in color, composition, size and tooling of joints.

REPLACING BRICK

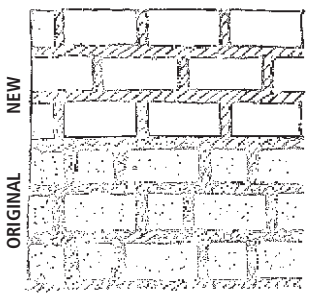
Good match of old and new

Mortar, joints and bricks are matched in original and new sections



Mismatched

Color of brick and of mortar and bonding pattern in new section do not match the original



There are three things to consider when re-pointing:

1) Mortar Composition—mortar is composed of lime, cement and sand. Always consult an expert to determine proportions appropriate for your building.

2) Color—Always match the color of the old mortar composition. Early (1700-1850) mortars were rarely pigmented, but rather had a sandy color. Avoid the standard light grey cement and instead use a white cement in your mortar mixture if you own an early building. Mid-to late-nineteenth century buildings were often pointed with colored mortar. Sometimes these colors can be reproduced by simply adding a little brick dust to the mortar.

3) Joints—Finishing or tooling the surface of the new mortar to match the original joints is also important when repointing. Generally mortar joints are either flush with the building surface or slightly concave.

In some cases the bricks themselves and not just the mortar are severely damaged and may need to be replaced. To match old and new brickwork, keep in mind these guidelines:

1) The new brick should match the old in color, size and texture. Many manufacturers offer water-struck bricks, while salvage yards are also good places to look for replacement bricks. If you do use old bricks, always chip off any mortar and clean off any dirt or paint before laying them.

2) Bricks when laid are arranged in a pattern or bond. The most common bonding patterns are English, Flemish and Common Bond.

TRIM

Every effort should be made to retain the trim and ornamental details that give special character to a building.

- Loose trim may be refastened by carefully drilling a hole; countersinking, and screwing the trim back on. The countersunk hole can be filled in and painted.
- Certain synthetic materials make it possible to preserve and recondition partially rotted wood details and ornaments.
- Cracked doors can be removed and re-laminated, missing brackets can be molded, and balusters can be repaired and re-glued.
- If trim is beyond repair or entirely missing, it can be duplicated closely with new lumber.
- If you cannot or do not wish to attempt to re-work trim yourself, a local carpenter