



## DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING DIVISION

REPORT: 53 Magnolia Street, Hartford, CT 06112

For consideration: June 21, 2021

### STAFF REPORT

**TO:** HARTFORD PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
**FROM:** Paul Bengtson, Principal Planner  
T. 860-757-9056 Email: paul.bengtson@hartford.gov

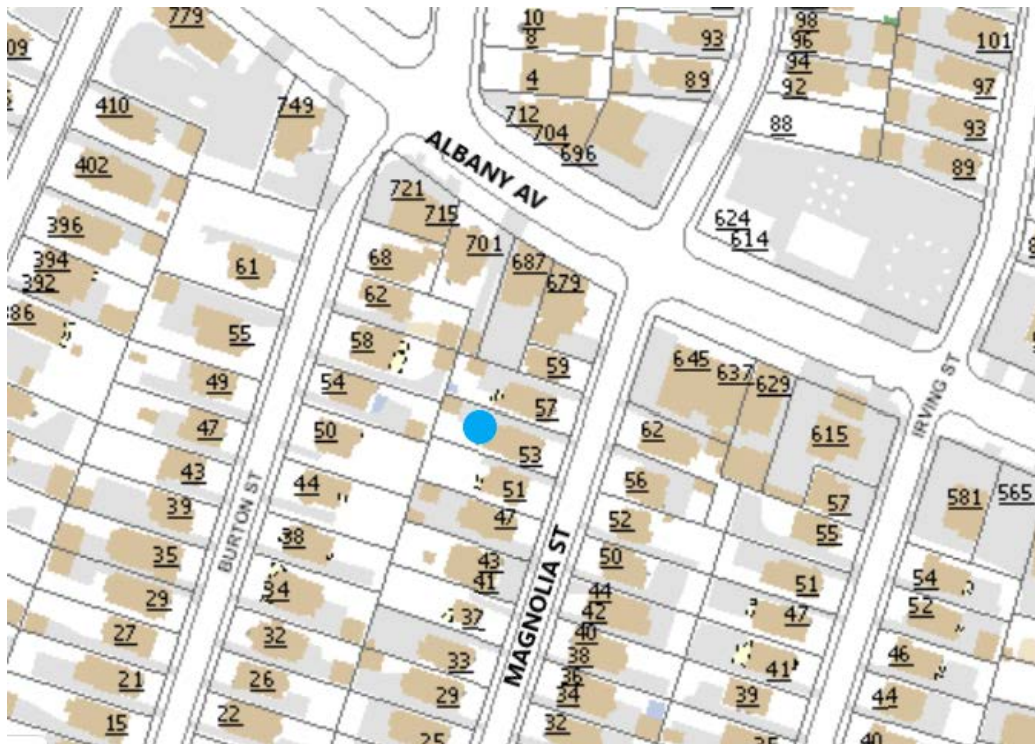
**PROJECT:** 53 Magnolia Street  
PARCEL ID: 199-216-152  
ENERGOV ID: COMM-2021-0356

**ZONE:** N-2-3 **HISTORIC DISTRICT:** Upper Albany National Historic District

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

**APPLICANT:** Merville Murray

**OWNER:** Merville Murray



Location Map

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The existing residence at 53 Magnolia is a two and a half story, three family building built in 1899. in the Colonial Revival style and contributes to the Upper Albany National Historic District. The first floor of the house has horizontal clapboard siding while the upper walls are finished with cedar shingle siding.

This application was originally scheduled to be heard by the Historic Preservation Commission at their regular meeting on April 21, 2021. Prior to that meeting the application was continued to the May 19, 2021 meeting at the request of the applicant.

The application was heard at the May 19, 2021 meeting and was ultimately continued to the June 21, 2021 to allow the applicant to submit evidence to support a hardship including estimates of the costs associated with doing the siding with wood or fiber materials versus vinyl.

**Proposed Project:** The applicant proposed to replace the siding materials, horizontal clapboard siding on the first floor and cedar shingle siding on the upper floors, with similar vinyl siding products. The applicant proposes to use Ply Gem Progressions double 4-inch horizontal siding (in Nantucket Gray) for the first floor, and Tando RoughSawn Cedar Dual panel vinyl siding for the upper floors (in Classic White). The exposure for the shingle siding product is 6.5 inches, while the exposure for the horizontal siding product is 4 inches.

The vinyl siding is proposed to be installed over the existing siding materials. The first-floor horizontal siding will continue to have a corner trim detail, while the second and third floor shingle siding will be cut at the corners to have no corner trim. Within the dormer area the wall plan is angled/coved to meet the soffit as an architectural detail, which the applicant proposes to replicate with the vinyl shingles.

**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***; *“Recommended: Repairing wood shingles and siding”*

**FINDING OF FACTS**

<b>CURRENT USE:</b>	Three Family	<b>PROPOSED USE:</b>	Three Family
<b>YEAR BUILT:</b>	1899	<b>STYLE:</b>	Colonial Revival

**Particular Mention in historic nomination:** *“The nomination only includes the details of the structure in the inventory: 53-55 Magnolia Street, built in 1899, 2 ½ stories, gable roof, Colonial Revival style.”*

**Current Conditions:** The exterior of the building, including the wood shingle siding and paint is in deteriorated condition. The roof edge of the projecting bay on the second floor shows damage.



Fig. 1 - Front Façade from Magnolia Street – Google Streetview Image October 2020

**Condition of other properties in neighborhood:** Other properties on Magnolia Street are in good condition. Many structures retain their original siding and historic character, though some windows have been replaced and siding covered.

**COMMENTS RECEIVED** (None received as of April 16, 2021)

### **ANALYSIS**

The applicant proposes to replace the existing horizontal lap siding and cedar shingle siding with vinyl siding products. The existing siding is in poor condition with signs of warping, rot, and paint decay. The applicant has submitted photographs that indicate the poor condition of the materials.

The applicant proposes to use Ply Gem Progressions double 4-inch horizontal siding (in Nantucket Gray) for the first floor, and Tando RoughSawn Cedar Dual panel vinyl siding for the upper floors (in Classic White). The exposure for the shingle siding product is 6.5 inches, while the exposure for the horizontal siding product is 4 inches.

The applicant has submitted a description of work that will attempt to replicate the design of the current siding. The first floor will have corner trim as the existing siding has, while for the upper stories the applicant will cut the shingles to wrap the corners and have no trim. Further, the angled/coved dormer façade will be matched as it currently exists. Staff's biggest concern is that the

existing siding will not be removed, which will cause issues with the reveal of existing window trim. A condition of approval is recommended to require the removal of the existing siding material before new siding is installed.

The applicant has not provided any estimates on the costs associated with replacement in kind or a budget for the project to demonstrate any financial hardship.

Staff finds that the existing siding has deteriorated to a state that it is no longer repairable and should be allowed to be replaced. However, vinyl siding is specifically listed by the guidelines as an inappropriate material and the applicant has provided no hardship evidence. As such, staff has recommended a condition of approval requiring that the siding be replaced with a solid wood or fiber cement siding, installed with the same reveals as the existing siding.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval of this application with the following conditions:

1. The existing wood shingle and horizontal clapboard siding may be removed, but new solid wood or fiber cement siding that matches the existing design shall be installed.
2. All existing siding materials shall be removed prior to the installation of new siding materials.

**A draft resolution follows.**

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Application Form
2. Photographs submitted March 4, 2021
3. Revised Applicant's Narrative submitted May 14, 2021
4. Photographs of the existing siding submitted May 14, 2021

**REVIEWED,**

---

Aimee Chambers, Director



**CITY OF HARTFORD  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION  
53 MAGNOLIA STREET  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROPOSAL**

**Whereas,** The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission reviewed the proposal to replace the siding on an existing residential structure; and

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

**Whereas,** The structure is a 2 ½ story wood frame of Colonial Revival style; and

**Whereas,** The applicant proposes to replace the siding as indicated in their application submitted March 4, 2021 and updated in a revised narrative submitted May 14, 2021;

**Whereas,** All rehabilitation work can be done in a manner consistent with the historic character of the house with the conditions below; and

**Whereas,** The proposed siding work can be consistent with the City’s Historic Design Principals with the conditions below;

Now therefore Be It

**Resolved,** The City of Hartford Historic Preservation Commission hereby approves the proposed work with the following conditions:

1. The existing wood shingle and horizontal clapboard siding may be removed, but new solid wood or fiber cement siding that matches the existing design shall be installed.
2. All existing siding materials shall be removed prior to the installation of new siding.

Be It Further,

**Resolved,** This 21st day of June 2021.