

**Washtenaw County Historic District Commission
Special Meeting Minutes**

DATE:	Thursday, February 10, 2022
TIME:	5:30 pm-7:00pm
PLACE	Learning Resource Center Washtenaw County 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Call to Order

- Chair Ralph called the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission meeting to order at 5:35 PM

Swearing in of Commissioners: Robert Mulcahy swore in commissioners James Mann, Peter Kelley, and Kim Clarke

Roll Call

- Staff conducted roll call:
 - **Commissioners present:** Kim Clarke, Olivia Davidson, Peter Kelley, James Mann, Katie Remensnyder, Alice Ralph, and Blake Swihart
 - **Commissioners absent with notice:** Alec Jerome, Aprille McKay
 - **Staff present:** Melinda Schmidt, Robert Mulcahy

Approval of the Agenda of the Current Meeting:

Chair Ralph asked if there were any corrections to the agenda. There were none. Commissioner Kelley moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4071 Thornoaks Drive Application Review:

Chair Ralph called the **4071 Thornoaks Drive wall repair and siding replacement** application hearing to order. Staff presented the application for the repair of the remaining three exterior walls and replacement of siding on the entire house. The north wall, bearing the brunt of the damage, needs new siding. Interior demolition revealed that every elevation wall has pockets of deterioration, rot, and animal infestation, including a bird nest and a beehive. The rot in the walls necessitates replacement of the siding attached to the rotting portions of each exterior wall. Wall repair includes removing the siding, Celotex, and bad studs on all elevations; installing new plywood, and coving the exterior walls with Tyvek.

The proposed replacement siding is 6-inch wide Hardie Cedar-Mill Panel Vertical siding in the Woodstock Brown color. This siding is fiber cement and resembles cedar. The color closely resembles the current siding color. The applicant plans to install a vertical pattern on the entire house. The applicant provided a sample of the siding.

The current siding is a mix of vertical, diagonal, and flat wood siding painted tan. The vertical and diagonal siding is 4 inches wide. The front facade features all three types of siding, the rear elevation has vertical siding, the north elevation had diagonal siding, and the south elevation has diagonal and vertical siding. The garage has all three types of siding.

Several commissioners conducted a site visit at 4071 Thornoaks Drive earlier in the week. Chair Ralph, who attended the site visit, explained the deterioration present on all the walls.

Commissioners discussed the proposed siding pattern changes, and the need to preserve the building envelope and significant design elements. Commissioners agreed the diagonal siding is a character defining feature of the home, and discussed at length how to maintain the design integrity of the house while allowing for the proposed Hardie Cedar-Mill Vertical siding on most of the house. Commissioners determined keeping the diagonal pattern on the front elevation would maintain design integrity, while allowing for a different siding pattern on the rest of the home that will better keep water from the walls.

Commissioner Mann moved to approve with condition the Certificate of Appropriateness application for wall repair and new siding at 4071 Thornoaks Drive, as submitted with pictures, which includes removing the siding, Celotex, and bad studs on all elevations; installing new plywood, and covering the exterior walls with Tyvek; and installing HardiePanel Cedar-Mill Sierra 8 vertical siding in Woodstock Brown color. This application is **approved with condition that** the design, color, texture, and diagonal orientation of the existing siding on the front facade is maintained. This work is approved based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation numbers 2 and 6.

Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation cited:

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Commissioner Davidson seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was put to vote. The motion unanimously passed. Commissioners asked that the property owner notify staff of the siding type proposed for use on the diagonal portions of the front elevation. Commissioner Ralph asked that the letter to the property owner include a recommendation to hire a contractor certified in installing James Hardie products.

Adjournment: Chair Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:20pm.

The next HDC meeting is scheduled for <i>Thursday, March 5, 2022- Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center, Superior Room, 4135 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48108</i>
