

**SUBJECT:** Heritage Permit Application by  
Mariani's of Unionville Ltd. to Permit  
Vinyl Siding and Aluminum Cladding  
188 Main Street  
Unionville Heritage Conservation District

File No. HE 14 119143

**PREPARED BY:** George Duncan, Senior Heritage Planner, ext. 2296

**REVIEWED BY:** Regan Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) That the report titled "Heritage Permit Application by Mariani's of Unionville Ltd. to Permit Vinyl and Aluminum Cladding, 188 Main Street, Unionville Heritage Conservation District, File No. HE 14 119143", be received;
- 2) That within a five (5) year time span beginning March 29, 2016, the owner be required to remove all modern cladding materials and restore the original wood siding and trim on the heritage building at 188 Main Street if the original wood siding remains in place and is in restorable condition;
- 3) That in the event the original wood siding does not remain under existing modern cladding or is in poor condition, subject to the agreement of Heritage Section staff, the owner be required to install replica wood siding based on historic photographic evidence;
- 4) That the owner be required to submit a letter of undertaking to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor and the Commissioner of Development Services to confirm his agreement to carry out this work within the specified time frame;
- 5) And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Not applicable.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this staff report is to follow up on Council's deferral of consideration of the heritage permit application for vinyl siding and aluminum cladding at 188 Main Street until a Council Workshop on the City's heritage policies and guidelines was held.

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**BACKGROUND:****A Council Workshop on the City's heritage policies and guidelines was held on March 7, 2016**

At the March 7, 2016 meeting of the Development Services Committee, Regan Hutcheson, Manager of Heritage Planning, made a detailed presentation titled "Markham's Heritage Planning Program – Heritage Policies and Guidelines."

The presentation provided an overview of the City's heritage conservation program and the policy documents and the national and international standards that support it. The subject of the importance of maintaining authenticity of built heritage resources through the preservation of historic materials, or the installation of like materials when the originals cannot be restored, was highlighted in reference to the consideration of vinyl siding and aluminum cladding at 188 Main Street.

**Consideration of the Heritage Permit application follows Council's direction from the Development Services Committee meeting of April 21, 2015**

With the Council Workshop on the City's heritage policies and guidelines now complete, staff is bringing the matter of the Heritage Permit application for vinyl siding and aluminum cladding back to the Development Services Committee for consideration, in accordance with Council's direction (Appendix 'A': Development Services Committee Extract April 21, 2015).

**The subject property is a Class A heritage building in the Unionville Heritage Conservation District**

The subject property, the Eckardt-Davison House and Store, c.1850 and c.1870, is a two storey frame building in the Second Empire style, with a boomtown front on the store at the north end. Historically, this was the location of Unionville's first general store and post office. It is a Class A heritage building in the Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan (See Figure 2: Building photograph prior to recent work).

**In 2014 the owner installed vinyl siding and aluminum cladding without a permit**

On May 28, 2014 the owner installed vinyl siding over the existing wood clapboard, and aluminum cladding over the window frames and window sills (See Figure 3: Building photograph with work in progress). There was no Heritage Permit application or contact with City staff prior to the work being undertaken. By-law Enforcement was notified and an officer attended the site. The owner contacted Heritage Section staff to discuss the process for having the work approved, and the same day a Heritage Permit application was submitted. The permit application sought the City's approval for the changes the owner had already made to the building.

**City staff met with the owner and advised him that the work did not meet the policies and guidelines of the Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan**

While the work was still in progress on May 28, 2014, City staff met with the owner on site and explained that a permit is required to alter a building in the heritage district, and that the work did not meet the policies and guidelines of the Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan. The vinyl and aluminum installation work on the south wall of the building had been completed when staff arrived. The owner was asked to stop

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work on the installation of the modern materials on the front wall (Main Street), however, the application of the vinyl and aluminum was completed following the site visit by staff.

**A Heritage Permit application was reviewed by Heritage Markham and was not recommended for approval**

An “after the fact” Heritage Permit application was reviewed by Heritage Markham on June 18, 2014, and was not recommended for approval because the work does not comply with the policies and guidelines of the Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan. Heritage Markham recommended that the owner be required to remove the vinyl siding and aluminum cladding around the windows, and restore the underlying wood siding and trim to its previous condition.

**The Heritage Permit application was referred to Council for a decision**

In the consideration of alterations to property in a Heritage Conservation District, as provided for in the Ontario Heritage Act the municipal heritage committee (Heritage Markham) is appointed to provide advice to Council. In instances where the applicant and the municipal heritage committee do not agree, applications are referred to Council for its consideration. Staff had recommended that the Heritage Permit requesting approval of the vinyl siding and aluminum window treatment not be approved and that the building be restored to its previous condition with wood siding. At its meeting of September 10, 2014, Council passed a resolution to refer the Heritage Permit Application back to staff for further consideration.

**Staff met with the property owner in October to discuss options for addressing the siding issue**

Heritage Section staff met with the property owner on October 15, 2014 to discuss potential options for addressing the siding issue. Several options were discussed with the owner but the owner has not taken a firm position on any of them at this time. The options are described in detail in the Options/Discussion section of this staff report.

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

**The application of vinyl siding and aluminum cladding on a Class A heritage building is not consistent with the policies and guidelines of the District Plan**

The application of vinyl siding and aluminum cladding on a Class A heritage building is not consistent with the policies and guidelines of the District Plan and if approved, will likely lead to further requests from others to cover wood exteriors with modern siding. This would gradually erode the authentic heritage character of Unionville and in staff’s opinion, the cultural heritage resource value of individual buildings and the district itself would be compromised. This would be regrettable given the City’s long-standing commitment to Unionville’s preservation, and the City’s well-known national and provincial reputation as a leader in cultural heritage protection.

It should be noted that any vinyl or aluminum siding materials seen on other heritage buildings in the heritage district were applied prior to the designation of the Unionville

Heritage Conservation District. The District Plan encourages the removal of these inappropriate siding material and restoration to wood siding.

**The building apparently has four cladding materials on its walls**

The heritage building was originally built with a horizontal wood cladding. At some point, likely in the 1960/70s, the original wood was covered by aluminum siding. In April 1989, Heritage Markham Committee had no objection to the current property owner's request to replace/cover the aluminum siding with modern horizontal wood siding to be more complementary to the heritage area. It is unclear if the white aluminum siding was removed or just covered. In May 2014, the existing wall claddings were covered with vinyl siding. Until May 2014, the area around the windows was wood.

**Four options for addressing the siding issue were discussed with the owner:**

**Option 1:**

- Remove the new vinyl siding and aluminum trim cladding from the windows, and restore the underlying modern wood siding where required.
- Council could request this to be done immediately, or agree to a time span to allow the vinyl to remain in place and then be removed at a later date.
- The owner has expressed concern that the modern wood siding from 1989 that was applied on top of the white aluminum siding several years ago was not in good condition.

**Option 2:**

- Remove all modern siding materials, including the new vinyl and the underlying modern wood and aluminum, and restore the original wood siding, if it remains in place and is in restorable condition.
- If the original siding does not remain or is in poor condition, then replica wood siding could be installed based on historic photographic evidence.
- Council could request this be done immediately, or agree to a time span (staff suggest up to 5 years) to allow the vinyl and aluminum to remain in place and then be removed.
- This work could qualify for the City's Commercial Façade Improvement grant program (up to \$15,000 could be granted toward the siding restoration as a matching grant with Council's approval).

**Option 3:**

- Remove the new vinyl siding and aluminum trim cladding, and the underlying modern wood siding from 1989, and install new wood siding on top of the old white aluminum siding.
- Council could request this to be done immediately, or agree to a time span to allow the vinyl to remain in place and then be removed.

**Option 4:** Leave the new vinyl siding and aluminum trim cladding in place. This option is not supported by Heritage Markham or Heritage Section staff as it is contrary to the policies and guidelines of the Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan.

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**Option 2 is recommended by staff as a compromise that will result in the restoration of the original character of the heritage building within a 5 year time frame.**

Option 2 is recommended by staff. This option will result in the restoration of the original character of the heritage building at 188 Main Street within a 5 year time span from its installation date, while allowing the owner's investment in the new cladding materials to remain during this time period.

The restoration of either the original siding that is believed to exist under modern claddings, or its replication based on historic photographic evidence if it does not remain or is not in restorable condition, is work that would meet the qualifications for a matching grant funding through the City's Commercial Façade Improvement program. The funding would depend upon Council's continued support for funding this program during the 5 year time period.

This option also would demonstrate to other property owners that the City supports its current heritage policies in the Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan (the use of traditional materials on heritage buildings), and would discourage other owners from undertaking similar changes to their wooden heritage buildings.

As noted in the Manager of Heritage Planning's presentation (March 7, 2016) on current heritage policies:

- the Markham Official Plan policy indicates that Markham will protect and conserve its cultural heritage resources generally in accordance with the national and provincial heritage conservation standards which all state that repairs should be undertaken with like materials that match the forms, materials and detailing of the original material;
- the City's four Council-approved heritage conservation district plans all indicate that repairs and replacement of heritage features are to be completed with like materials, and the use of metal and synthetic sidings is not supported; and
- all of Markham heritage conservation policies:
  - reflect accepted heritage practice supported by international, national and provincial heritage bodies;
  - reflect policies being used in most progressive municipalities;
  - involved extensive public/community consultation and meetings; and
  - were approved by Markham Council.

The property owner has not yet communicated his preference for addressing the cladding issue to staff. He is aware of the four options from his meeting with staff on October 15, 2014, and has been advised of staff's recommendation for the City to pursue Option 2.

**Owner has plead guilty to the charge**

In 2015, the owner was charged and fined under the *Ontario Heritage Act* for undertaking alterations without municipal approval.

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**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:**

Not applicable.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

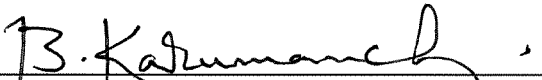
**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The protection of culture heritage resources and their appropriate treatment aligns with the strategic priorities of Managed Growth and Environment.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

The Legal Department has reviewed this staff report and its recommendations.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**



Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Acting Director of Planning & Urban  
Design



Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.  
Commissioner of Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix 'A' – Development Services Extract April 21, 2015

Appendix 'B' – Section 9.4.2 – Exterior Cladding – Alteration to Heritage Buildings

Figure 1 – Owner/Agent and Location Map

Figure 2 – Building photograph prior to alterations

Figure 3 – Building photograph with work in progress

Figure 4 – Building photograph with work complete

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**FIGURE 1**

**File Path:**

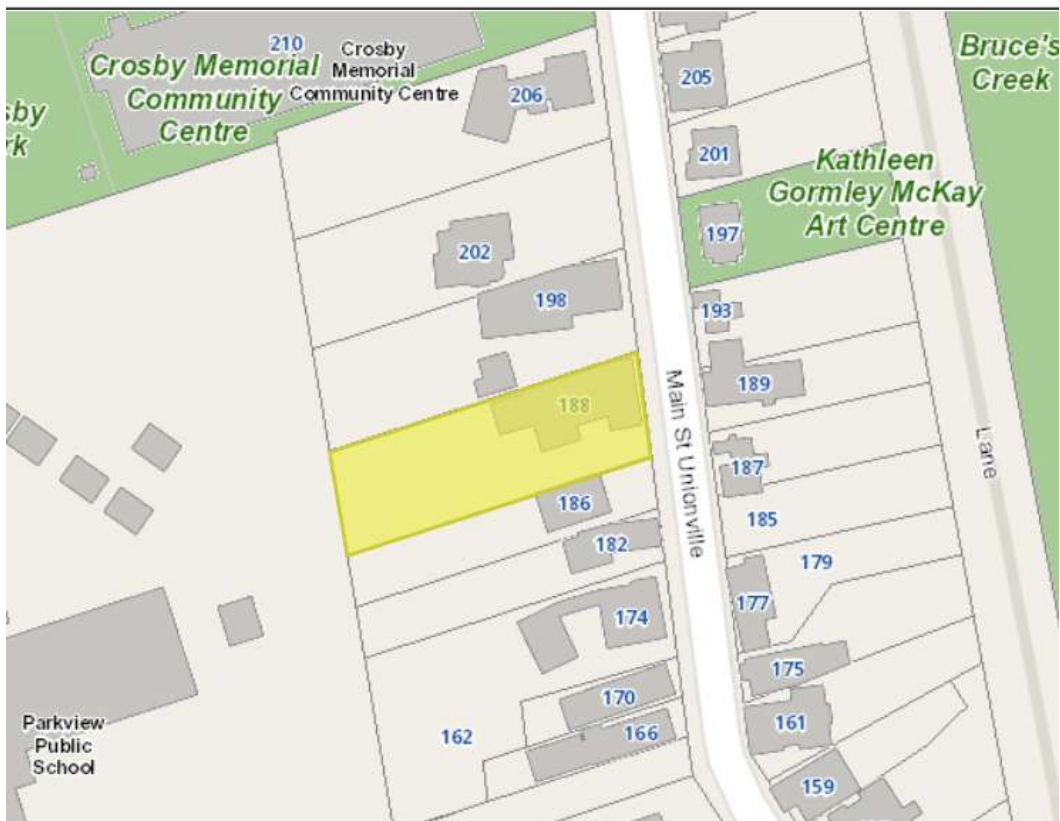
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**OWNER:**

Mariani's of Unionville Ltd.  
188 Main Street  
Unionville, ON, L3R 2G9

Email: larrymariani@gmail.com

**LOCATION MAP:**



**FIGURE 2 - Building (2013) Prior to Alterations**



**FIGURE 3 – Building – May 28, 2014 – Alteration Work in Progress**

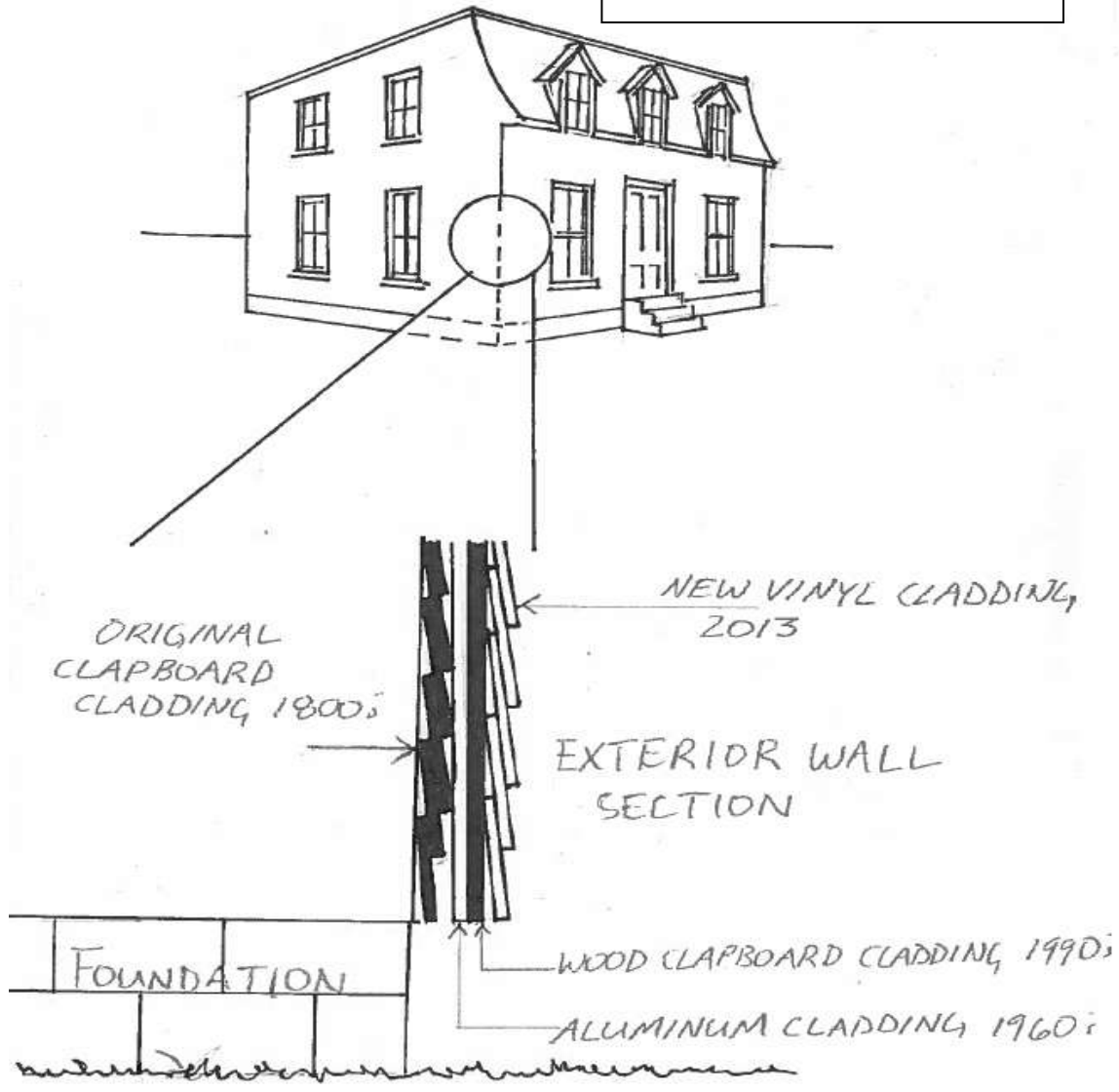




**FIGURE 4** – Building with Work Completed



Cross Section of Wall Claddings on the Building



**APPENDIX 'A'**

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE  
APRIL 21, 2016**

**EXTRACT**

**Item #15  
Page 2**

**The Committee agreed to defer this matter until a Council Workshop can be held, to better understand heritage policies and guidelines.**

**Moved by: Deputy Mayor Jack Heath  
Seconded by: Councillor Karen Rea**

- 1) That the deputation by Larry Mariani regarding 188 Main Street, be received; and,**
- 2) That the report titled "Heritage Permit Application by Mariani's of Unionville Ltd. to Permit Vinyl and Aluminum Cladding, 188 Main Street, Unionville Heritage Conservation District, File No. HE 14 119143, be received; and,**
- 3) That consideration of the Heritage Permit Application for 188 Main Street Unionville, be deferred until a Council Workshop on heritage policies and guidelines has been held; and further,**
- 4) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.**

**CARRIED**

## 9.4 Alterations to Heritage Buildings

### APPENDIX B

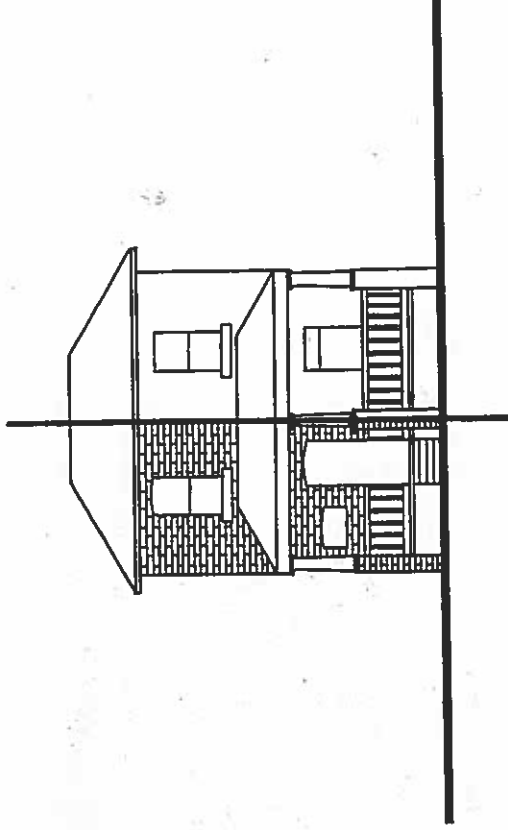
#### 9.4.2 exterior cladding

The exterior cladding of heritage buildings in the District feature a mixture of wood and brick. Wood siding is the most prevalent due to the existence of the former Unionville Planing Mill. The most common variety of wood siding is vertical tongue and groove board. Other types include board and batten and horizontal weatherboard. A number of brick buildings are also found in the District. The most prominent type of brick is the soft, "pink-red" or "salmon" variety, made by the Snowball Brick Company of Markham. In some instances yellow or buff colored brick is used as an accent feature in voussoirs above windows or doors or in quoining. A majority of the brick buildings were laid in the stretcher bond pattern, indicating brick veneer construction.

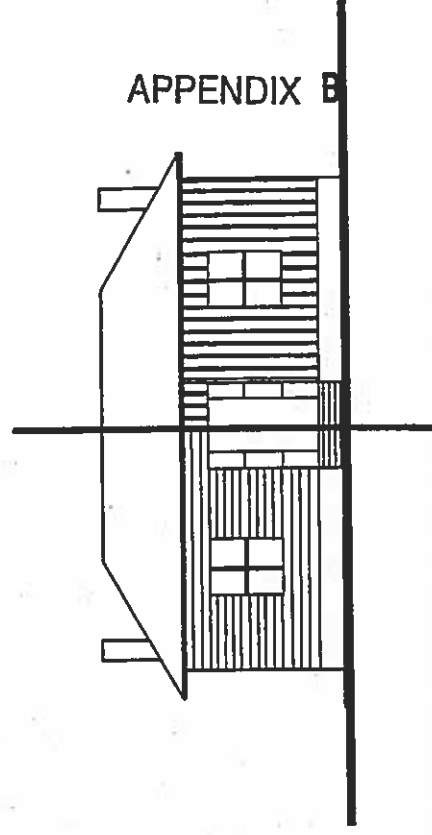
Exterior cladding materials can deteriorate over time resulting in the need for intervention. It is always better to repair the cladding material rather than replace it. However, if replacement is necessary, the new material should match the original material.

In repairing brick walls, the greatest danger to old masonry is the practice of using the wrong type of mortar when repointing. Modern mortar mixtures are usually harder due to a large portion of cement and a small portion of lime which can be harmful to older masonry materials. Older mortar with a large portion of lime and a small portion of cement is weaker than the surrounding bricks and absorbs stresses.

The cladding of heritage buildings with metal or modern synthetic siding such as vinyl is not supported since this approach can result in significant changes to the appearance of the building. These products can affect the visual texture of the building, impact the building's architectural scale, reduce the profile or result in the removal of cornerboards and window and door trim, and contribute to moisture problems in some cases. Although the initial cost and maintenance appears minimal when compared to restoration, over time, these products can lose their colour, deteriorate in appearance and are prone to denting and splitting.



Not Recommended: Original brick building replaced with stucco as siding, greatly alters presence of building



Not Recommended: original horizontal siding replaced with vertical board-and-batten, alters building presence

### APPENDIX B

## 9.4 Alterations to Heritage Buildings

### 9.4.2 exterior cladding cont'd

In addition, the application of the product can be detrimental to the original cladding material underneath, potentially jeopardizing the restoration of the building in the future.

#### Guidelines

1. The original, external finish of a heritage building should be conserved and maintained. Repair of the original material is always preferred over replacement. If replacement is necessary, the material should match the original in form, style, dimensions, profile, texture and method of installation.

2. If replacement of material is necessary, only the specific deteriorated material should be replaced rather than the entire wall or building.

3. The application of new surfaces or coatings that alter the appearance and character of the heritage building's original cladding should not be utilized. The use of metal and synthetic sidings such as vinyl are not supported.

4. The removal of siding material considered to be unsympathetic to the District is encouraged (i.e. aluminium and vinyl siding, asbestos tile, angelstone, etc.). Once removed, the heritage building should be restored to its original state using available physical and archival evidence. If the original cladding material is unknown, a siding material appropriate to the style of the building and commonly used in the District should be introduced.

#### Existing Wood Siding

5. Wood siding should only be replaced when it has lost its material integrity and its ability to hold a surface coating.

6. Wood siding should remain painted and not stripped bare.

#### Existing Brick Masonry

7. Repointing of masonry should only be undertaken when it is badly deteriorated or when water penetration is a problem. It is normal for old

mortar to be weathered back a short distance from the wall face due to its compositions of lime, sand and water. Old mortar in good condition should not be disturbed.

8. The repointing of historic mortar can be a complex undertaking and often best left to those skilled and experienced in the proper procedures. A good technical resource is a provincial publication entitled "Annotated Master Specification for the Cleaning and Repointing of Historic Masonry" available at the Town.

9. Masonry and mortar to be replaced should be cut out with handtools to minimize the risk of damage. Power tools can cause damage to the brick edges.

10. New mortar should match the original in terms of colour, composition (soft, lime rich variety for pre-1920) and pointing method.

11. Existing unpainted brick surfaces should not be painted.

12. Before attempting to remove paint from brick surfaces, the building should be examined as not all brick was unpainted. A soft brick was sometimes used instead of face brick with paint providing the weatherproof skin.

13. Brick surfaces should not be sealed with silicones or waterproof coatings as these can trap moisture behind the surface.

#### Cleaning Exterior Claddings

14. If cleaning is desired, only the gentlest method should be employed.

15. The use of abrasive cleaning methods to clean or strip wood of existing finishes should be avoided. Sandblasting or waterblasting wood surfaces should not be used.

16. The use of abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting, high pressure water jets and harsh chemical cleaners are not acceptable for historic masonry.

17. Choose an inconspicuous sample area to test a cleaning method.