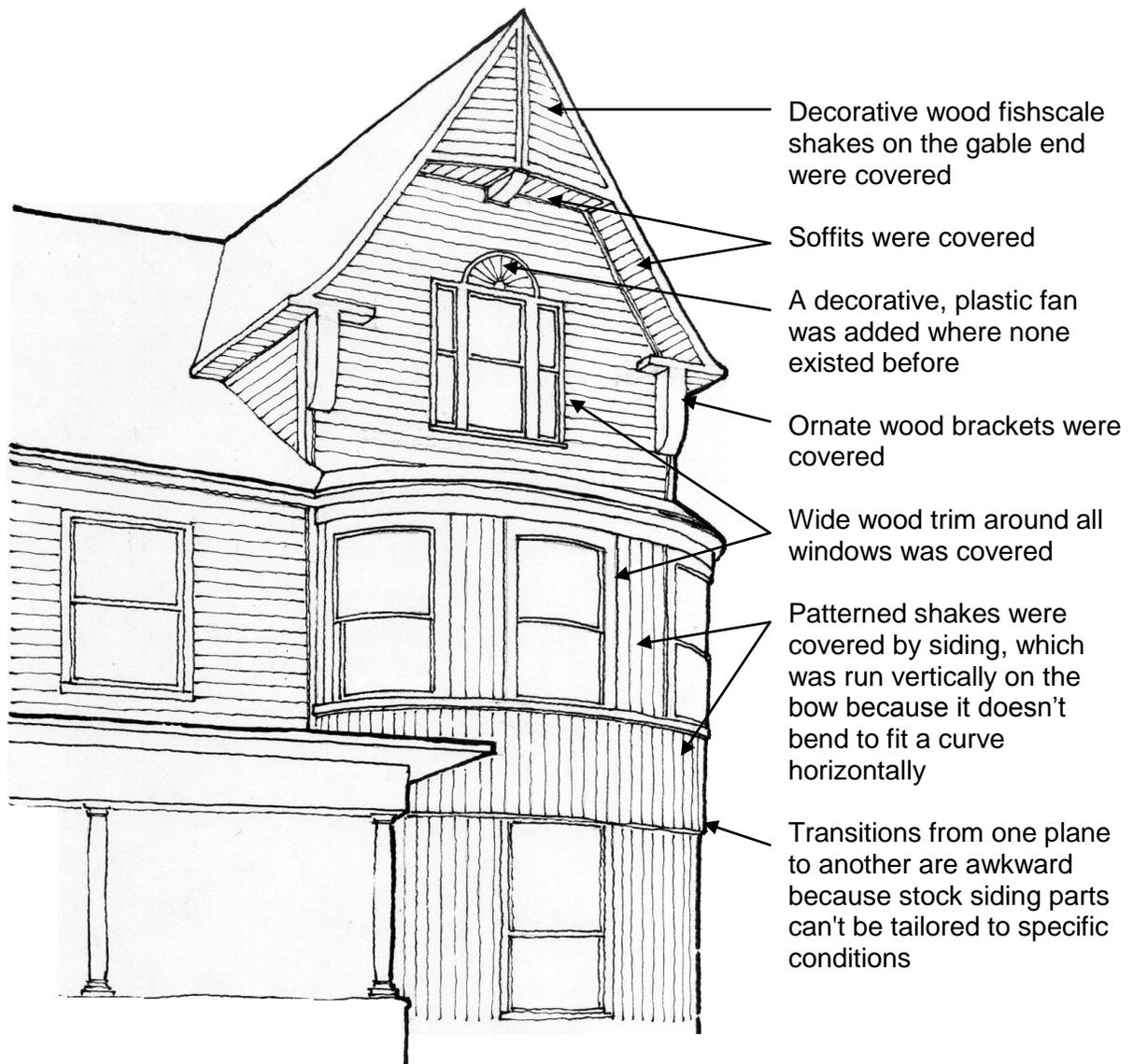


## J.1 Siding

Covering original siding with a layer of another material is inappropriate. When new siding is installed over the original siding, rather than in place of it, the projecting depth of trim at windows, doors and corners is lost. This reduces the shadow lines that instill richness in a façade. Covering decorative detail is also inappropriate, as this strips a building of its character. The results of a poor siding job are shown here.



A worse case is where insulation board is installed over the old siding before the new siding is put on. When this is done, the face of the siding extends beyond the original trim boards. This not only erases shadow lines around the trim, it puts the windows in shadow.

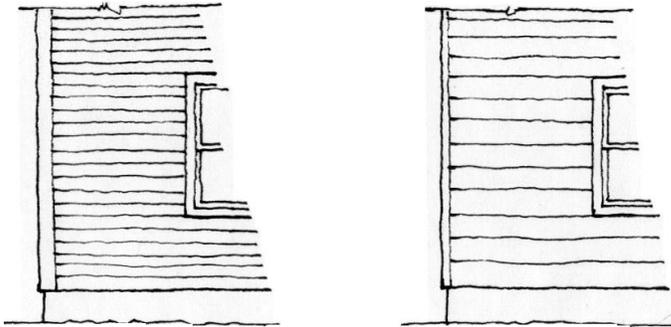
An all-too-common attempt to recreate the shadow lines is to add new trim around the openings. But the new trim is nearly always plain stock, or it is wrapped with a flat sheet of vinyl or aluminum. The result lacks any of the detail commonly seen in original wood trim.

## J.2 Siding continued

Installing vinyl or metal siding over traditional wood siding can cause damage or prevent the visual detection of damage to the underlying structure. Often, the new siding is used to cover damage caused by moisture within the walls, without eliminating the source of water. The trapped moisture may never dry, which accelerates the rot and which may cause mold growth. Also, vinyl and metal siding leaks, sometimes a lot. Manufacturers punch weep holes into the bottom edge of the boards to allow water to escape, but if the water goes into the walls, it can cause irreparable harm.

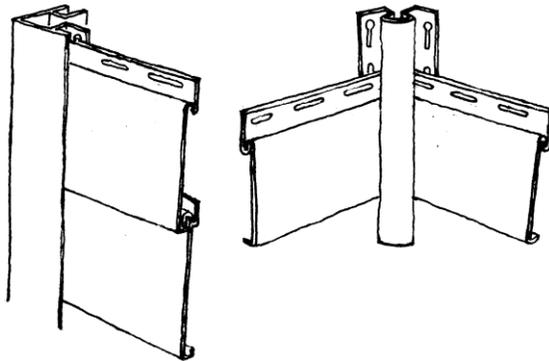


The loss of trim around windows is one of the most significant impacts of an over-siding job. The window shown here on the left has its original trim. Though rather plain, it gives character to the window. The trim around the window on the right was covered or removed, lessening the character of the window.



New siding rarely matches the look of older siding, with noticeable differences in board exposures, profiles, textures and joints. The older siding shown on the left has narrow "exposure", where the exposed face of each board is about 4 inches. This gives the house a degree of character not seen in the resided house on the right with a greater exposure.

Even when the differences between old and new siding are minimized, certain components of new siding systems lack historic precedent, and are therefore inappropriate to historic buildings. Receiving channels, especially, are prominent enough to affect the overall appearance of a building. They are used where siding boards meet window or door trim or architectural details like porch brackets, or where the boards meet at inside or outside corners.



While some manufacturers are trying to make components that appear more like traditional ones, they have struggled to overcome the need for receiving channels like those shown here.

## **J.3 Siding** continued

Door and window trim pieces of metal and vinyl siding systems also differ from their counterparts on historic buildings, largely because they lack the detail possible with crafted wood components. While metal can be bent and vinyl can be molded into many shapes, few shapes are actually available on the market. When the same shapes are used over and over on one house after another, the appearance of the houses and streetscape becomes monotonous. Also tedious are the colors of beige and gray that are repeated *ad nauseam* throughout new construction.

Trim pieces that mimic elaborate wood moldings but are made of materials like PVC and fiberglass are being used with metal or vinyl siding systems. Some of these appear enough like traditional trim that they can be appropriate on historic buildings. But the siding boards must terminate in receiving channels where they meet the trim.

The joints in metal or vinyl siding and trim also appear different than those on traditional buildings. Because these materials cannot be sanded, puttied or glued, the joints are often quite visible. This is especially bothersome at the butt joints between siding boards and at the corners of window and door trim.

### **Replacing original siding**

Replacing original siding can be acceptable if the original material is deteriorated beyond reasonable repair. While in-kind replacement is preferred, alternative materials can be appropriate if the Board determines they look like the original. An alternate material that has been accepted as a replacement for wood siding is fiber cement board, which is available in the same configurations as wood siding. An industry leader in 2005 is HardiPlank® made by the James Hardie Company.

More information on siding historic buildings can be found in the National Parks Services' *Preservation Brief #8: Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings*.