

4-23-20  
616 Coppermine Road  
Corinth, VT 05039

Planning Commission  
Town of Bradford  
172 North Main Street  
P.O. Box 339  
Bradford, VT 05033

**Regarding:**

**REQUESTING THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECONSIDER ITS 4-11-20 DECISION AND GRANT APPROVAL FOR THE APPLICANT TO FINISH VINYL SIDING THE PROPERTY AS SHOWN BY THE STREET FACING FAÇADE AS OF 4-21-20 WITHOUT REMOVING THE ORIGINAL CLAPBOARDS.**

Dear Planning Commission:

We request that you reconsider your 4-11-20 decision and approve our application to vinyl side our building at 45. N. Main Street without having to remove the existing Clapboards. Yet we will make the other changes the PC required in the decision.

We ask that you reconsider for the following reasons:

**1.) HISTORIC DISTRICT RULES:**

We believe that it can be demonstrated that if the Historic District Rules were applied as they were intended to be, then our original application would have been approved with the vinyl siding being applied as we originally intended, (*as shown on the South Side of the building*).

**2.) MAINTAINING UNIQUE CHARACTER OF SUBJECT PROPERTY:**

*We believe that we have shown by example from the subsequent improvements to the Front Façade facing the street that we can maintain the same pattern that gives the house its unique character without having to remove the original clapboards.*

## HISTORIC DISTRICT RULES

*We believe that we can demonstrate using the Historic District Rules that our original application should have been approved with the vinyl being applied as we originally intended as shown on the South Side of the building.*

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Per the PC's Decision Section D. "Findings of Facts" paragraph 4 sentence #2:

**"In this particular request, the Planning Commission must consider pattern, materials and texture, and architectural features. It must consider the unique characteristics of "the building".**

Perhaps we are missing it but, no where in the Historic District Overlay could we find where it says that **"the Planning Commission must consider pattern, materials and texture, and architectural features. It must consider the unique characteristics of the building."**

**What section 3.13, sentence (3)** does state as was pointed out in the PC's decision is that:

***"Change is and should be a part of the community. Sympathetic new design can be a positive contribution to the character of the District. Historical, architectural and visual integrity "CAN" be maintained while present and future needs are met. To acknowledge both growth and character, existing buildings and structures should be recognized as products of their own time."***

Furthermore, we could not find anywhere in the Historic District Overlay where it is stated that the PC can dictate the colors we wish to use on the building.

We would greatly appreciate it if the PC would re-visit section 3.13 as outlined below and evaluate our original proposal to vinyl side the building as 3.13 flows into the Criteria For Approval in section 4.3.C. 5 & 6.

## SECTION 3.13 BROKEN DOWN

### Section 3.13:

***".....Change is a should be part of a community...."***

Yes vinyl siding over the clapboards is change, and it is in keeping with the "immediate area" as specified in Section 4.3.C 5. Furthermore, as outlined in 4.3.C. 6. it is not intended that the details of existing buildings be *duplicated precisely*, but those features should be regarded as *suggestive*

### Section 3.13:

***“.....Sympathetic new design can be a positive contribution to the character of the District. Historical, architectural and visual integrity can be maintained while present and future needs are met.”***

We have not changed the design of anything (*other than the Southeast corner board facing the street which has since been brought back to original*), we have changed a material type and in so doing are keeping the same clapboard design of the immediate area as required in Section 4.3.C 5 & 6 . We believe that this has had a positive contribution to the character of the district. The vinyl siding improvement has dramatically enhanced not just the “immediate neighborhood but the entire Historic District and town for that matter. Lastly, even with the vinyl siding being applied as started on the South side of building originally, we went to the extra expense back then to add to the window trim thus furring the trim out in an effort to maintain the same reveals. We then abutted the J-channel up to that. This is in keeping with 4.3.C 5 & 6. If the PC takes the time to look at all the properties in the “immediate area” as outlined in Criteria for Approval: 4.3.C. 5 & 6 we believe that it will show that we more than complied, even as we started out originally on the South side of the building.

### **The last sentence of section 3.13**

***“....To acknowledge both growth and character, existing buildings and structures should be recognized as products of their own time.”***

We are in a time of Federal and State Lead Paint regulations in regulating all property built prior to 1978. These laws have been put in place to protect the health of the community specifically children. The most effective way to do that, short of complete lead abatement procedures (*which would require the removal of all the clapboards, trim, etc at an approximate cost of \$40,000*), is to apply vinyl siding & vinyl replacement windows.

In addition to the exorbitant cost of lead abatement, there are other downsides to removing the clapboards. First of all, all this hazardous lead material is added to our landfills and thus is not good for the environment. Second the removal of the clapboards actually weakens the structural integrity of the building. They actually add to the building’s strength from racking and act as an additional barrier to the weather. In this application one never removes the clapboards when going over them with vinyl. Lastly, there is always the possibility that some future owner may wish to remove the vinyl and restore the building back to its original siding material.

Looking back to when we began the project not realizing we needed a permit, we believe now that even then, that our original intent to side the building the way we were, was in keeping with section 3.13 and & 4.3.C. 5 & 6. We were making a positive impact (*we have had and are still getting many compliments*) while at the same time maintaining compatibility with the “immediate area”.

It would appear to us that the PC in their findings of fact and subsequent decision did not take into consideration sections 3.13 or 4.3.C. 5 & 6. Or apply them as they were intended to be applied. *(Criteria 4 does not really apply as it only speaks to the placement of windows and doors. Although it does specify that they only need to be "similar")*

In the PC's findings of fact and subsequent decision there was no mention of or consideration given to the properties in the "immediate area" that were supplied in the application. The majority of those properties were vinyl or metal sided and they lacked the detail required of "us" in the PC's decision. Nor was there any mention of the 30+ other properties in the Historic District that are currently sided in vinyl and metal. We believe that if the properties in the "immediate area" had been considered and the Criteria for Approval had been applied as intended by the Historic District Overlay, then the PC would have found in our favor on 4-11-20's decision. The only property that the PC referenced was the subject property when handing down its ruling.

Perhaps we are misinterpreting the Historic District Overlays Rules but no where can we find where the PC is suppose to be focused on the Subject property; Comparing it only to itself and to make every effort possible to maintain/duplicate the look of it. In fact, we maintain that it is just the opposite of that and for the following reasons:

**Section 3.13** summarizes the purpose of the Historic district Overlay and moves on to outline what circumstances require approval by the PC. In our case, section 3.13.B. 7. Change of Material. No where can we find where it says that "**In this particular request, the Planning Commission must consider pattern, materials and texture, and architectural features. It must consider the unique characteristics of the building**".

**Section 4.3. C Criteria for Approval:** Of the 8 criteria the only two that apply are criteria # 5 & #6. Moreover, it is possible one could argue that #6 does not apply as we are not asking to build a new building. Which It seems is what #6 is referencing.

It is our contention that our original application should have been approved because our original vinyl siding change of material meets and or exceeds criteria 4.3.C 5 and if need be 6 as well.

## **MAINTAINING UNIQUE CHARACTER OF SUBJECT PROPERTY:**

*We believe that we have shown by example from the subsequent improvements to the Front Façade facing the street that we can maintain the same pattern that gives the house its unique character without having to remove the original clapboards.*

It was our interpretation of the PC's decision of 4-11-20 part #3 that the PC wanted the remainder of the clapboards removed because the PC thought that that was the only way to duplicate the same pattern and thus maintain the unique character of the house.

It was subsequently verified in the meeting of 4-21-20 by the Chairperson Marcey Carver, that the unique character the PC wanted to duplicate was the "reveals" of where the siding butted up to the corner boards of the house and all the window trims. The PC also had concern regarding exposing the freeze board and the window sills extending in width beyond the window trim.

Prior to the reconsideration meeting , In an effort to appease the PC's desire to duplicate the same pattern and thus maintain the unique character of the remainder of the house, we went forward doing everything the PC requested in its 4-11-20 decision except removing all the clapboards as we worked our way around to the Front of the house facing the street.

We removed vinyl siding to expose the freeze boards and corner board. We replaced and duplicated the damaged corner board previously covered with a vinyl corner board. We also painted the corner boards and freeze board black as required (although not sure that is required in the Historic District Overlay).

Regarding the garage in the back of the property decision #4, our original plan was to go over it in vinyl as we felt it is in keeping with section 3.13 and 4.3.C. 5 & 6. We would still like to do that.

We believe that we have done everything the PC required in its decision of 4-11-20 except remove the clapboards. What we did on the front facing the street prior to this meeting of 4-30-20, We did to show the PC an example of how(*although we don't believe that should have been required of us originally per 4.3.C. 5 & 6*), we could basically "duplicate" the same unique character the PC wants on the remainder of the building without actually removing the clapboards.

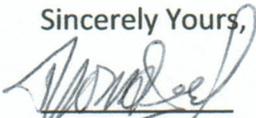
How you see the Front Façade of the building now is greatly enhanced and the intent is to continue on the rest of the building down the North side and around the back of the garage attached to the house. It is our contention, that our building is quickly becoming one of, if not, the best looking building in the "immediate area".

We hope that the PC, as of now, feels that we can comply with sections 3.13 and 4.3.C. 5 & 6 of the Historic District Overlay by continuing to side the building without removing the existing clapboards.

We would very much appreciate it if the PC would take the time to really look at the other properties in the immediate area as per the Criteria Of Approval, Section 4.3.C. 5 & 6 (*not just focused on the subject property*); ..... But actually take the time to look at each neighboring building's: siding, window trim, corner boards freeze board etc., including, Aubuchon's (*where the PC recently approved covering brick with vinyl*). Then compare those buildings in the immediate area to the subject property. We hope if that is done by the PC then PC will agree that applying the Vinyl as we have recently shown on the Front Façade without removing clapboards will be acceptable.

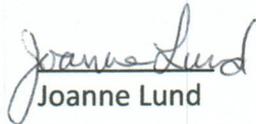
Thank you

Sincerely Yours,



Tom Lund

4/23/2020



Joanne Lund

4/23/2020

**\*\* If you are not willing to venture out, even if it is just to stay in your cars and view the properties in the immediate area and see how they compare to the subject, then please take the time to study the pictures of all the other propertied provided to Marcey Carver, Chairperson. Please take the time to study them prior to the hearing on the 30<sup>th</sup>.**