

UWF HISTORIC TRUST RECOMMENDATIONS TO ARB REGARDING THE USE OF ALTERNATIVE BUILDING MATERIALS

These recommendations, if approved by the ARB, should supersede all previous policies concerning the use of vinyl, aluminum, fiber cement, or other artificial materials that previously have been adopted by the ARB.

It has been the general practice of the Architectural Review Board [herein “ARB” or “Board”] to duplicate documented building materials, types, styles, and construction methods when making repairs, alterations, and/or additions to contributing structures. However, the Board may approve any variances from the original materials, styles, etc. if circumstances unique to each project are found to warrant such variances. In reviewing such variances, the Board shall refer to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Board acknowledges that the quality of non-traditional materials have greatly improved since the adoption of the City of Pensacola’s historic and preservation land use districts and that the quality of some traditional materials have declined and may no longer match the properties of original material. In regards to fiber cement siding, the Board shall consider the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standard #6: “Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.” Giving the increasing popularity of fiber cement products, continued requests for its use, and conditional approval by the National Park Service the following policy is proposed:

- 1) Any request for application of any siding to any building in the Pensacola historic districts shall be brought before the ARB prior to proceeding with the work.
- 2) Smooth finish fiber cement siding with lap exposure typically found on historic buildings in historic and preservation districts may be approved for:
 - new infill construction
 - new construction designed to match historical designs
 - new structures behind existing contributing structures new additions to existing contributing structures
 - elevations where fire-rated materials are required to meet code requirements.

Smooth finish fiber cement siding matching existing historic siding in design, lap exposure, profile, and dimensions may be approved for:

- installation on all facades of a contributing or non-contributing structure where no historic wood siding remains
- historic corner property side and rear elevations not highly visible from the public street – on an elevation-by-elevation basis if the existing historic wood siding cannot be retained and repaired, as confirmed by UWF Historic Trust staff pending review of photographs and/or site visit as applicable
- historic mid-block property side elevations not highly visible from the public street and all rear elevations on an elevation-by-elevation basis if the existing historic wood siding cannot be retained and repaired, as confirmed by UWF Historic Trust staff pending review of photographs and/or site visit as applicable.

3) The use of composite materials (mixture of wood and fibrous materials), polyurethane, PVC, or fiber cement materials for decking, railings, and other architectural details will be considered on a case-by-case basis for both contributing and non-contributing buildings, along with new construction. The ARB will require extensive documentation by the applicant to substantiate all claims of unique conditions and/or financial hardship to justify consideration of non-historic materials by the Board. Details, textures, profiles, and material properties shall closely match traditional building materials; samples and product information are required at the time of review; and documentation of current materials and building conditions shall be provided to the Board. If a project receives ARB approval, the ARB will limit the use of artificial materials, and the Board will closely monitor installation to insure correct application of materials.

4) The use of vinyl and aluminum siding on any “contributing” structure in any historic district is inappropriate; therefore, in virtually all circumstances, a request for permission to use non-historic materials will be denied. In order to maintain the character and ambiance of the historic districts, the ARB believes that it is inappropriate to use vinyl and aluminum siding material on structure that are considered “non-contributing” within the districts. Consequently, the ARB also will strongly discourage the use of these materials on “non-contributing” structures.

5) The continued research and consideration of non-traditional building materials in the Pensacola historic districts will be evaluated yearly by the UWF Historic Trust. If the review of a new material or change to an existing policy is deemed necessary, the UWF Historic Trust staff will make a recommendation to the UWF Historic Trust Property and Collection Committee for review. If the Committee approves staff recommendations, the request will go before the UWF Historic Trust Board of Directors, with the final review going before the ARB.