

Product Feedback

PRODUCTS PUT TO THE TEST



by Mike
Loughery,

Communications manager
for CertainTeed Products.

Original Glory

Trim Helps Restore 112-Year-Old Victorian Home

It often takes a good eye and a creative mind to look at a timeworn, century-old home and get a view of what it could be after proper renovation. When architect Francesco Salerno and his wife Catherine bought an 1895 two-story Victorian-style home, two years ago in Sayreville, N.J., they saw past the crumbling old siding, trim and paint and visualized how it would look if restored to its original glory.

"This house was the proverbial ugly duckling," Salerno says. "It had a lot of old-world charm to it, though. It just needed some help getting back to its roots."

Work Ahead

A lot of work lied ahead for the couple. The interior and exterior both needed a complete renovation, with particular emphasis on the exterior, which needed all new siding, trim, roofing and a new porch. An independent architect who has worked on several historical renovation projects, Salerno wanted to get as close as possible to the home's

original look. He contacted the Victorian-era homebuilder's granddaughter, who still lives in Sayreville, and she provided a greater understanding of the home's original appearance by sharing old photos and stories. Though it had been covered with asbestos shingles, the house was first clad with wooden clapboard siding and cedar shake siding in its peaks, which were two very popular exterior looks during the Victorian period of design.

Salerno, however, did not want to follow all of the building material specifications of the Victorian era exclusively, especially not with the exterior cladding. Because of its high performance and longevity, Salerno preferred vinyl siding and trim to the original wood. For the bulk of the exterior, he specified CertainTeed® Monogram™ 46L Vinyl Siding in Natural Clay, and for the peaks he chose CertainTeed® Cedar Impressions polymer shake siding in Cypress. Salerno had used the CertainTeed vinyl siding in previous historical rehabilitation projects and was pleased with the results.

An Authentic Appearance

Though many historical preservationists look down on vinyl siding and trim, Salerno says it offers the homeowner an authentic wood appearance with more advantages than wood.

"The main benefits of vinyl siding are that it comes pre-finished in a variety of colors, so you don't have to paint it," he says. "Color options used to be very limited with vinyl siding, but with all the options these days you can get very close to a period color. From 20 feet away, you'd be hard-pressed to determine some vinyl from wood. Plus, vinyl is a low-maintenance material, so you don't have to do periodic re-staining or repainting to keep it looking nice."

Salerno hired contractor Window & Door Outlet of Edison, N.J., to re-side the house, and the siding was sold and shipped by distributor National Building Supply of Roselle, N.J. The crew went to work in December



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2006, removing the crumbling and old siding. Underneath the previous shingles, the crew discovered remnants of the house's original clapboard siding.

"Unfortunately, that was all there was covering the exterior walls of the home," says Sam Raymond, project manager for Window & Door Outlet.

"When we took off the old shingles and the original layer of clapboard, it went right to the studs," he says, "so we had to re-sheath the whole house before we could go any further."

A Hardworking Crew

Window & Door Outlet removed the rest of the clapboard and put up new plywood sheathing. Next, the Salernos installed the home's new windows themselves, and the Window & Door Outlet crew put up house-wrap and began installing the 28 squares of Monogram 46L siding, which was insulated with drop-in foam backing. The crew used scaffolding to reach the higher points and peaks, where they installed Cedar Impressions polymer shakes.

The crew next tackled the trim, installing CertainTeed® Vinyl Carpentry™ wide lineals around the windows, Vinyl Carpentry™ Traditional SuperCorners™ along the corners of the exterior and Vinyl Carpentry™ InvisiVent® triple 3 1/8-inch soffit under all overhangs. The job was complete in just five days, Raymond says.

With new siding and trim in place, Salerno next focused on dismantling and rebuilding the entire front porch to create a mix of the porch's original design and some of his own modern touches. He expected to have the project complete by the end of August.

The Salernos now say they are happy with the work done by Window & Door Outlet.

"We have a neighbor who has lived in this neighborhood for 50 years, and she was ecstatic and excited about how the house turned out," he says. "She said we brought back the original beauty of the home. There's a certain sense of accomplishment when you're able to restore a historic home." 🏠

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