

HardiePlank® Exterior Adds Elegance to Seattle Apartment Building Makeover

The century-old apartment building is located in the city's Central District, two blocks from Seattle University. The property was originally two separate structures that were joined together in the 1920's. The exterior consisted of cedar shiplap and had no insulation, according to Rob Walker of Seattle-based Above & Beyond Remodeling. Early in the renovation, he and the building's owner, Al Triplett discovered that the upper floor had no sheathing underneath the lap siding, either.

"When the wind blew, it would go right through the house," Walker says.

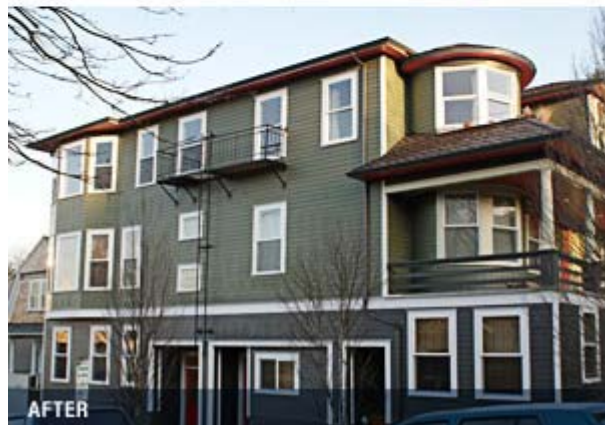
Triplett opted to undertake an even more significant remodel of the structure, stripping it down to the studs on the exterior. Insulation was added to the walls, and new sheathing was applied to the entire building. Approximately 80 energy-efficient windows were also installed.

The Obvious Choice Over Cedar

For the new cladding, the project's architect, Skip Satterwhite, AIA, principal of Seattle's Triangle Works, initially considered using cedar lap siding. However, owner Triplett felt that the finger joints found on most modern-day cedar siding could not survive Seattle's unforgiving climate. Satterwhite did locate product in Canada that was manufactured without finger joints, but it was "exorbitantly expensive, even if you could find it."

Triplett, meanwhile, visited a friend's home north of Seattle, which had a HardiePlank® siding exterior. "I was marveling one day at how nice the house was," he says. "It was 10 or 12 years old, and the thing looked brand new."

He and the architect subsequently scouted additional Hardie homes around Seattle, and the material "became the obvious choice."





HardiePlank siding has a track record of having been a reliable product, architect Satterwhite says. The product meets his criteria for being easily handled and cut in the field, and offers superior dimensional stability.

Pre-painted and Primed

The upper part of the building uses HardiePlank siding with factory applied ColorPlus® Technology. The lower portion of the property consists of primed HardiePlank, which was painted using a complementary color suggested by a local color consultant.

Walker, of Above & Beyond Remodeling, says the project was the second time he's used the pre-painted ColorPlus. "It's phenomenal," he reports, adding that the product line has some really good color choices available. "The Mountain Sage Green that we used is just beautiful. And the color match caulk makes it a great system." Despite the slightly higher cost for the ColorPlus product, Walker says it provides a paint job "that's going to last a lot longer."



The building's owner says the overhaul has been an unequivocal success, despite the surprises along the way and the additional three months it took to correct all the building's shortcomings. Triplett is glad he made the choice to use fiber cement. Hardie "was great to work with," he says, and the painter loved it for its ability to hold a coat of paint.

Triplett praised James Hardie for having good information available to help make the installation go smoothly. "If we needed info, they had it," he says, like which brand of paint works best for abutting plastic trim pieces.

LOCATION
Seattle, WA

PROJECT
Apartment Building

Both tenants and neighbors are thrilled with the building's makeover. "People were so happy we didn't tear it down," Triplett says, "and they're so happy that we maintained the integrity of the original building. It looks a magnitude nicer than it did."