

Synthetics in Cambridge Historic Districts

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Cambridge Historical Commission

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5-7 Clinton Street. Photo 2017.

The Cambridge Historical Commission routinely allows synthetic replacements for:

- fences
- trim details that are in ground contact (like porch skirt boards and step risers)
- wooden elements exposed to the weather (like rooftop balustrades or unprotected steps or deck railings).

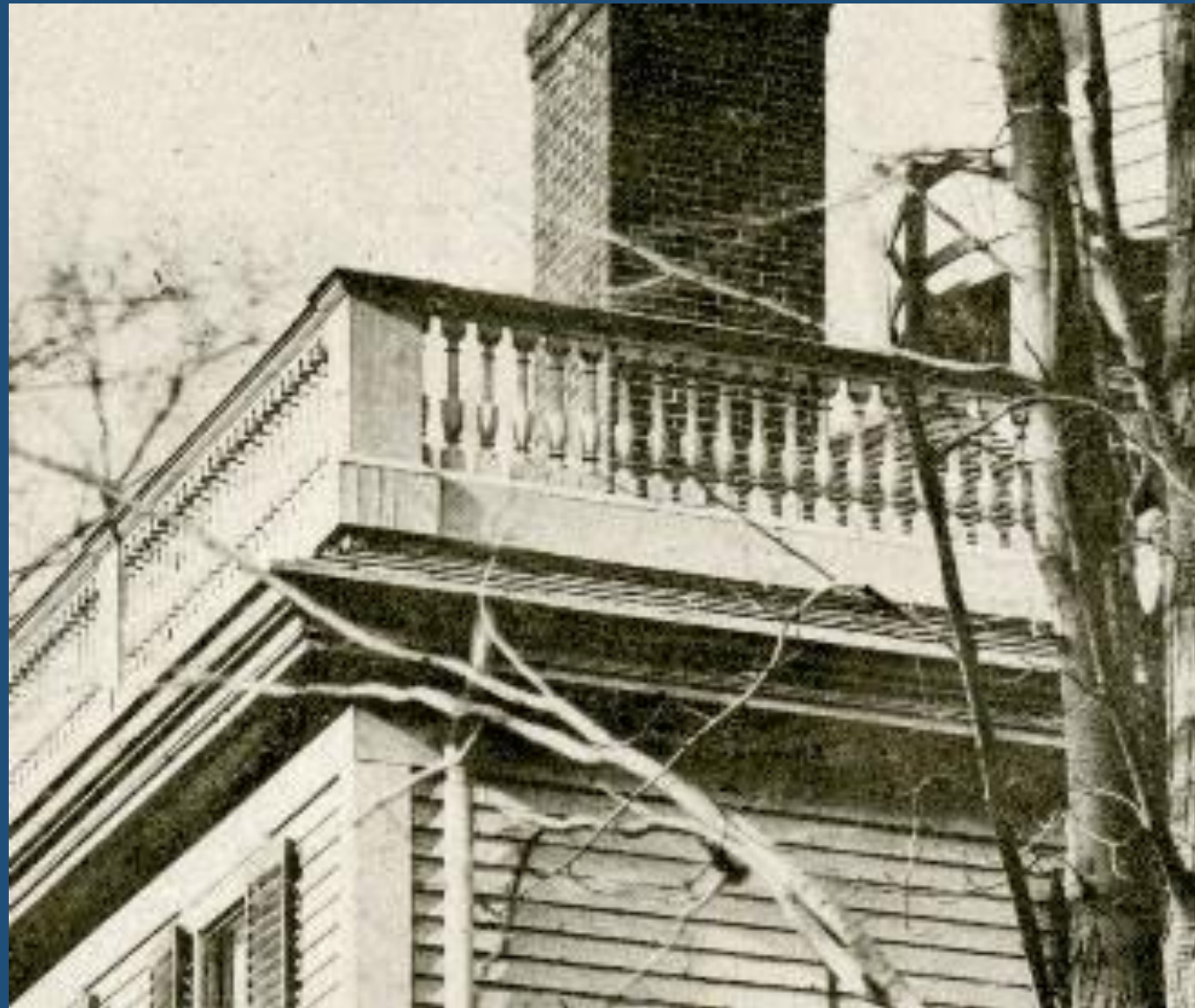
The Commission also allows wood gutters to be replaced with copper or fiberglass as long as the profile matches the original or existing profile.



Dana Palmer House, Harvard University (1823; moved 1947). Photo 2017.
National Register of Historic Places, CHC-HU protocol



Dana Palmer balustrade in 2006.



Dana Palmer House balustrade in 1874.



Reproduction high-density polyurethane balustrade, 2006
<http://www.architectural-elements.com/reproduction-balustrade.html>



174 Brattle Street, Old Cambridge Historic District



394' of wood fence installed with a Certificate of Appropriateness in 2003.
Photo 2015.



174 Brattle Street. Photo 2015.



174 Brattle Street. Wood fence and gate installed 2003. Photo 2015.



174 Brattle Street. PVC fence and gate installed 2015. Photo 2017.



28 Fayerweather Street (1882, Sturgis & Brigham, architects). Cambridge Landmark.
350' fence reproduced from historic photographs.



28 Fayerweather Street



8 Follen Street (1872) with replica wood fence (ca. 1991), May 2018



8 Follen Street (1872) with replica wood fence (ca. 1991), May 2018



8 Follen Street, Old Cambridge Historic District
Replica PVC fence under construction, August 2018



8 Follen Street, details of post and top rail PVC construction
Contractor: Perfection Fence, Marshfield, Mass.

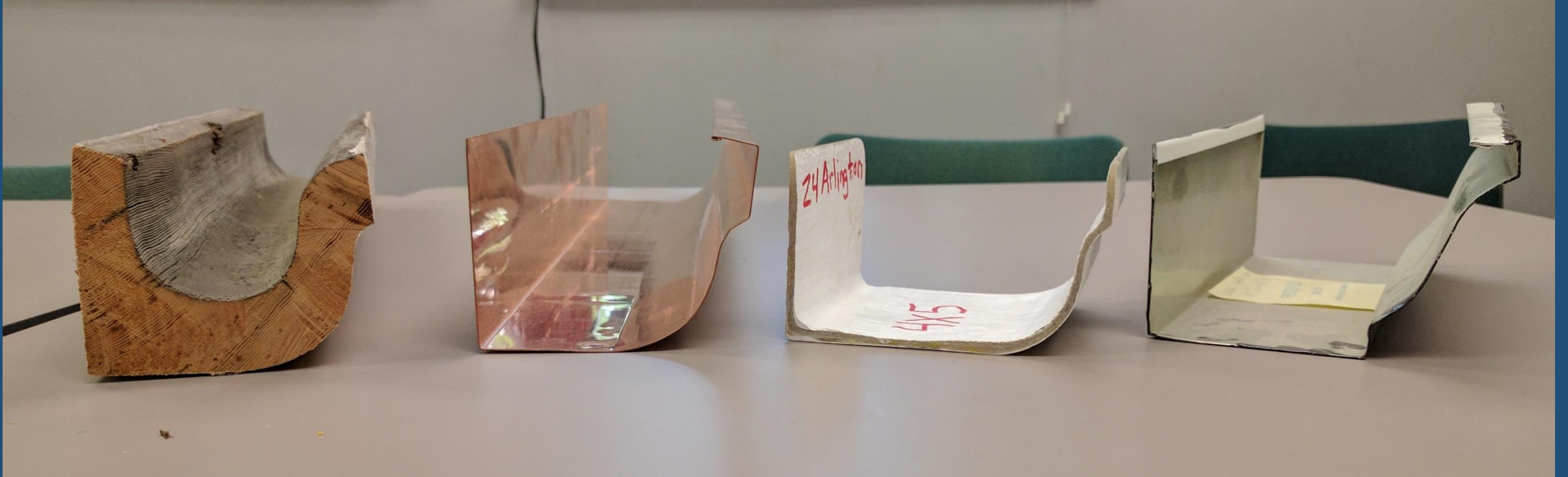


Duxbury, Mass.
Porch reconstruction with PVC
railings and trim, 2012.



Duxbury, Mass. Deck and railing built with wood in 2010, partially replaced with PVC 2015. Photo 2016.

Gutters



Wood, copper, fiberglass, and aluminum gutter sections



13 Lancaster Street (1885). Avon Hill Neighborhood Conservation District.
Slate roof, K-Style gutters and bare fascia. Photo 2016.



Asphalt shingles with custom-made curved fiberglass gutter, 2016. Photo 2017.

Synthetics Gone Wrong



Masonite clapboards, 10 Salem Street (ca. 1971)



Old Cambridge Historic District
New construction 2005: Hardiplank clapboards with wood trim and gutters.
Photo 2016.



2005: new construction
2009: repair soffits
2012: replace wood gutters
2013: replace trim, gutters
2016: replace Hardiplank in kind,
wood trim with Azek, line gutters
with copper

Photo 2016



Will it last?

Veritas Hotel, 1131 Massachusetts Avenue
(2008, Boyes-Watson Architects)

New construction; all-PVC exterior