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YOUR OLD HOUSE

PAINT AND MAINTAIN TO CONSERVE HISTORIC CHARACTER LECTURE FINDING AID & TRANSCRIPT

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Video Description

From 2010 Press Release: The Cape Ann Museum presents Your Old House: Paint and Maintain to Conserve Historic Character with Sally Zimmerman, Manager of Historic Preservation Services, Historic New England on Thursday May 6 at 7:00 p.m.

27 Pleasant Street, Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930 USA

+1 978-283-0455

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All houses, from the simplest to the most elegant, have distinctive stylistic features that give them their historic character. Learn how to conserve the character of any home by working with its architectural features and using paint color to enhance its design. Homes built yesterday or a hundred and fifty years ago all share some standard of architectural elements: windows with operable sashes, doors, a sheathing material, and an overlay of woodwork or trim. Maintaining this basic architectural vocabulary gives the home visual distinction and character and helps it retain both historic and real estate value. Applying period paint colors in traditional three-color paint schemes provides an essential organizational structure to the design and construction of the home, regardless of its architectural style. Bring a photo of your house and receive tips on working with its architecture to conserve historic character and bring out its best features. This program is free and open to the public. Reservations are required. For reservations please call 978-283-0455, x11.

Sally Zimmerman, formerly Preservation Planner at the Cambridge Historical Commission, joined Historic New England in 2006 as a member of the Historic Preservation Team. She is co-author of *Painting Historic Exteriors: Colors, Application, and Regulation*. Sally manages Historic New England's Historic Homeowner membership program; for more information, see www.HistoricHomeowner.org.

Funding for this program was made possible through a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which promotes excellence, access, education and diversity in the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences, in order to improve the quality of life for all Massachusetts residents and to contribute to the economic vitality of our communities.

Subject List

Alexandre Lenoir, French archeologist d. 1839

Styles: First Period; Georgian; Colonial Revival; Federal; Greek Revival; Italianate; Second Empire/Mansard; Queen Anne; Stick; Shingle.

Historic Houses:

Swett-Ilsley House c. 1670, 1720, 1756 Newbury, MA

Arah Phelps Inn 1787 Colebrook, CT

White-Ellery House 1710 Gloucester, MA1728

Ross Tavern, c. 1734 Ipswich, MA

Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters aka Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House, Cambridge, MA

Frary House 1750 Historic Deerfield, MA

Barrett House 1808 New Ipswich, NH

Phillips House 1806 Salem, MA

Cogswell's Grant, 1728 Essex, MA

Lyman Estate "The Vale" 1793 Waltham, MA

References Cited:

Preserving Your Old House by Morgan Phillips, 1975

Antique Houses of Gloucester: The Families Who Build Them, The Mayor Who Moved Them and the Changing Face of the Harbor Village by Prudence Paine Fish, 2007

Historic New England magazine

This Old House magazine

Energy conservation www.preservationnation.org/issues/weatherization

Renovating Old Houses: Bringing New Life to Vintage Homes (For Pros by Pros) by George Nash

Transcript

Courtney Richardson:

I'm Courtney Richardson, Director of Education and Public Programs. I want to welcome you to the Cape Ann Museum for one of our special historic preservation month programs. Later this month we'll be hosting the Gloucester Historical Commission awards on May 22 at 2 pm and on May 27, at 7 pm, we will host "Preserving Gloucester", a special panel presentation to update the community about ongoing preservation projects at the Cape Ann Museum's White-Ellery house, the Sawyer Free Library's Saunders house, Historic New England's Beauport, Gloucester City Hall, the schooner *Adventure* and the Sargent house museum. There will be open houses at all of those places the following Saturday, May 29 from 10 am to 1 pm.

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Tonight we have Historic New England's Sally Zimmerman with us presenting a lecture entitled "Your Old House: Paint and Maintain to Conserve Historic Character", a topic very fitting for this community where we are lucky to be surrounded by, and for some of us to own, historic homes. Sally, formally preservation planner at the Cambridge Historical Commission, joined Historic New England in 2006. As a member of the historic preservation team, she is co-author of "Painting Historic Exteriors: Colors, Application and Regulation". Today she manages Historic New England's historical homeowner membership program. Please join me in welcoming Sally Zimmerman.

Sally Zimmerman 1:46

Well, thank you very much for asking me here tonight. Taking care of old houses is something that we all know is a lot of work, but it's also a lot of fun, and in particular, I like the painting part of them. So I'll do a little bit about that as well in the second half of the program. I did mention that we have the red "Preserving Your Own House" book. And you're all certainly welcome to take that. And there's some brochures and information I think probably with Pilar here amongst you, most of you have some sense of Historic England so I won't dwell on that. (Works out technical issues with remote.)

I run the historic homeowner program, which is a membership program that helps people and you'll see a little bit more about that in a minute. It provides technical support and advice for questions on old houses. So here, as you see up on the screen, and here in my hand, is the centennial issue of Historic *New England Magazine*, which kind of summarizes on its cover the things that we've been up to for the last hundred years. And then of course, you all recognize Beauport in the background. So Historic New England likes to tell us that we are the oldest, largest and most comprehensive regional preservation organization in the country. And that fan light on the cover expresses the several different areas in which we operate. There's the children at the Pierce house in Dorchester who are part of our education program, Bowen house in Woodstock, Connecticut, representing our historic house museums. People climbing up on that crazy chimney, which I think is Beauport's chimney who represent our property care team are great experts in taking care of old houses, our collections, and our Library and Archives. And I'm not quite sure where the preservation piece of it is. Maybe we're the glue at the bottom and that little piece of wallpaper at the, at the bottom, but I think we're all kind of folded into property care and and taking care of old houses for sure.

So Historic New England is 100 years old this year, and we're having lots of chances to celebrate. Next slide. We started, we've been developing over those past 100 years, we've gotten pretty good at preservation. And our preservation expertise really began at the Swett-Illsley house, which is in Newbury on the right hand side there, the first historic house museum that Historic New England, then SPNEA, owned. I've taken that hundred years or more beginnings of expertise in historic preservation and begin to apply them, wanting to apply them, in more external ways. And one of the first ways we did that was through our stewardship program and the building on the left hand side was the Phelps house in, in

Connecticut, a 1787 building, which was the first building in our preservation easement program back in 1981. Next slide. What we've wanted to do since then, in the easement program, we work directly with property owners, owners of important historic buildings to protect the interior and the exterior of the houses without putting them in museum ownership. And as our technical awareness and expertise of our own museum curation of our buildings has grown, we've also been more involved with regular private property owners through the stewardship program. And when I came on in 2006 to start the historic homeowner program, the idea was to take that one step further and to not just contain all of our expertise or information within the houses that we own, but to share that more broadly.

And here are two examples of some properties that are in the historic homeowner program where we give best practices advice on taking care of houses and you can see in the house on the right hand side there are some sort of unfortunate windows, it's a little 1938 house not anything one might think of as particularly historic, I think if you push, the it should let them animate in. And there it is with is the right windows put back into it. So even a simple house which you know, doesn't have much quote unquote, historic character, can, can lose that and regain it by having the right kind of window put in. And on the left hand side is a house in Brookline, which is a nice Queen Anne house but not painted very nicely. And if you don't want to come in and there's the kind of thing that can happen when the paint color gets right on the house. So, next slide. These are the things that we do in the historic homeowner program. I provide online consultations for historically appropriate paint colors and help people with design proposals. And then just provide basic technical assistance through the year as well as information on specialty contractors and you know, other kind of nice benefits like the little book. Next slide.

Now to get to the main information that I want to cover tonight, what I really want to leave you with and I may be talking to the choir, but, but maybe some of you have a house that looks like the house at the top, that little drawing of the 1950s Cape, I want everyone to come away from this talk, thinking about the ways in which their own house is historic, even if they don't think of it as capital H historic to begin with. So, you know, I often hear about this historic homeowner program, my house isn't historic. But in fact, you know, your house is historic, even if it was built after 1900 and I think in New England, we tend to be a little narrow in our definition of what could qualify, even for houses of the 20th century. And even houses that have been seriously altered, like the one in the middle actually have a lot of character that can be brought back. And even terrible rundown houses have a lot to offer and can be brought back as well. And that's what we're really trying to do, is to help people get even things that are, maybe appear to be on their last legs, back on their feet. Next slide.

8:36

Because really, the historic character of any old house is something that can be, is present in the fabric of that house and something that we need to respect and appreciate in terms of its design and its fabric. And this is a, an example from a book that I have here if you want to look at it afterwards, a good little guidebook from the Cambridge Historical Commission, where I

used to work, on taking care of old houses. Next slide. And the truth is that it doesn't matter whether the house is very simple, or a more elaborate house. These are two Italianate houses in, in Cambridge, in very, was originally built by very different people, but nonetheless with intrinsic qualities that can be brought out by appropriate appreciation of their fabric, and, and and with the use of paint. And I think that we know that, that in a community where historic character is appreciated and conserved, appearance and value are something that is enhanced. Next slide.

Now, the thing to remember, I think, underlying this as a kind of bedrock philosophy of preservation. A French archaeologist in 1839 said it very succinctly. He said, "It's better to preserve than repair, it's better to repair than to restore, it's better to restore than to reconstruct." And the reason, when you get back down to that 'better to preserve than repair', we really want to maintain integrity in the building, we want to maintain the integrity of its fabric, and that's really critical to maintaining historic character. integrity of style. Next slide.

The next piece of that is that paint does a lot to help convey the character of a building to the average person. And historically appropriate paint color really does help organize the, the distinctive pieces of the building's design from the period in which it was constructed. Next slide. Integrity of. is something we think about integrity and people we usually think of people who are honest and authentic and that holds true for buildings as well. So the one definition says that 'integrity is the state of being whole or entire or undiminished'. And in buildings, that translates into a retention of the proportions, textures and details of house. This is a little 18th century Cape that was substantially reworked in the 19th century in the Queen Anne style on the North Shore. It's part of the, the stewardship program that we have. So you can see in the little details that have been added to that building, that it has a great deal of a small space and packed in a lot of interesting detailing and its proportions are quite charming, I think. Next slide.

11:27

When we look at how integrity of proportion and texture are to be maintained, we're really looking at proportion and what can happen to a house, where it can get off track. Proportion is one area where things can get off track pretty quickly. And particularly when things like dormers are being put onto a house or additions are being made to it, the, the way in which that's done and, and the maintenance of some sense of the original integrity of the proportion of the house, the height, the width, the volume of the existing elements on the building, really come into, into play in maintaining integrity of proportion. And in integrity of texture, we're looking primarily at the materials that are on the house, the siding and the windows. This is some very ancient siding. I think it's actually in Maine. But the materials have an inherent physical and visual quality and texture of their own that can easily be lost when things like siding are replaced and windows are replaced. We're looking at trying to maintain those physical and visual characteristics. Next slide.

So, one of the main things that we hear from preservation people all the time is to keep the old windows and there are lots of reasons to do that these days and, but one of the ones that really

adds to the character building is in terms of proportion and textures, just the size of the window and the way that it plays off of the, the proportion of the openings and solids and voids in the, in the facade of the building. But the reason that we want people to do that these days, to keep the old windows, is really an energy-related window or reason, which is that old windows are really a better quality product than anything that anyone can get now. And when people, I think there's a sort of knee jerk reaction, that somehow the windows are not working properly, they're difficult to use, you can't raise and lower them properly, it's it's time to get new windows. But in fact, as it says there, a single glazed wood window with a good quality storm window is just as energy efficient. But more than that, the repair is really cost effective. We've just gone through this with some homeowner members and for the same price as a vinyl replacement window, they were able to get new storm windows and rehab their existing windows so, and that's not a very good quality vinyl replacement window, so for about \$200 to \$400 basically, less than \$400, you can get a wooden window repaired.

We all are also quite aware that the wood these days that's used is farmed wood, that is not, it's very soft, it has a very poor ratio of hardwood and softwood and so old windows that are made of old growth wood are basically an intrinsically superior material. And the window system in an old building is sustainable. Polarno knows this, I think because we're working on 220 windows at Beauport, which have taken quite a beating over the last hundred years and are being lovingly restored as we speak. And whereas a replacement window is probably going to last, at most, maybe 20 years before you remove the whole thing, the replacement window is a system, it's interlocking, and it's entirely dependent within itself on everything staying in the same order. When anything goes out of order, in a replacement window, you take the whole thing out and toss it. And whereas in a wood window that's an historic wood window, all the pieces are replaceable, individually. So its life is basically infinite. Next slide.

Integrity of detail is something I think we tend to, it tends to get lost on old houses fairly easily because it's usually fairly delicate, because it's found in the trim elements. And you can see some of this small scale detail on the house from, in the stewardship program, where there are, you know, some lovely dormers, that big dormer at the top and that wonderful little tiny tiny balustrade over the porch. It's, it's a, as well as the pattern of the, of those elaborate Queen Anne multi-pane windows, which really add, especially on this little tiny house, that sort of overwhelming kind of detail and delicacy. Next slide. If you're lucky, you might have a historic photograph of your house or it might show up in an Edward Hopper painting. I know there's some people last year who are lucky enough to have had their houses show up that way. That's a pretty nice thing to have. But most of the time, it will be in historic photographs. And sometimes that's something that can be gotten from earlier homeowners or whatever. But particularly things like little balustrades on the top of porch roofs are very fragile and tend to have been lost. And when those are not there, then something really distinctive is, is missing. And it's great to have it put back. Next slide.

16:31

I think one of the great revelations and one of the more difficult decisions an owner might have to make is whether to take the plunge and actually take siding off of your house. I know people sometimes worry that if they take the siding off that somehow the house is going to be totally naked underneath there. But it's not. And it's a very rewarding thing to do. This is a house in Albany and on the right hand side is a view of the house in the 1940s from a, from some family members who had a shot of the house in a big snowstorm and then you see how the siding was removed and what the end result was. Underneath the siding will be the original clapboards, and usually, they're about, usually only maybe 20% to 30% that need to be replaced. So it's usually not a big deal to take off the siding. Sometimes you can even get salvaged, you know, the metal if it's aluminum, that has a as a salvage value. So that's kind of an unusual thing to think you could turn your siding in like a like a recycled can. Next slide.

When siding comes off, there's always evidence on the house. And when we're talking about integrity and integrity of detail and materials, that's what you want to use for your guide. It's really I don't know how many of you subscribe to a magazine, like *"This Old House"* or something like that. Or watch the "Curb Appeal" movies or TV shows on cable. But I think the temptation is we want to do something with our houses to make them more, or different, or there's actually quite a human tendency, I think, to not really love the house we have. I don't know whether that's something that we have, you know, all have to overcome. But oftentimes people end up with a house that's not quite what they had hoped for. And they go about trying to sort of force it into being the house they wish it was. They've got a Queen Anne, they want a Greek Revival. They got a Greek Revival, they want a Queen Anne. But indeed, really, the thing that you need to do is to let the house tell you what it is and what it, what it was.

And in fact, when siding comes off, there's always a mark of the evidence of how that was put onto the house originally, and it just takes a careful, close look. Some people go as far as seeing where the nail holes are so that they can see exactly where shingles were, how shingles were patterned, and things like that. It's pretty archaeological. But most of the time, it's pretty straightforward. And you can see in the cut marks on the clapboards or whatever, that there was something there that's missing. And I show the illustrations on the bottom at the bottom there, the little photograph of Dorchester, and the picture of the foundation next to that, to say, I think if you notice in the Dorchester case, there's a little porch here that doesn't have any roof over it. And this is, you'll see it, there is a part of the porch that's roofed and it has a little gable over it right where the door is. But it was it was not uncommon for people to have porches that extended out with these elements that didn't, didn't get protected with a roof and frequently those are completely gone. They rot away, they, they're missing. And when that has happened on your house, the way you can tell is you'll start to see things like elements of the foundation appearing that were not supposed to be exposed appearing on the front of the house. So if you've got a section of house, that's rubble in the front, and it doesn't, and you've got, you know, nice brick or nice granite, in your case, probably, coming up to it, and then there's just sort of rubble stone next to it, you probably have something that used to be there and it's gone, like a porch like this. So that's kind of a little clue for looking for whether you might have had a more extensive porch at one time in the life of your house. Next slide.

The other thing I think people worry about is that somehow replacing missing trim elements on the house is going to be a matter of finding all custom woodwork and then you won't be able to get anything you know, in the regular store. Well, you can. Here are a lot of very typical moldings that come from the Brosco catalog. Brosco is Brockway Smith, it's a big lumberyard. You can go in any lumberyard and find Brosco moldings and many of those are perfectly suitable to be used as band moldings on the house, to replace trim that has been removed around windows or in other places. Or else it's very easy, things like Greek Revival houses, to replicate what was very simple trim that was used in the beginning. This is just a simple detail that shows up in that "Maintaining Your Old House" in Cambridge book, on how to replicate a corner capital for a pilaster on a Greek Revival house. I think it is true that that turned trim on a house on a porch or something like that that needs to be replaced, it tends to need to be custom work but a lot of flat work and a lot of moldings are still out there. Next slide.

So what we're looking for in trying to keep this house authentic and to, to respect it and to understand how it got to be where it is now is to, is to retain the proportions, the textures and the details. The integrity of proportion, as I say, comes out of retaining the windows in their original proportions, dormers in a proportion which is consistent with the volumes in the house, watching out for additions and looking at the way that height, width and volume come together within those elements. Texture comes out of retaining siding and windows or else replacing them with materials that are, that are the same or similar. And then detail comes from understanding what was on the house and putting that back. Next slide.

22:29

So that brings me to paint color. Paint is really, how many people have had to paint their house recently? Did you, a lot of people just, did you just do white? (No, oh no.) I'm glad to hear that because that's kind of the default that if you can't think of anything else to do then you can paint it white. And a lot of people assume that paint color choices are really just what you like. If you like blue, so you'll paint your house blue. Whatever. It's, it's really though actually much more than just a matter of personal taste. When we look at the history of how paint colors were used in, on buildings, and how they were presented to the public, it's very clear that paint color choices relate very strongly to the architectural style of the house and, and to the available colors that were technologically possible at the time the house was, was constructed. And that question of authenticity and integrity in paint color comes down to looking at the kinds of colors that that were available and fitting those colors onto the house based on the style and the period of its construction. Next slide.

One of the things that's happened, you'll see this, these fellows on the, on the left hand side are quite elaborately dressed and have fancy hats and they all are doing special things with their individual brushes. House painting is now, used to be, something more akin to what plumbing and, and being an electrician is, is now. It was a, it was a craft, it was something that you had to really learn. You had to know a lot of basic chemistry. You had to be able to put paints together on site, from their raw ingredients, because paint was not a manufactured product. And even

up into the 1920s I think most painters and even some old time painters now have that kind of expertise, but paint is sort of like your computer. When I first started using my computer, I had to use DOS and I had to know how to use, you know, do the backslash and brackets and things and all of that is now hidden. In paint, it's the same thing. All the technical stuff that, that people used to have to be aware of, has basically been put underneath the, and so that the, so that the the paint itself is not a, is a product that an amateur can use and anyone can, can handle without any terrible repercussions.

So what that means, though, is that we've kind of lost the understanding of how paint was used. We've sort of come, gone adrift on, on the uses of color and the ways in which paint color can inform architectural style. Next slide. In the chronology of paint color here are two houses, one from about 1840 and the other one probably 1910, that represent the two big phases of paint color history. In the time before 1850, really, paint was available only in a very limited range of colors. It was made from materials that were derived from earth pigments, and so there were not many choices. Many houses were not painted and they were left to weather on their own. The paint was, was mixed on the site. The paint was the product of the painter. And it made it a very irregular and unpredictable product.

After 1850 after or so, the range of colors increases because there's a lot of technical development in the, in the field of pigments and there are a lot of other innovations that come through. Like transportation, we have a national railroad that can take paint across the country. We have, we start to have a paint can, a tin can that can hold the paint and make it, have it so it's shipped and fresh on the site. And the, the way that paint is used on houses follows the kind of elaboration that happens in the, in the architectural field as well so that as the houses are more complicated the wood work that's available is more complicated because of the availability of machined woodwork, the paint colors also, and the complexity and the problem of how you paint and where it goes, gets a little more difficult as well. Next slide.

27:17

The other, the thing that's really been lost in this transition from sort of an artisan craft to, to everybody can do it is that now nobody knows how to do it. I think that tends to be a kind of problem that can happen when, when it's possible to do it, no matter, then there really are no experts left anymore. So one of the things that's gotten lost is the understanding of how the placement of the paint on the architectural features informs the design and helps to organize and make sense of the architectural detailing on the building. So one easy way to think of this, is what I mean and it really is tricky because no matter how many times you tell someone this, when you go to actually put the paint or the painter goes to put the paintbrush on the house, all of a sudden, you're sort of struck with this, uh-oh, I don't know how far to go with that color. Or what do I do with this piece that's over here. So this is what you have to always keep telling yourself over and over again, as you stand in front of your house, or the painter, or if the painter stands next to you asking where he wants you, where you want him to put what colors.

The body of the house gets painted in one color, and that's either clapboard or shingle, and if it's anything else, it's trim. And that means mostly that people find out that they have a lot more trim on their houses than they thought they did. So sometimes that means you choose a color you really like for the trim so that because you'll have a lot more of it than you had anticipated. And so all the woodwork that's not clapboards gets painted in the trim color. So that's one color. There's always a three-color paint scheme at the very least, body color, the trim color. And then the third color is the sash color, which is usually, can be a different color, a third color completely; it can actually match the trim. So if you just tell yourself if it's covered or shingle I paint it body color; if it's anything else I paint it the trim color unless I walk on it like porch decking or steps or it moves like a window, a door, window sash, a door or shutters and that's kind of the mantra and you can see it there, in the, in the illustration from the 19th century of a nice little house painted with one body color, one trim color and another color on the, on the window sashes which is also kind of the accent color and that's in the house on that on the right hand side as well. Next slide.

29:45

So, but this changes over time. This is not a constant. How do we, how do we know how, how paint was used and obviously you all know the White-Ellery house, which looks fabulous these days, is really coming along. Next to it is the Ross Tavern, which was a reconstructed house, first period house from the 1940s. And on the Ross Tavern were located original paint colors in this Indian red. Not on the whole house; you see it kind of weathered black the way that unpainted clapboards would have been and with only what is trim painted in the Indian red color. It's a house that didn't have that shape, it's a, because it was two houses put together. It's a much more elaborate version of a first period house than a real first period house would be. But White-Ellery shows that as well, with the Indian red color on the trim there and, and that wonderful parched cornice at the top. So it's a good illustration for just, you know, looking at what's body and what's trim because there's a lot of trim that's painted red and nothing else is. We don't all have first period houses, but that and we most of us have to have to paint the clapboards but ideally, that was what the intent was, to show that to pick out that trim and to highlight it. Actually Beauport I think reminds me of first period houses in that regard a lot. But as we all know, styles change and the pendulum of what people find attractive moves back and forth. The next slide.

In the Georgian period, we don't obviously have photographs and we don't have actually many visual, much visual documentation, pictorial documentation. But on the right hand side, you see a painting from a fireplace over mantel from a house in Connecticut that shows a Georgian house painted the way that it would have been and on the left the famous Longfellow house, which is the national historic landmark in Cambridge, both of which have a very characteristic Georgian paint scheme on them. Where there's a very, we now know from paint analysis and from, and from the investigations of various museum properties that the colors that were used on Georgian houses were really quite deep and, and saturated. So these deeper grays and a strong contrast on the trim's quite typical. You see that the windows are painted; the window sashes are painted white. And in, when the sash window came, came along early in the 18th

century, it had to be painted. It was, the glass was puttied in, it wasn't a leaded window, and so you had to protect the glazing and the putty by painting over it. So there are actually some examples I think at Historic Deerfield where the clapboards are not painted but all the trim is painted white. It's just like that first, that first period house. The trim is painted white, and the window sashes are painted white. The Frary house I believe in Deerfield has that that combination. But strong contrasts of body and trim with these deep ochre colors, dark grays, tan and usually the, the window sashes are painted in that, in that bright linseed oil white lead paint.

The, in contrast to the Georgian style, which is quite heavy and robust, the Federal style is a much lighter and more delicate architectural statement and that correspond to the paint colors as well. So the Barrett house there, 1808, on the left hand side, in New Ipswich, New Hampshire is a classic Federal style house, that very easy transition to, to smaller, shorter windows at the top, that nice, light, vertical sense of the house kind of diminishing as it gets taller and painted all in a very light classical monochrome scheme, with dark green on the, on the shutters and also in the balustrade at the top. And then the Philips house on the, on the right hand side, also a light gray with a light colored trim. And almost in many cases either monochrome or very low contrast with the whiter paints, light grays and light tans or else all white.

Then, with the Greek Revival, there's a little bit more again, we're looking at a different source of architecture. It's a more robust style and kind of goes back and forth like this for a while, but they're not all white. They were oftentimes painted in these soft sort of ochres, and, and tans, grays. But I think you see how the use of the trim color is really an important element in framing these architectural elements and organizing the, the way that the windows, the entrances, the trim, the pediment is, is detailed and called, called out on the house by the use of the color. Next slide. And the same holds true for houses in the Italianate style. Again, we're all, these are all pre-1850 style so that the buildings, so that the paint that's available is really very limited in its, in its, in the palette. The palette is not something that has a lot of variation or very deep colors. It's not possible to get these very deep saturated colors, and certainly not an even one, when you're when you're making the paint on-site. So frequently, houses in the Italianate style are painted also fairly monochromatically with a low contrast. Next slide.

35:58

And this shows what begins to happen after the 1850s when, with the Victorian stuff, you get a much more varied and deeper palette and a much more complex architecture. Next slide. Even more complex with the Queen Anne style, and the one, one of the variables that is, is kind of constant through the 19th century is the use of a dark color on the window sashes as a way of sort of aesthetically drawing your eye into and denoting the location where the transition from the interior and the exterior take place. Next slide. And finally, with a Colonial Revival, where in the early days and of our investigations on paint color, we were looking at examples of colonial houses that where the paint was quite faded and not and so this led people to believe that in the 18th century, the colors were relatively light and so they replicated those in houses like these that are shown here. Again, elements of the 19th century, the light or dark sash

sometimes, in the Colonial Revival the sash is painted to match the trim color but many times, especially with these more sort of transitional Queen Anne and Colonial Revival houses with a dark, with a dark sash. Next slide.

So, I want to let you know we have a new lineup in colors that I've just been working on for the 20th century, which joins the palette that Historic New England has had for many years of 18th century and 19th century colors that are taken from Historic New England's properties and we've been able to pull together colors from Beauport and from the Gropius house, and from the Cogswell's Grant property in Essex, all of which were either restored or painted or built in the 20th century. And then augmented those with examples from our wallpaper collection to see what we might have for colors for the 20th century, which are also pretty wonderful. And that's something that we've developed and California Paint has just launched in the last month or so. I have a card, both of those cards here with me.

In terms of painting the houses -- next slide -- you really want to sample before you, before you go into the decision about what colors to use. And this is the best way to do it is on house. If you're a brave person, you can hold up and your, your color choices to your neighbors and see how they respond. And if you're not a brave person, you can put them on a little card and carry them around and, and bring them right back inside as soon as you've looked at them and not have to worry about anyone saying I hate that color or I love that color. But indeed, you do want to know what it's going to look like on the house before you, before you decide. And here is a particularly elaborate Stick-style house with all of this. Now, who's gonna, who's gonna tell me what's the clapboard, what's the trim and what's the body color? (Clapboard and shingles.) Yes, clapboard and the shingles are the, are the body so there's a lot of stuff on there that's not clapboard or shingle right. There, there is this sort of barn door looking piece with the cross, cross braces, and then all of this and then there's a piece of trim right here and there's another piece of trim right here and there's more up here and even around this section of the wall.

So all of that, you can, when this, when some, Stick-styles are a hard thing for people to get their, two of the ones that are tricky for people are the Stick-style and the Shingle-style houses because the Stick-style houses have a lot of trim and you start looking at it, and you say, it's gonna look really crazy, it's not gonna look good if I pick all that out and I paint all that trim. I'm gonna have a nutty looking house. But no, no you won't. It was, was meant to be there and when it when it gets the right colors on it and it's all painted and organized properly, it really does look much better. And the problem with Shingle-style houses is nobody likes dark brown. Everybody thinks dark brown is horrible these days. So nobody wants to take the plunge and really do a dark brown house. Everyone wants their house lighter. And that actually is a problem for a lot of houses because very light colors on very large houses do not do them any favors. I think maybe if you think about, about Beauport, Beauport's a big house, and it's got a lot of color on it. And it's very grounded. It's very oriented to its site. It's very cemented into its site. That's partly an architectural decision, but it's also a color decision. So try to fight your modern light, trend color taste and, and let your house appear in the colors that it was, that it was probably intended to have, when you look at how old it is and what might have been

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available, or you call us up and ask, what should I pay my house. If I can help you and I will help you tonight if you have questions about your own house.

The next, the last thing I want to talk about tonight is really, just very briefly -- next slide. Why you should be looking at energy issues in your house. I want to really urge everybody to take the energy consumption in their, in their old house seriously but to do it again with the idea of what is authentic and what has integrity. How do I how do I approach retrofitting my old house with energy interventions that won't harm it? We, I think that that, you know, it's a it's a, it's something that we are not going to find a lot of information about if you if you look at regular websites. You'll find information about new houses, and you'll find lots of good advice to, you know, do all this stuff, put insulation in your walls, blown-in insulation and change your windows and all of that. But let's remember that the point of conserving the character of a building is to indeed work with the materials, the proportion, the texture, the integrity of the, of the design, and particularly with the materials and insulation, there are really some questions to watch out for with old houses. We use about 48% of our, about 48% of our greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings and from their operation. So it's an important, it's an important problem to solve. But we don't have to break the back of all of our old houses by making them the only way in which we address energy use. Next slide.

43:33

Here are some little do's and don'ts for energy conservation. You want to do as much as you can while retaining the integrity of the materials in the house. And that means working with the passive systems that are already part of its design. You know, windows that open and close, shade trees, porches that shade rooms in the, in the summertime when it's hot and the sun is high and let sun in the winter when the sun is lower. We've got you know, houses that have closets on the outside wall so we can close doors and, and keep windows repaired. What you really want to do is to educate yourself. There are, there's a very good website at the National Trust, which is the, with the citation at the bottom here. preservationnation.org is the National Trust website. And there's a huge posting of information at their weatherization site. So I would start there with an old house and not rely on material that comes from contractors or contractor websites.

So you really do need to educate yourself and it's a very large subject. You really want to be aware of wall insulation in an old house. Wall installation is, is much more, is a much superior product. The cellulose that's used now is far superior and it's better able to be used. The foams are better, the sprayed in place foams are a better product than they were in the 1970s. But there really isn't enough information yet on how these materials are going to interact in old houses to be able to safely go forward with using them. So that means, you know, you really need to think, what can I do? How far can I go, I'm not going to insulate the walls, because that's probably the first thing that you would hear in an old house, is put wall insulation in. And the thing, one of the things you should not do is to panic, because all of the, of all of our housing stock, our existing housing stock, only 8% of it is very old houses. So if you have a pre-1919 house, you're one of a very small minority in the United States. And we're not going to

solve the whole problem of our energy consumption on the backs of 8% of our housing stock. So don't feel that you as an old house owner are somehow more responsible for this than anyone else here. Next slide.

46:09

What you do need to do is to get really good information and that's a blower door test. A diagnostic energy audit being done at the Lyman house on that funny red door where the air is pulled out of the house and then you can find where the leaks are. When you, when you suck all the air out of the house and you go around and with a little stick of incense or a little air, there's a little smoke puff thing, or you could just stand there and feel the air rush past your ankles, you will know where you have leaks. We were, we did this in the in the Lyman house and we've always had a very, very, very cold kitchen. And you know, it was all coming from one place. It was like a hurricane from under the sink. And so you need to get the, to get a very good idea of where you have leaks and air infiltration because it's really controlling air that will make the house more comfortable. And here from a great renovation book, George Nash's *Renovating Old Houses*, are indications of where you can caulk and air seal to minimize the penetration of air.

And many carpenters don't like to have caulk on the outside of the house because it's kind of a fussy and messy thing to deal with but you can caulk almost every one of those locations on the inside of the house as well. So everything around door casings and baseboards, electrical outlets and that will keep the, the drafts and the, and the, the cold air that comes in and warm air that goes out from diminishing the energy efficiency in the building. The other thing to do is to make sure that the attic is very heavily insulated, as heavily insulated as you can, as long as you've already air sealed any little places where air can come up from the lower floors and insulating pipes and ducts. And then finally, it's more expensive but the next, the next best thing you can do is to upgrade heating and air conditioning systems and appliances. Next.

So, with integrity, using your, keeping your, letting your house tell you who it is and what it should be and really observing it for what is relevant in terms of its proportions, textures and materials and using paint in a historically appropriate way and enhancing the energy efficiency in your old house, you will be conserving character, you will be adding value and you will be giving something back to your community. Next slide. So I'd be happy to take questions.

That's with me. So turn on the lights. Real quick questions. Over there? Yes.

[End of Lecture]