Justification Letter

Project: 445 Los Gatos Boulevard
Application: PHST-26-002
Applicant: Nam Nguyen

Purpose of Study

Following the HPC February 25, 2026 recommendation to identify a V-groove siding profile that more closely matches the original wood siding, we conducted a market survey of siding manufacturers offering exterior V-groove profile siding that is fire resistant.

The objective of this research was to determine whether any currently available product more closely replicates the **dimensions, profile, and appearance** of the traditional wood V-groove siding.

The review included both **North American and International manufacturers** producing siding in the following material categories:

- Fiber cement
- Composite
- Engineering Modified wood
- Traditional wood (for comparison purpose)

Evaluation Criteria

During the February 25 meeting, members of the Los Gatos Historic Preservation Committee expressed interest in identifying a fire resistant siding product with a profile that more closely matches the existing V-groove siding while preserving the authenticity of its dimensions and appearance.

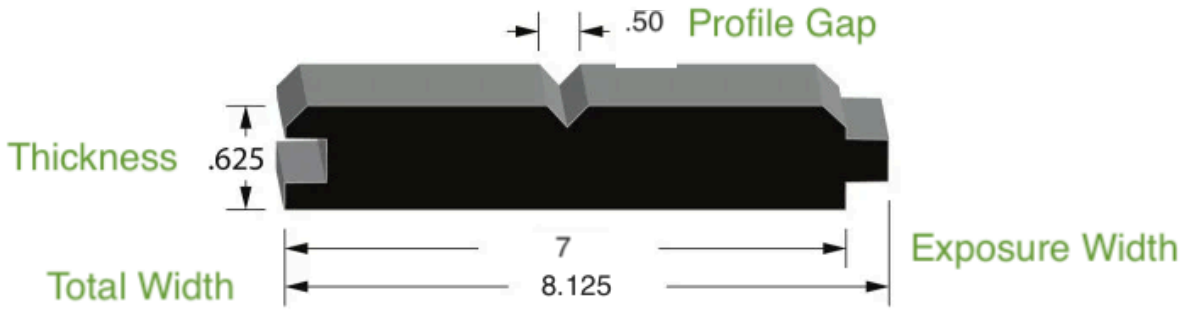
To address this request, the market survey focused on the following key characteristics:

Exposure Width

The visible width of each siding board once installed. This dimension determines the spacing of the siding pattern across the façade.

Profile Gap
The width and shape of the V-groove joint between boards, which creates the shadow line that defines the traditional V-groove appearance.

These two dimensions are the **primary visual characteristics** (what a lay person sees) that determine whether a siding product closely matches traditional V-groove siding.



In addition to dimension compatibility, the study also considered:

Material Type and Fire Resistance
Materials were evaluated based on whether they provide **fire-resistant performance**, such as fiber-cement siding products that are commonly classified as non-combustible materials.

Table 1 – Market Survey of V-Groove Exterior Siding

MANUFACTURE	MATERIAL	PRODUCT	EXPOSURE WIDTH	PROFILE GAP	NOTES
Original	Wood	V-Groove	7"	7/8" (0.875")	No longer manufactured
James Hardie	Fiber Cement	Artisan V-Groove	7"	1/2" (0.5")	
Kelleher Corp	Wood	V-Rustic AdvantagePlus	7"	1/2" (0.5")	Not Fire rated
Modern Mill	Composite	ACRE V-Groove	6-1/4"	~5/8" (~0.625")	Not Fire rated
Modern Mill	Composite	ACRE V-Groove	8-1/4"	~5/8" (~0.625")	Not Fire rated
Thermory	Thermally Modified Wood	C87 V-Groove	5"	~3/4" (~0.75")	
Nichiha	Fiber Cement	VintageWood / Latura V-Groove	5 11/16"	5/16" (0.3125")	
Westlake Royal Building Products	Composite	Celect V-Groove	8"	-	
Western Wood Product	Wood	Cedar	6-1/4"	-	

Color Gradient — Indicates closeness to original wood siding appearance

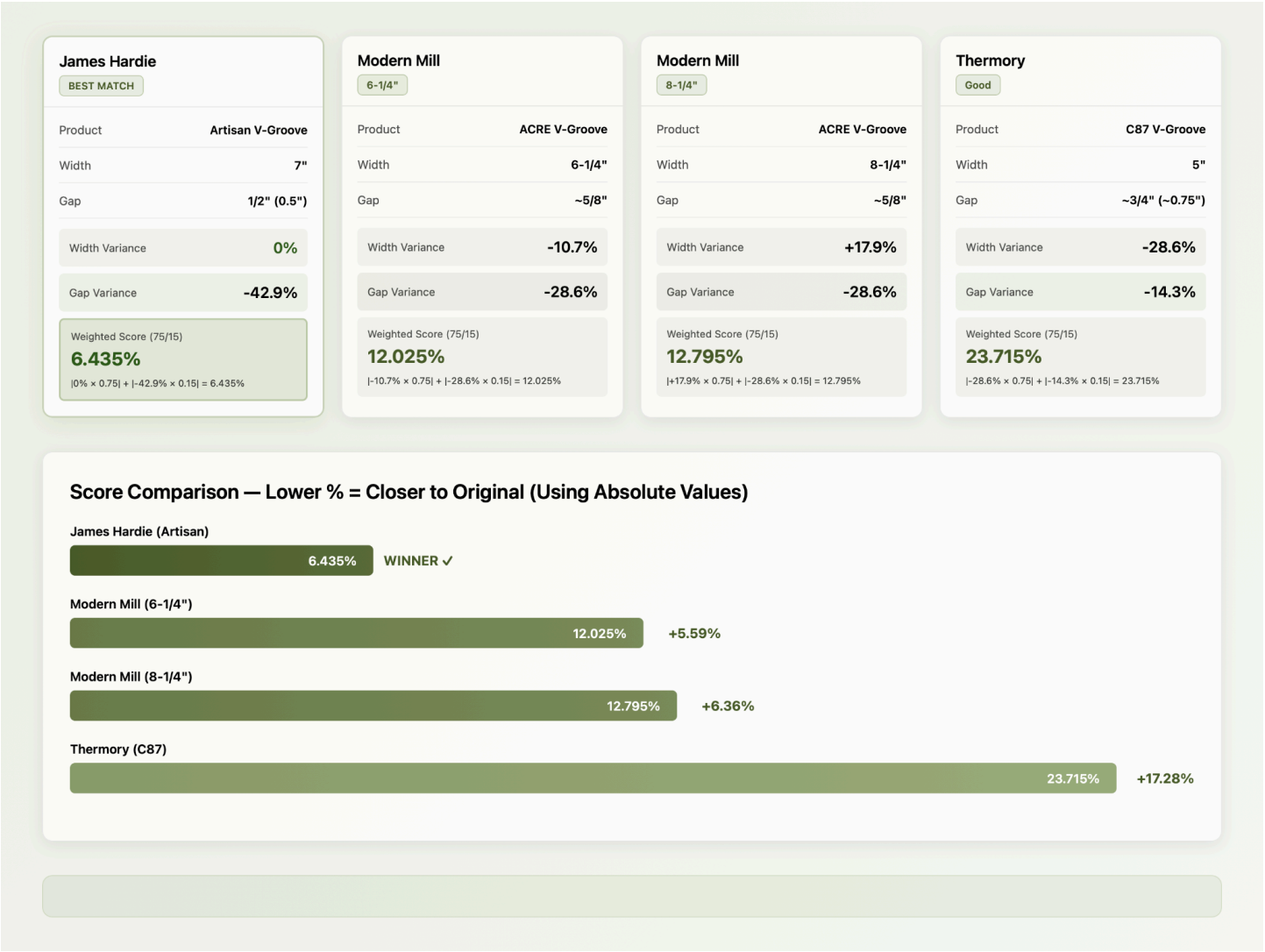
*For detailed specifications, visit manufacturer websites.

Key Findings

Only one product on the market today offers an exact match in Exposure Width AND fire-rated protection: **James Hardie's Artisan V-Groove**. The second-closest alternative is Kelleher Corp's Wood option, which also matches the Exposure Width and has the same profile as the James Hardie but lacks fire protection.

This analysis exposes a significant market reality: authentic dimensions and profiles are rare. The industry standard has evolved to 7" Exposure Width and 0.5" Profile Gap—and only James Hardie's Artisan V-Groove matches these exact specifications while providing fire-rated protection.

Table 2 – Weighted Scoring Analysis



To further validate our findings, we calculated variance scores comparing the top market leaders, factoring in both Exposure Width and Profile Gap. Using a 75/15 weighted analysis—prioritizing Exposure Width since it's what a lay person notices—the data conclusively demonstrates James Hardie's Artisan V-Groove as the superior choice.

Conclusion

Based on the market research summarized above, we were unable to identify a siding product that more closely matches the **exposure width and profile gap of traditional V-groove siding** than the proposed Artisan V-Groove siding manufactured by James Hardie.

The proposed siding therefore represents the **closest commercially available alternative currently available in the market**, while also providing improved durability and fire-resistant performance compared to traditional wood siding.

We respectfully submit this research in response to the Committee's recommendation and welcome the opportunity to present the findings to the Committee.

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