

Swanton Railroad Station

Swanton, Vermont

August 28, 2025

Exterior Maintenance



Late 2002



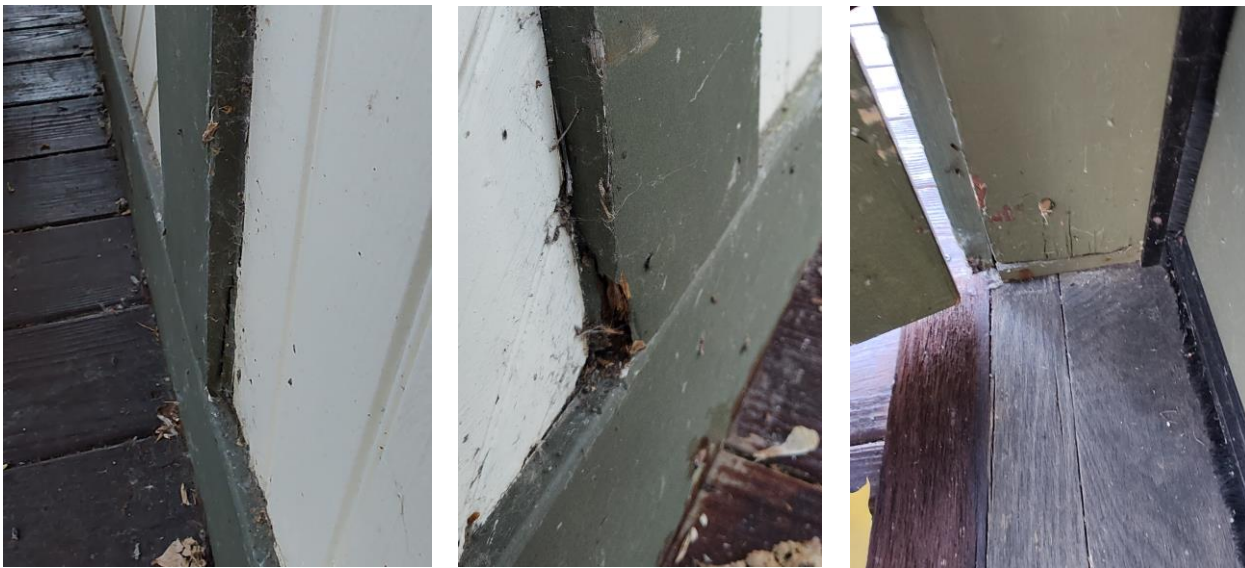
August 2025

Renovation work to the Swanton Railroad Station was completed in late 2002. Ron Kilburn in 2011 asked me to look at the exterior of the station and write up a report that he could take to the Town of Swanton Selectboard so that they could see the need to maintain the exterior of the station. I issued that report back in October 2011 stating that “the exterior appears to have held up well. While there are no signs of deterioration, there are areas that are beginning to show wear.” That report is attached at the end of this report.

Well, the station is now beyond wear. A lot of the items that I mentioned in that earlier report still exist and have gotten worse. In the report, I mentioned that a bird’s nest should be removed. It is still there. That’s minor. It appears that at select areas, only a coat of paint has been applied in the past. At some areas, no new paint has been applied. The existing deck has been sloppily stained including some painted trim and beadboard.

The existing exterior surfaces of the building need to be cleaned (using TSP-PF), rotted wood removed and new replacement wood installed. The existing exterior surfaces need to be scraped to remove loose and/or failing paint, sanded, prepped for painting, spot primed, joints caulk/sealed and two finish coats of paint applied.

There are numerous areas where the existing trim has rotted or is rotting and needs to be replaced. Below are photos of some of those areas.



Views of existing rotted trim that needs to be replaced. New replacement to match existing.



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Views of existing rotted trim that need to be replaced. New replacement to match existing.

There are many areas where existing trim and paneling showing signs of cracks at their ends. This is a sign, that water has gotten to the end of the existing boards and water is being pulled into the wood at their ends. This will eventually lead to rot. Below are photos of some of those areas



Views of existing cracks at the ends of existing trim boards and panels. New replacement to match existing

There are now gaps between existing panels and trim boards and where existing trim boards meet. These gaps need to be sealed/caulk to prevent water, bugs and other elements from getting behind them. Some of the rot that is happening may be caused by these gaps.



Views of existing gaps where existing trim boards meet and gaps between panels and trim boards.

There are existing steps, landings and door sills that have not be finished. Existing deck boards are cracked and curling. These boards need to be replaced, existing boards refastened, existing wood cleaned and stained.

Existing metal pipe railing are showing signs of rust. The existing pipe railings, need to be refastened to the existing deck framing/boards. Existing metal pipe railings need to be cleaned, loose paint removed, rust to be removed and prepped for painting. Spot prime (Benjamin Moore, HP1320-70) at removed paint and rust areas. Lightly sand, prepped for painting and apply two finish coats paint.



At some existing doors, molding at the panels have moved.

At some of the existing exterior doors, the existing molding at the panels has moved. These pieces need to be re-secured in place. Any existing finger joints that have opened, need to be sealed.

At some existing doors, the existing panels have begun to crack. These joints need to be sealed to lessen further cracking, if not, it will lead to wholesale panel replacement. If the cracks are too large to be sealed, then an epoxy based filler can be used instead.



At some existing doors, the existing panels have begun to crack.

At some existing windows, some of the stile and rail joints are beginning to open and the glazing putty is starting to fail. At some windows, the existing glazing putty is missing. The existing windows need to be cleaned. The existing windows need to have failing glazing putty removed (if necessary, existing failing or missing glazing points). Apply linseed oil to glazing rabbets, apply bedding bead of glazing compound to glazing rabbets. Provide and install new glazing points.

Apply final glazing bead and tool to a smooth even bevel. Glaze all sashes with DAP glazing compound. The existing exterior surfaces of the windows need to be scraped to remove loose and/or failing paint, sand, prepped for painting, spot primed, joints caulk/sealed and two finish coats of paint applied.



In our 2011 report, we stated that “There are two gables on the south and north sides of the building that have decorative wood scroll work. These scrolls are located at the face of the gable and have little protection from the elements. Joints and trim boards are beginning to separate. Some board ends are showing cracks and some elements have begun to separate.” It appears no work was done to the scroll work, which is unfortunate.



At the north scroll, rot has begun at some of the trim pieces. They will need to be removed and new trim pieces install. New trim pieces to match existing.



Now, the existing south scroll work has major rot at some of the trim pieces. The rotted pieces will need to be removed and new trim pieces install. New trim pieces to match existing. The existing surfaces of both scrolls need to be cleaned (using TSP-PF), exterior surfaces to be scraped to remove loose and/or failing paint, sand, prepped for painting, spot primed, joints caulked/sealed and apply two finish coats paint.

SWANTON RAILROAD STATION

Swanton, Vermont
October 2011



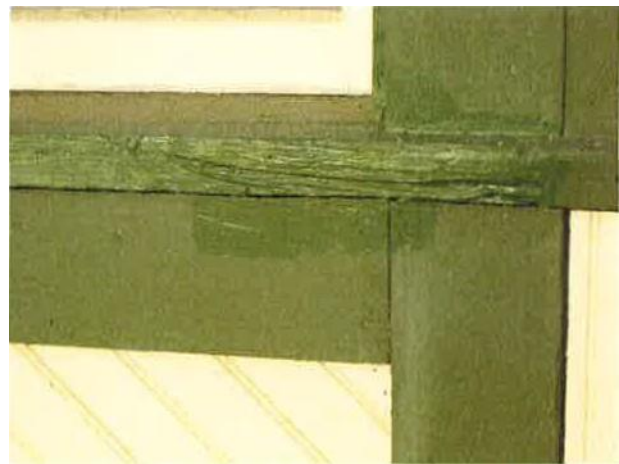


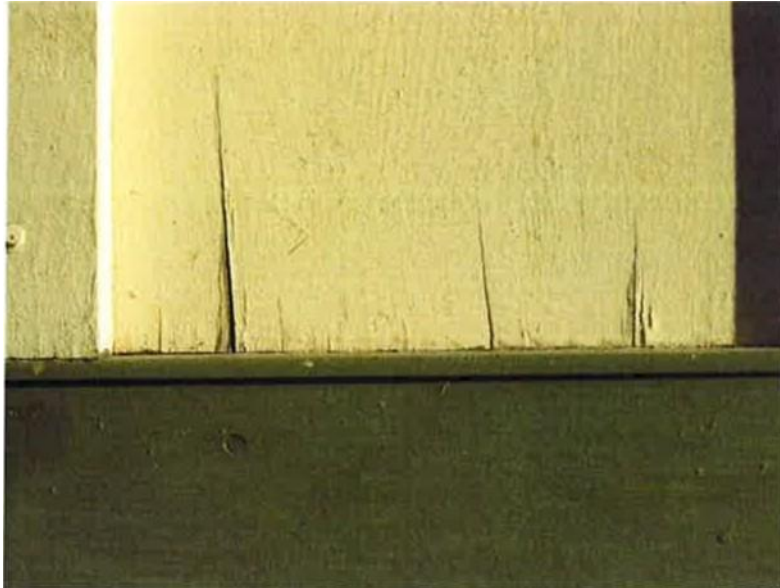
South Elevation



East Elevation

Renovation work to the Swanton Railroad Station was completed in late 2002. The Station exterior appears to have held up well. While there are no signs of deterioration, there are areas on the exterior that are beginning to show wear, especially on the south and east sides of the building. These sides of the Station are mostly in the sun during the day and the paint has begun to fade.





Painted Wood That Has Cracked



Painted Wood That Has Begun to Rot

When wood is not properly protected, the wood begins to “crack” at the end of the board and if water gets behind the painted surface, the wood will begin to rot. There are numerous areas where the ends of wood boards have cracked; however, there are a few trim boards that have begun to rot.



Peeling Paint at Window Jamb



Peeling Paint at Window Sashes

There are also a number of areas where the paint is peeling at original wood (i.e. window sashes, window jambs, original window trim, etc.). These areas need to be scraped, sanded, prepped for painting, primed and painted.



Door With Peeling Paint



Bird's Nest on Door Head

The doors on the south side of the building are peeling and need to be refinished. At one of the doors, the sticking bead needs to be refastened to the door. Above one of the doors, a bird has built a nest; this nest should be removed to prevent the door head trim from rotting underneath the nest.



A Joint That Has Opened and Moss Has Begun



A Joint and Corner Board Trim That Has Opened

There are a number of joints where corner boards, horizontal trim boards, etc. meet that have begun to open. These joints need to be caulked/sealed to prevent water from entering and getting behind the trim and causing damage. Once water enters, it can cause rot and has allowed in one area for moss to grow. A sign that wood is absorbing water.



Gable Scroll Work

There are two gables on the south and north sides of the building that have decorative wood scroll work. These scroll works are located at the face of the gable and have little protection from the elements. Joints and boards are beginning to separate. Some board ends are showing cracks and some elements have begun to separate.



Because of the issues mentioned previously, a repainting/maintenance program needs to be developed to properly maintain the exterior of the building. Paint applied to exterior wood must withstand yearly extremes of both temperature and humidity. It's the only protective coating the exterior of the building has. One of the main causes of wood deterioration is moisture penetration. A primary purpose for painting wood is to exclude such moisture, this slows the deterioration not only of a building's exterior trim and decorative features but, ultimately, it's underlying structural members.