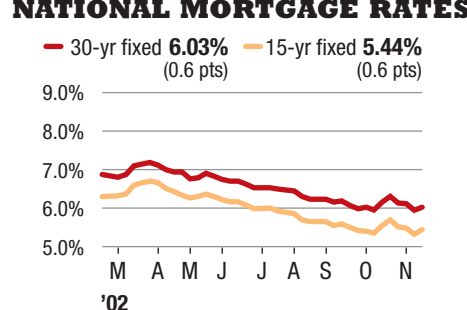


**JUDY ROSE  
IN FRIDAY  
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**KENNETH HARNEY**  
Don't let lenders' outdated software harm your credit score. **PAGE 2F.**

**CREATING SPACES**  
A correctly placed sunroom benefits the whole house. **PAGE 1G.**

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# REAL ESTATE

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IMPROVING YOUR HOME: PART 3 OF A 3-PART SERIES

# SIDEWAYS

## CUT THROUGH THE CONFUSING CLAIMS BEFORE YOU BUY NEW SIDING

By MARTA SALIJ  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

It's hard to take siding salesmen seriously, not after you've had countless dinners interrupted by telemarketers who "just happen to be in the neighborhood" and want to sell you a house's worth of beige vinyl.

In researching this story, we heard our share of preposterous claims from siding salesmen. "You don't need a thicker brand of vinyl siding because paper is the best insulator, and it's thin." (A sheet of paper is a poor insulator.) "A half-inch of foam board insulation is just as good as an inch because it's really an inch, just compressed." (A half-inch of insulation is a half-inch; an inch is an inch.)

Another salesman made us pile a briefcase full of books on a piece of siding to test the strength of his vinyl. (An entertaining stunt, but beside the point.) Yet another told us that nobody makes dark colors of vinyl siding because "the technology just doesn't exist." (Oh, but it does.)

Here's some help in cutting through the claims.

We'll cover three kinds of siding popular with remodelers: vinyl, which captures most of the market; aluminum, and a new product, fiber-cement siding.

We also will discuss house trim: the gutters, soffits, fascia, rake and frieze boards, and door and window detailing that are usually replaced during a re-siding job. And we'll cover the insulation you can add at the same time.

**Wood: Handsome, high-maintenance**  
The main question: Do you really need new siding? To answer, a little history.

In the beginning, there was wood, in clapboards or shingles.

Please see SIDING, Page 11F

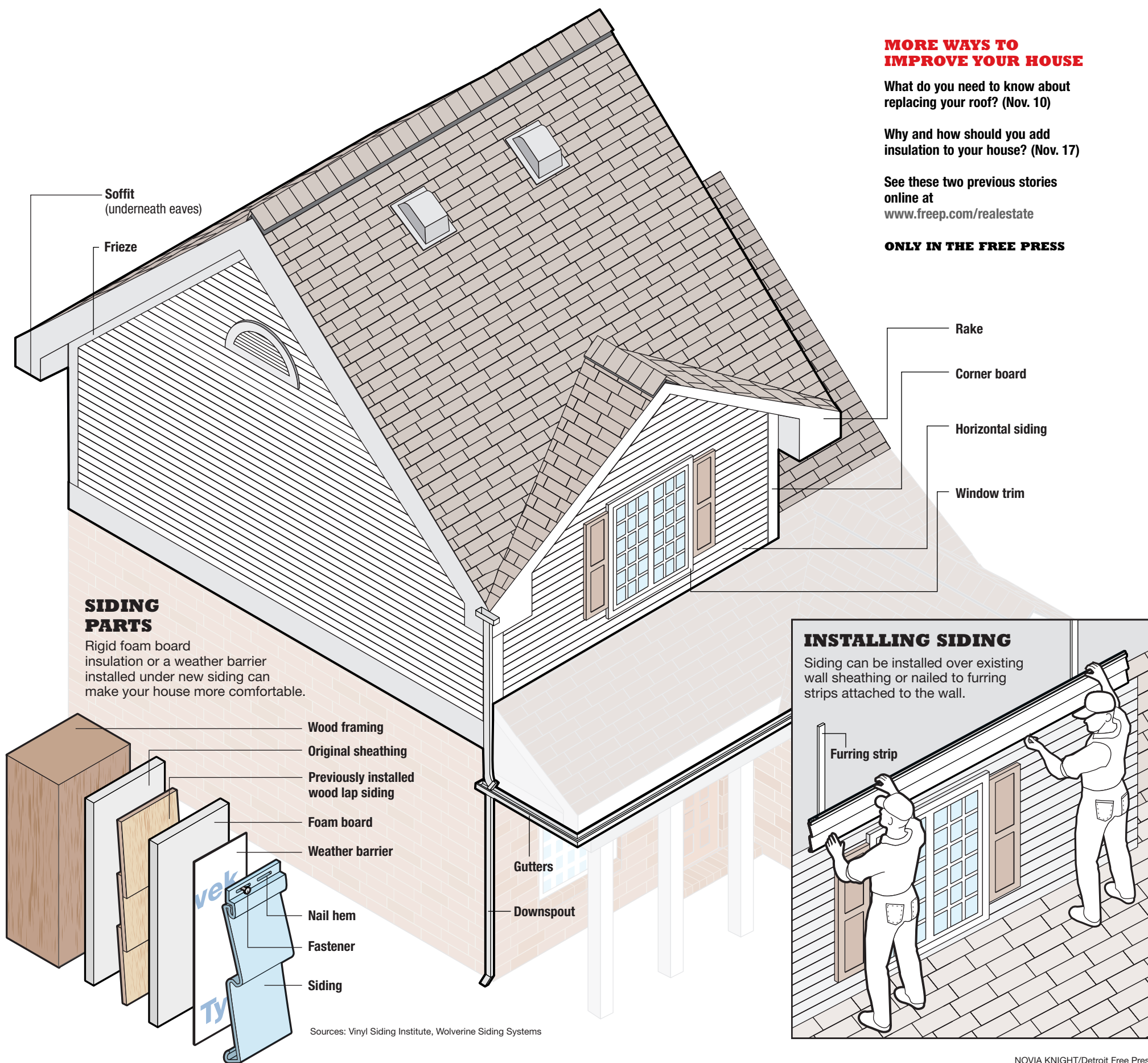
## MORE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR HOUSE

What do you need to know about replacing your roof? (Nov. 10)

Why and how should you add insulation to your house? (Nov. 17)

See these two previous stories online at [www.freepress.com/realestate](http://www.freepress.com/realestate)

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### SIDING PARTS

Rigid foam board insulation or a weather barrier installed under new siding can make your house more comfortable.

### INSTALLING SIDING

Siding can be installed over existing wall sheathing or nailed to furring strips attached to the wall.

Sources: Vinyl Siding Institute, Wolverine Siding Systems

NOVIA KNIGHT/Detroit Free Press

## NEW NEIGHBORHOODS VILLAGE AT CORNERSTONE SOUTHFIELD



Tadian Homes

**Project:** The Village at Cornerstone, 180 stacked condos, one-bedroom/one-bath or two-bedroom/two-bath. There is also a three-bedroom/three bath option, tucked into the same space. Square footage numbers are not provided by the builder, Tadian Homes; we estimate the size at 900-1,100 square feet. \$140,000-\$167,300.

**Place:** Southfield, near Northland Center and Providence Hospital.

**Appeal:** A true starter condo at an

affordable price — small but attractive in a good-looking brick complex. Location is unusually close-in and convenient. Additions, like an extra bedroom/bath, do not drive up the price unreasonably.

**Base price per square foot:** Rough estimate: \$150.

**Included:** One full bathroom for ev-

ery bedroom, central air, carpet or vinyl floors, miniblinds, stove and dishwasher, one-car garage.

**Add-ons:** Vary with plan. For example, on the one-bedroom Freeland model, a finished family room at the garage level adds \$2,055. A bedroom and full bath there adds \$8,500. Turning that space into a two-car, back-to-front garage adds \$250. An upgrade package at \$2,440 upgrades carpet, cabinets, counters and vinyl floors. A package at \$3,395 does all that and adds ceramic tile to the bathrooms.

**Insulation:** Typical R13 walls and R30 ceiling. Vinyl windows.

**Lot size:** No lot. Porch, landscaping and green space in front.

**Association fee:** \$105 per month includes grounds and landscape



maintenance and all water.

**Comment:** The one-bedroom Freeland model has long sight lines in the living room and kitchen and feels especially pleasant. You can add a second bedroom downstairs for \$8,500. The Liberty model has two bedrooms and two baths, at the cost of smaller living-dining space.

**Schools:** Oak Park, MEAP scores 13 percent below state average.

**Taxes:** \$41.16 per \$1,000 of a house's taxable value. A \$150,000 condo, with taxable value of \$75,000, would pay \$3,086.

**Call:** 248-552-0368, 11-6 daily.

By Judy Rose,  
Free Press real estate writer

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