

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF ALLENTOWN  
December 15, 2021  
FINAL REVIEW**

**Property located at:** 443 N 9<sup>th</sup> St.

**Agenda Item:** #2.a

**Historic District:** Old Allentown

**Case:** HDC-2021-00033

**Meeting date:** December 6, 2021

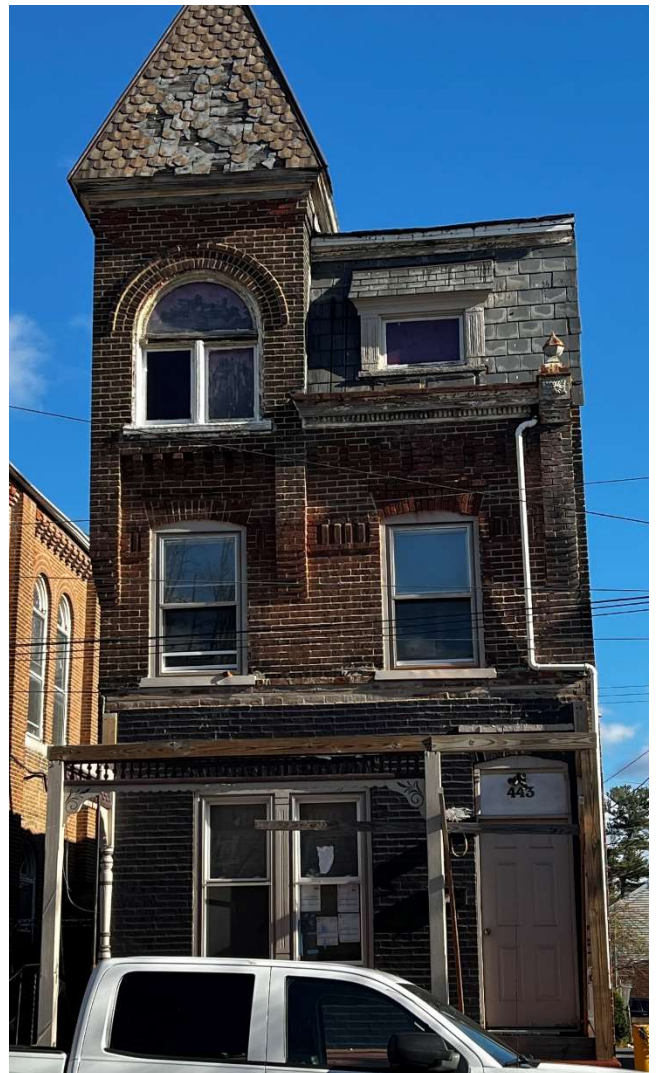
**Property Owner/Applicant:** Tito Cardona

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**Building description, period, style defining features:**

This 3-story brick single house, ca 1888, is a Queen Anne/Victorian house with Eastlake influences. The mansard roof is slate shingles, a double chimney, a hooded dormer and a turret enhances the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. The turret has a slate pyramidal roof topped with a finial. An unusual window is shown on two sides of the turret, it has two small windows with a large arched glass transom with a full brick arched lintel. The corbelled brick panels edge the turret and the edge of the building with a pommel. The brick dentilated cornice runs across the façade between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor levels.

The windows are 1/1 sash set into arched Eastlake frames topped by brick segmental arch lintels. A brick string course ties the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows together. The main entry is a single glazed door. There is a concrete porch



with turned wooden columns and wooden balustrades, with a wrought iron rail on the steps (*removed*). The decorative fan brackets extend from the columns and a spindled frieze runs across the porch just under the roofline. The front of the foundation is brick and shows a basement window grille.

**Proposed alterations:**

1. Amendment to HDC-2020-00021 (violation) to permit the use of Ecostar Majestic Slate, beveled edge in the color grey for the turret and mansard section of the roof and three-tab shingles for the new porch roof (to be constructed) in lieu of architectural grade scalloped shingles.

**Staff Approvals:** None

**Violations:**

**2020:** Front Porch Removal

**Prior COA(s):**

1991: Parking lot, replacement of front porch railing, replacement of 1/1 sash windows like for like and approval of existing 6-panel front door.

1997: Installation of new satellite dish antenna behind the turret.

2010: Installation of replacement 1/1 vinyl sash windows on the northern elevation (not including windows on the northwest corner of the third floor) and replacement of the rear door with a six-panel door in the same style as the front entry door.

**Secretary of Interior Standards:**

**Rehabilitation Standard 2:** The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

**Rehabilitation Standard 6:** Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

**Design Guidelines, Section 3-Roofing:**

**Slate Shingle:** The most cost effective and appropriate way to preserve a slate roof is through regular maintenance. After each winter season a slate roof should be inspected and cracked, broken, or missing slates be replaced. This is generally a relatively inexpensive project to undertake if done on a yearly basis.

- ✓ Replacement of deteriorated slate shingles with new slate shingles through regular maintenance is recommended.
- ✓ Preservation, reuse or in-kind replacement of rolled ridge caps and finish is strongly recommended (see features in images below.)
- Replacing slate shingles with asphalt shingles on a gable or hipped roof is not recommended but may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis when the slate or fasteners have reached the end of their serviceable life. A pre-application review is recommended when considering replacing slate roofing with alternate materials (See alternate material section on pg 14).
- Replacement of slate shingles with asphalt shingles on a mansard roof is typically not necessary. The steep slope of a Mansard roof helps to preserve the roofing material and prolong the life span of the slate.

**Alternate Roofing Materials:** There are instances where historic materials may become deteriorated beyond repair and in-kind replacement may be infeasible or not possible. The lack of availability or the excessive cost associated with in-kind replacement may make the use of alternate materials acceptable.

- ✓ Alternate materials should closely replicate the historic roofing.
- ✓ Fiber reinforced cement shingles and rubber simulated slate shingles are generally acceptable substitutions for replacing natural slate shingles.

- ✓ Replacement of existing asphalt or fiberglass shingles with shingles that resemble the existing roofing material is acceptable.
- Replacement of natural slate shingles with asphalt/fiberglass 3-tab shingles that match existing/ historic shingle size, shape and color is also typically acceptable and requires staff level approval.
- Architectural shingles that recall the appearance of wood or cedar shake roofing typically are not appropriate

### **Evaluation of Proposed Project:**

The proposed substitute material of synthetic slate (EcoStar Majestic Slate with bevel edge) is appropriate. Use of “rubber simulated slate shingles” is allowed by the Guidelines. The proposed product will be consistent with the existing turret roof slate shingles in size, dimension, profile, shape, configuration, thickness, and appearance. The mansard roof shingles are rectangular in shape and profile; rectangular synthetic slate would be a more appropriate replacement. However, it is generally historically appropriate for slate shingles to match across a building’s different roof slopes and replacement of this roof was previously approved.

The proposed substitute of 3-tab shingles for the porch roof will result in minimal visual impact to the building. The proposed product is a dark color and rectangular in shape. Architectural shingles with even exposures and rectangular cuts are generally recommended over 3-tab shingles as a higher quality material; however, the applicant has demonstrated that the approved shingle product is not currently available due to material shortages and manufacturing interruptions.

### **Historic District Impact:**

The proposed material substitutions will not negatively impact the surrounding historic district. The use of synthetic slate will honor the original appearance of the building in the district as well or better than the previously approved architectural asphalt shingles. The proposed 3-tab shingles will have a minimal visual impact compared to the previously proposed material.

### **Recommendation(s)**

The proposed materials appear to be appropriate substitutes. It is recommended that the HARB discuss with the applicant the shape of the mansard roof shingles. For the 3-tab shingles substitute for architectural shingles, it is recommended that the HARB consider citing that due to ongoing supply chain issues and material shortages caused by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, there is a lack of normally acceptable alternative materials, and that they make the approval without creating precedent.

### **HARB Discussion**

HARB members agree that the change to EcoStar material is an improvement and that the asphalt shingle was likely on the porch prior to its removal and is therefore a like-for-like replacement and therefore appropriate.

### **Action**

A motion to approve the application as presented with the condition that this proposal and subsequent approval does not impact the previous COA was made by HARB member Glenn Lichtenwalner, motion was seconded by HARB chair David Huber. Motion carried with unanimous support.