

Historical Architectural Review Board COA Preliminary Review Sheet

HDC-2025-00024

Address: 1550 Chew Street

District: West Park Historic District

Owner: Livingston Holdings LLC

Applicant: Joe Colasano

Proposal: Partial roof replacement

Building Description: This brick building is a 2 ½ story Queen Anne/Porch House, built in 1927. It features a corner turret with dome roof and wrap around L-shaped porch with wide columns supporting the porch roof. Many windows are 6 over 1, though there are variations due to varying window sizes.

Project Description:

The proposed work is to remove the existing clay tile roof at the main roof area and replace with a substitute product. The applicant notes that the turret dome and rear roof were replaced by a previous owner, and that replacement roof is black asphalt shingle.



Existing Front Elevation (Google Maps, April 2024)



Side Elevation (Applicant)

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Roofing Materials > Residential Roofing Materials > Shingles > Royal Sovereign®

Royal Sovereign®

Beautiful. Reliable. Affordable. Simple, timeless beauty—at a price you can afford. When value is everything, living the dream has never looked so good.

★★★★★ 4.8 (191) [WRITE A REVIEW](#)



Option 1: Charcoal 3-Tab (Applicant)

Roofing Materials > Residential Roofing Materials > Shingles > Timberline HDZ®

Timberline HDZ®

GAF's #1-selling shingle. High Definition™ color blends backed by strong warranties.

★★★★★ 4.8 (1887) [WRITE A REVIEW](#)



Option 2: Patriot Red Timberline HDZ architectural shingle (Applicant)

Royal Sovereign®

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Option 3: Royal Sovereign Weathered Grey 3-Tab (Applicant)

Applicable Guidelines:

Section 3.1 – Roofs

3.1.3 Repair and restore original and historic roofing materials whenever possible. Evaluate the condition and cost of repair of original materials before removing and replacing them. Targeted areas of repair or localized in-kind replacement may be the most effective and low-cost solution.

3.1.4 Repair and replace deteriorated flashing or fasteners with materials that are compatible with the roofing material. Roof problems are often caused by failure of these components rather than the historic roofing material.

3.1.5 Preserve architectural features that give the roof its unique and building-specific character—such as dormers, turrets, chimneys, cornices, rolled ridge flashing, cresting, and finials. Repair and restore features; replace in-kind only when necessary.

3.1.6 Replace historic roofing materials in-kind whenever possible if severe deterioration makes a full replacement necessary. Replacement material should match the original in material, dimension, shape, profile, color, pattern, exposure, and overall appearance.

3.1.7 If in-kind replacement is not feasible, replace historic roofing materials with alternate materials that resemble the original as closely as possible. Roof replacement should be sensitive to the original appearance. Replacement materials should match roof slopes or shape.

3.1.8 Replace non-historic roofing materials in-kind or with recommended alternates. If the original material is documented, restoration of the original material is also an appropriate option but is not required. Original roofs may have been replaced long ago, yet asphalt shingles and similar alterations are still considered impacts to the overall appearance. Replacement materials should match the existing in color, pattern, shape, and profile. Greater flexibility is possible with non-historic roofing and using durable high-quality replacements is recommended.

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3.1.9 Consider roof ventilation alternatives carefully. Ventilation options are approved on a case by case basis and can include ridge vents, louvered vents, or soffit vents. Proper ventilation may extend the life of a roofing system, but in some cases it can lead to condensation problems with long-term effects on the roofing materials and structural components. Refer to Chapter 3.8 Mechanical and Utility Equipment for related guidelines about roof vents.

3.1.36 Repair and restore gutters whenever possible. Types of repairs include repainting wood or metal surface, installing new fasteners, sealing or soldering cracks and open seams, and relining built-in box gutters with new copper sheet metal.

3.1.37 Replace existing gutters in-kind when replacement is necessary due to severe deterioration. Replicate the original construction method of a historic gutter if feasible.

3.1.38 Replace existing downspouts, scuppers, collection boxes, and other drainage elements in-kind. Appropriate alternates to in-kind replacement are round or rectangular downspouts. Smooth surfaces are encouraged over corrugated metal. In the case of decorative scuppers, replicate the profile and details as closely as possible.

3.1.39 Consider alternate materials for gutters in locations that are difficult to access for maintenance or where original materials have demonstrated a pattern of deterioration over time. A fiberglass gutter is an acceptable replacement material for a wood built-in box gutter if it matches the original in profile, size, appearance, and finish.

3.1.40 Avoid vinyl gutters due to poor durability and non-historic appearance.

3.1.41 Install new downspouts in locations that are sensitive to the architecture and will be minimally visible. Run downspouts at secondary facades and along building or porch corners when possible.

3.1.42 Paint gutters and downspouts to blend in with the building exterior. Matching the existing building trim is usually the most appropriate color selection. Copper and terne-coated stainless steel systems should be left unpainted because they weather naturally and develop a protective patina.

4/7/25 Observations & Comments: It would be helpful if there were photos or evidence of the condition of the current clay tile roof. The previously performed roof replacements were not in keeping with the guidelines/the original roof; the dark grey/black 3-tab shingle was not an appropriate replacement.

While the building rear and tower roofs were both replaced with a dark asphalt shingle, the view of the primary elevation and the main corner of the building along the streetscape retains the clay tile, consistent with an adjacent cluster of clay tile/red asphalt roofed buildings. It is preferable to repair the existing historic materials/replace in kind, rather than replace. If repair is not possible, an alternate replacement product such as engineered composite polymer tiles closely resemble the look and feel of glazed and natural terra cotta tile.

4/7/25 Staff Recommendation: Staff recommend denying the application.

4/7/25 Discussion: Mr. Huber noted that this building had an existing violation related to partial roof replacement at the turret and the rear roof. Mr. Colasuano noted that he purchased the building in the summer of 2024 and was notified of a stop work order on the roof, which he was not performing. The roof violation was from 2023 under a previous owner. The applicant has had numerous conversations with the City of Allentown about the violation and the roof. The City has been seeking for violation correction. The polymer alternate material for the clay tile roof is cost prohibitive. Mr. Huber noted that none of the proposed roof materials would be appropriate replacement for the red clay tile. Mr. Colasuano said he has had difficulty finding appropriate replacements. Mr. Colasuano said that he appreciates being in the historic district, but the violation was not caused by him, and he wasn't aware of the violation when he purchased the property. Mr. Huber noted that the property was sold without a presale inspection. Noting that Mr. Colasuano is amenable to correcting the violation, the HARB discussed tabling the application for one month to allow for the applicant to revise his proposal with other alternate materials/solutions.

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Red roofing products are extremely limited in availability. The violation occurred in 2023.

4/7/25 Actions: Mr. Hart moved to table the application one month to allow for the applicant to develop options for the roofing proposal, including alternate roofing products. Mr. Huber seconded the motion, which carried with unanimous support and no abstentions.

5/5/25 Updates: As of May 1, 2025, updated application materials were not received by Staff. Any new materials or proposed approaches to the project to be reviewed with applicant at meeting.

Discussion:

Since the April 7, 2025 HARB meeting, the applicant contacted several suppliers to source materials and has not been able to locate a comparable material to clay tile. The applicant desires for the roof to be uniform. A full clay tile roof is out of the applicant's budget, and the applicant was not able to source a red shingle besides an architectural shingle.

There are two main aspects to the treatment of the roof: first, to address the violation for the installation of the turret and main roof, and second, to address a leak in the clay tile roof. After the stop order was received by the applicant for the asphalt roofs, a leak started in the clay tile area.

The applicant stated that a 3-tab shingle roof would cost \$12,000, whereas a synthetic shingle would cost about \$80,000. The applicant would like to repair the leaking area of the clay tile roof, and wanted to make the roof uniform.

Mr. Jordan and Mr. Jones clarified that this application is not a violation correction; it is an application for the repair. Given the lack of appropriate replacement material options, Mr. Jordan noted that the application may not be able to move forward. The architectural shake submitted is not approvable due to its difference in shape.

Mr. Jones noted that in-kind replacement/repairs can be staff approved.

Actions:

Mr. Hart moved to deny the application as presented on May 5, 2025, for the roof replacement at 1550 Chew Street, finding noncompliance with the following sections of the Guidelines for Historic Districts: Chapter 3, Section 3.1- Roofs, and found no circumstances unique to the property.