

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
CITY OF ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
December 9, 2019
FINAL REVIEW**

Case # HDC-2019-00056 – Proposal to replace existing terra cotta roof tiles on front slope of roof with architectural shingles

Property located at: 1546 W Chew Street

Agenda #OB1

Historic District: Old Allentown

Case # HDC-2019-000054

Meeting date: December 2, 2019

Property Owner: Juan Hernandez

Address: 1546 W Chew St, Allentown PA
18102

Applicant: Sana Abdulateef

Applicant's Address: Same

Building description, period, style defining features: This structure is a 3 story semi-detached brick dwelling with gambrel roof, heavy terra cotta shingles, wide front facing gable roofed dormer with half-timbered detail and exposed rafter tails, roof overhang over second floor oriel window with decorative support brackets, and enclosed full-front porch with half-timbered detail, exposed rafter tails, and multi-light sash with unique curved mullion details. The house dates from c. 1926 and is Dutch Colonial Revival with Arts and Crafts influences. The heavy terra cotta shingle roof is a character defining feature of the building.











Proposed alterations: It is proposed to replace existing terra cotta roof tiles on front slope of roof with architectural shingles.

Staff Approvals: n/a

Violations: 9/17/2012 – Replaced 3rd floor wood windows with vinyl windows.

5/22/2013 – Non-compliance with certificate of appropriateness issued October 17, 2012 by City Council. Violation does not appear to have been resolved.

Background: 12-WP-17 – 10/1/2012 - Replace vinyl windows installed in the front façade with wood aluminum clad windows to resolve a violation. Repair wood windows on front, not replaced with vinyl and install storm windows. Vinyl windows installed on side may remain. Recommended for approval of certificate of appropriateness by HARB on October 1, 2012. Approved by City Council on October 17, 2012 by resolution No. 28900.

Guideline Citation: **SIS 6** Deteriorated features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.

SIS 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment **Allentown Guidelines for Historic**

Districts: 5. Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 1. Repairs, Replacement and Alternative Materials, 3. Roofing

Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations: All effort should be made to repair the existing terra cotta roof. The upper part of the gambrel roof might be replaced with new heavy fiberglass shingles in red color (matching the house two properties to the west) and salvaged tiles used to repair the front sloping roof and dormer roofs. The upper gambrel roof is not highly visible, but the dormer roofs and lower front slope of the roof are.

A last resort replacement option would be the same fiberglass shingle on all slopes but there is great concern about how the new shingles will meet the old terra cotta shingles on the attached dwelling. The detail on the neighboring roof is not historically appropriate. The shingle used on the neighboring roof is CertainTeed Grand Manor dimension shingle in the Georgian Brick or Terra Cotta color. Samples would be needed to determine best color.

From 11/4/19 meeting:

Discussion: *The applicants had a letter from a roofing contractor that said the cost of a new terra cotta roof would be 3 times the cost of a new shingle roof. The letter also addressed repairing the existing roof and said that he could not guarantee repairs. Exact pricing was not given on replacement or repair. The applicants went on to explain that they lived in the house but their grandparents own the house. The said the roof had been leaking for about 2 years and showed photos of the interior conditions.*

Members of HARB explained the importance of the roof as a character defining feature and also cautioned them about the difficulty of the replacement detail at the joint between the houses. It was pointed out that this work could cause them liability if the joint created leaks in the neighbor's home. The HARB asked the applicants to get additional repair quotes. Ms. Jackson said Alan Kunsman repaired a terra cotta roof for her and the work went well. The Historic Consultant mentioned J. Wilson as another roofer who might be able to repair the roof. The issue of guarantee for repairs was addressed with the applicant, and the HARB said that that does not mean the repair will not be successful.

The HARB outlined the next steps for the applicants. They recommended tarping the roof for the winter, getting additional repair quotes, and if they decide to repair in-kind they would not need to come back to the HARB. If they decided they want to pursue replacement, they should come back next month with samples of the shingle proposed and a cross section detail from the roofer for the joint with the neighboring roof. The HARB strongly urged repairing the roof and said it would maintain or increase the home's value.

Motion: The HARB upon motion by Mr. Huber and seconded by Ms. Roberts agreed to table the application for more information. (7-0; motion carried; Brobst, Fillman, Huber, Jackson, Olson, Roberts, Sell)

Discussion: The project was not represented at the meeting. Due to the time limitation on the COA, the HARB decided they needed to deny the present proposal for replacing the terra cotta roof tiles with architectural shingles. If the applicants decide to repair in kind the existing historic terra cotta roof tiles no new submission would be needed. If the applicants cannot repair the terra cotta tiles a new submission will be needed with the requested details at the junction with the neighboring terra cotta roof and strong justification for replacement.

Motion: The HARB upon motion by Mr. Fillman and seconded by Mr. Huber adopted the proposal that City Council DENY a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work described herein:

1. The proposal to replace existing terra cotta roof tiles on front slope of roof with architectural shingles at 1546 W Chew Street was NOT represented.
2. It is not historically appropriate to replace the tile roof with the proposed shingles.

The proposal to DENY a COA was unanimously approved. (5-0; motion carried; Fillman, Huber, Olson, Roberts, Sell)