



## BAR Review Levels

These levels of review are applicable in most cases. Please note that during the administrative review process, Staff may determine that a project must be reviewed by the Board. Contact Staff at 703.746.3833 to confirm which level of review is required for your project.

### NO BAR REVIEW

Roof drainage elements such as snow guards, leaf guards, gutters, and downspouts

### ADMINISTRATIVE (STAFF) REVIEW

Repair or appropriate replacement of roofing material (greater than or equal to 100 square feet)

### BOARD REVIEW

Any project referred to the Board by Staff

## Introduction

Roofs of historic buildings are one of the dominant visual features in the historic district. The choice of roofing materials is an important consideration in the design of any rehabilitation work on a historic structure as well as for new construction. Replacement or new roofing material visible from a public right-of-way requires Staff review. Flat and low-sloped roofs are not reviewed by the Board due to their limited visibility.

## Guidelines

### All Buildings

The Board discourages replacing original and appropriate roofing material with modern alterations.

### Early Buildings (pre-1932)

Original or existing roofing which has acquired historic importance over time should be preserved and repaired whenever possible. When this is not feasible, Staff can approve replacement materials that match the original roofing material. If the original roofing material is missing and cannot be determined, roofing appropriate to the period of the building should be used. Synthetic slate may not replace genuine slate shingles.

### Later Buildings (post-1931)

Modern materials such as composite (synthetic) roofing and composition shingles may be used if appropriate to the architectural style of the building. The Board recommends using architectural grade composition shingles in weathered wood or slate blend colors.



## Additional Information

- o A building permit is required from Code Administration for the replacement of over 100 square feet of roofing material in the historic districts.
- o The Board recommends using light colors on flat roofs to reduce air conditioning loads on the building and minimize the urban heat island effect.
- o The Board encourages environmentally sustainable materials and practices, including living roofs in minimally visible locations.

### *Historic Roofing Materials*

#### *18th Century Buildings*

Wood shingle was the predominant roofing material in Alexandria until the early 19th Century. Historic wood shingle roofs were hand split and hand planed to a uniform thickness. Wood shingle roofs were often painted and/or scalloped to simulate tile or slate roofs.

#### *19th Century Buildings*

Standing seam metal roofs were in wide use throughout the historic districts by the mid 19th Century. Metal roofs are more fire resistant than wood roofs and have a life span of 50 to 100 years with proper maintenance. Other roofing materials such as slate shingles and clay tile were not widely used in Alexandria until the late 19th Century. Patterned slate shingles are a central architectural feature of roofs of Gothic Revival and mansard roofs on Second Empire style buildings. Clay tile roofs are a standard feature of Romanesque style buildings.

#### *20th and 21st Century Buildings*

Composition shingles made of asphalt were not widely used in the historic districts until the middle of the 20th Century. Other roofing materials developed in the 20th Century include fiberglass, rubber membranes, and imitation slate. Standing seam metal, wood, and slate continue to be used for new and replacement roofs in the historic districts.



# ROOFING

## ROOFING MATERIALS FOUND THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICTS



^ FISHSCALE WOOD SHINGLE  
18TH - 19TH CENTURY



^ POLYCHROME SLATE  
MID 19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURY



^ STANDING SEAM METAL  
MID 19TH - 21ST CENTURY



^ FANCY CUT SLATE  
19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURY



^ STAMPED METAL SHINGLE  
19TH - 21ST CENTURY



^ SLATE SHINGLE  
19TH - 21ST CENTURY



^ SINGLE PLY MEMBRANE  
20TH - 21ST CENTURY



^ ARCHITECTURAL GRADE ASPHALT  
20TH - 21ST CENTURY



^ 3-TAB COMPOSITION  
20TH - 21ST CENTURY



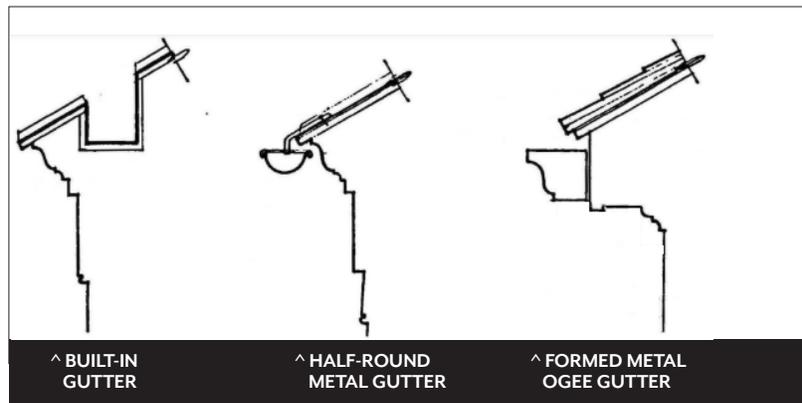
Not visible roof ● ● ●



## Gutters and Downspouts

While gutters and downspouts do not require BAR approval, the following are recommended as best practices:

- o Half-round gutters hang from the roof bracket and should be used when no fascia board exists.
- o K-style or ogee gutters should be used when there is a pre-existing fascia board to which the flat side of an ogee gutter can be easily mounted.
- o Gutters and downspouts should be metal or wood and painted or factory finished in a color to match the wall or trim.



Types of gutters appropriate in the historic districts.

# ROOFING



## *Additional Resources*

[National Park Service Preservation Brief #4: Roofing for Historic Buildings](#)

[National Park Service Preservation Brief #19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs](#)

[National Park Service Preservation Brief #29: The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs](#)

[National Park Service Preservation Brief #30: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs](#)