

Boards of Architectural Review

Roof Materials Policy

Adopted 10/20/2010 (OHAD) and 10/27/2010 (PG)

A. General

1. Replacement of more than 25 square feet of any roofing material requires an administrative finding of appropriateness from the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Staff, under sec. 10-109 and 10-209 of the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance. A building permit from Code Administration is also required for replacement of more than 100 square feet of roof material per the exception to 2006 USBC sec. 108.2(10) and a City Code amendment, effective June 1, 2010.
2. BAR Staff may administratively approve the direct replacement of roofing which complies with all of the policies stated in section B, below. Prior to any approval, BAR Staff must first confirm the age and style of the structure and, where possible, the original roofing material.
3. Where BAR Staff makes a written finding that all or a portion of the roof surface is not visible from a public right-of-way, the roofing material is not regulated by the BAR and may be replaced with any suitable material allowed by the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC). Historically appropriate, compatible and environmentally sustainable materials and practices are, nevertheless, encouraged. Whether visible or not, a building permit is required from Code Administration to replace over 100 square feet of roofing in the historic districts.
4. Proposed replacement roofing not in compliance with the Board's adopted policies, or found by Staff to be architecturally incompatible or historically inappropriate, requires review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the BAR. The BAR will evaluate such cases as to the appropriateness of the roofing product on that particular building using the criteria in the *Design Guidelines*.
5. Any appropriate and compatible modern roof material may be used on new buildings and additions approved by the Board as part of the overall building's Certificate of Appropriateness approval. Refer to the chapter on Roofing Materials in the BAR's *Design Guidelines* for additional information.
6. These policies may be amended by the Boards as new materials become available but will be reviewed by the Board and updated at least every five years.

B. Staff Administrative Approval of Replacement Roofing

Staff may administratively approve the replacement of roofing if the proposed material complies with all of the policies stated below.

1. Original roofing, or existing roofing which has acquired historic importance over time (such as metal roofing which replaced original wood shingles during the 19th century), should be preserved and repaired whenever possible.
2. When staff concurs that it is not possible to repair or salvage and reuse original historic roofing material, replacement materials should match the original in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and should utilize the same materials and installation method to the maximum extent possible.
 - a. Original slate or tile roofing must be replaced with the same style slate or tile roofing (color and shape);

- b. Metal roofing must be replaced with the same style metal roofing (standing seam, flat seam or stamped shingle). Standing seam metal roofing is not appropriate for a Second Empire Mansard style roof, unless documentary, physical or pictorial evidence demonstrate it was the original roof material; and
- c. Original composition roofing may be replaced with architectural grade composition roofing or any other stylistically appropriate roofing material. However, by past Board practice:
 - d. Preformed and prefinished standing seam metal may replace field installed standing seam if the seams and metal pan are the same sizes.
 - e. Solid copper may replace painted standing seam metal roofing.
 - f. Synthetic slate may not replace genuine slate shingles.
- 3. Where the original roof material is missing and cannot be determined from documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence, roofing historically appropriate to the period of significance of the structure must be utilized. Appropriate material will generally include painted or unpainted sawn wood shingles, genuine slate, standing seam metal or stamped metal shingles. Three tab composition shingles are not appropriate except where evidence confirms it was the original roofing material.
- 4. Roofing colors should reflect those available during the period the historical roof material would have been used on that portion of the building.

C. Board Review of New Structures and Additions

- 1. Roof materials should be visually subdued, compatible with nearby historic structures of historic merit, high quality, durable and environmentally sustainable with an emphasis on life cycle cost.
- 2. High quality synthetic slate may be appropriate for new structures and additions.
- 3. Composition shingle roofing is generally discouraged but architectural grade composition shingles may be appropriate in weathered wood or slate blend colors. Ornamental and decorative cut composition shingles may also be appropriate.

D. Environmental Sustainability

- 1. Roof material for flat roofs or low slope roofs not visible from a public way should be light in color to reduce air conditioning loads on the building and to minimize the urban heat island effect. Living (vegetative) roofs are also encouraged on later buildings or where minimally visible. (no Board review required)
- 2. Solar collectors should be located on secondary roof exposures where they are minimally visible. Thin film photovoltaic collectors may be appropriate on primary facades only if they are transparent or match the color of the historically appropriate roof material. (Board review required if visible)
- 3. Existing roof materials should be preserved and repaired wherever possible. Replacement roofing should be made from salvaged, recycled, or natural materials, which should themselves be recyclable.
- 4. To the extent possible, roof materials should be extracted, processed and manufactured regionally.
- 5. Roofing systems should capture rainwater for landscape irrigation and to reduce storm water runoff.