

STAFF REPORT: JUNE 12, 2024, REGULAR MEETING **PREPARED BY:** T. BOSCARINO
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00204; HDC2024-00275
ADDRESS: 971 BURNS
HISTORIC DISTRICT: INDIAN VILLAGE
APPLICANT: EMMA BORNGESSER, BRUTTELL ROOFING; DENINE NGOYI
OWNER: DENINE NGOYI
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: MAY 21, 2024
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: MAY 23, 2024

SCOPE: REPLACE WOOD SHINGLE ROOF ON HOUSE WITH ASPHALT SHINGLE ROOF, REPLACE ASPHALT SHINGLE ROOF ON GARAGE, OTHER GARAGE REPAIRS



971 Burns viewed from the street; May 2024 photo by staff. The roof material, subject of this application, is not clearly visible due to tree cover. The garage can be seen in the background.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This two-and-one-half-story house was built in 1908 and faces east onto the street. Key character-defining features include the wood shingles which comprise the roofing materials and extend to also clad the second story of the house. An undated survey report in the Historic District Commission files describes the house as “. . . outstanding in its styling. Its counterpart can be found on the sandy coastline of the New England States. It is as if it were transported to Indian Village. It is a unique style, rare and worthy of being preserved.”

The garage, also subject of this application, is from the 1910s or 1920s and clad with wood siding and stucco. The alley-facing (west-facing) wall is leaning outward slightly. A brick slope chimney is also leaning, potentially due to the erosion of its mortar over time.



The garage. May 2024 photo by staff.

PROPOSAL

Roof replacement

The applicant proposes to replace the wood shingles with Certainteed Landmark Pro asphalt architectural shingles in “Colonial Slate” color.



Proposed shingles in “Colonial Slate.” Image from product website.

Garage repairs

The applicant proposes to rebuild the compromised structural clay tile masonry of the alley-facing (west-facing) wall with wood framing. This repair work would result in a loss of the stucco surface, which would be

replaced with new stucco. Existing wood siding would be retained and the ash door would be kept in place.

The proposal would also rebuild the chimney with new brick.

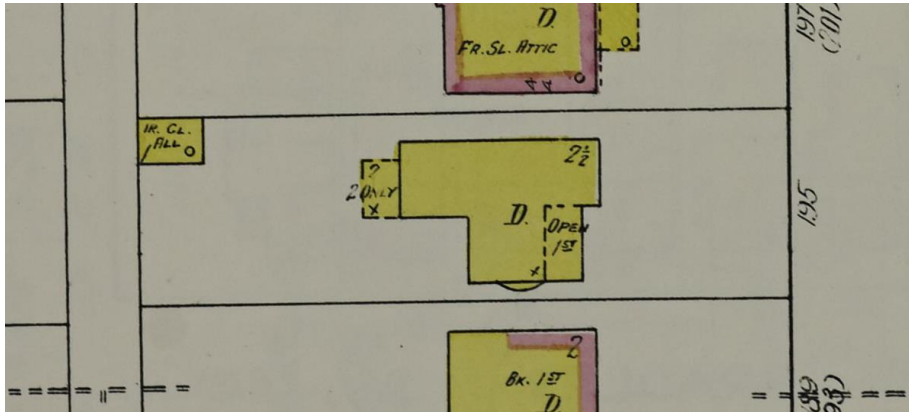


West wall (left) and chimney (right). Photos from application materials.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Indian Village Historic District was established by resolution of the City Council in 1971 and codified November 5, 1976. A Final Report was not prepared for the district.
- The Elements of Design for Indian Village provide the following relevant observations:
 - “The majority of the buildings are faced with brick, while many are partially or totally stucco. Wood shingle is occasionally used as a wall covering, usually at the second floor level, and never as the sole material. Roofing includes slate, tile, and wooden and asphalt shingles.”
 - “The use of stucco or concrete, with or without half-timbering, as a contrast to brick surfaces is not unusual. Tile, slate, or wood shingle roofs have particular textural values where they exist. Asphalt shingles, generally, have little textural interest, even in those types which purport to imitate some other variety.”
 - “Where stucco or concrete exists, it is usually left in its natural state, or painted in a shade of cream. Roofs are in natural colors (tile and slate colors, wood colors) and asphalt shingles are predominantly within this same dark color range. Paint colors often relate to style.”
- The wood shingle roofing in place today represents a restoration of a historical condition. The timeline

is as follows:



Sanborn Map Company 1910. The centered building is the subject property; the "x" denotes a wood shingle roof.

- The roof was originally wood shingle, as depicted in a Sanborn map.



Historic Designation Advisory Board photo, 1970

- Diamond-pattern asphalt shingles were in place by the time the Indian Village Historic District was enacted in 1971.
- The present-day wood shingles were approved by the Historic District Commission with a Certificate of Appropriateness dated September 11, 1997. The COA cites Standard #6: "Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial

evidence.” Further, the associated Historic District Commission staff report notes “physical evidence of the original wood shingles existing under [an upper layer of] asphalt shingles.”



Roof replacement from asphalt shingles to wood shingles per 1997 COA. Photo from unrelated 1998 application documents.

- The present wood shingles were installed in 1998.
- A wood shingle roof is almost invariably a character-defining feature of a building, as is the case on this house and garage on this property. The current wood roof represents a replacement of the original and historic roofing material. The character-defining nature of the roofing material is furthered by the architectural style of the building, which employs wood shingles as part of a cohesive design that also encompasses the second-floor cladding material.
- *Preservation Briefs 19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs* guides that “If over 20% of the shingles on any one surface appear eroded, cracked, cupped, or split ... replacement should be considered.” This is clearly the case, as seen during the staff site visit and in photos provided by the applicant.



2024 photos provided by the applicant.

- *Preservation Briefs 19* guides: “Wooden shingle roofs need periodic replacement. They can last from

15 to over 60 years, but the shingles should be replaced before there is deterioration of other wooden components of the building.” The same document also states “Fifteen to thirty years, however, is a more realistic lifespan for most premium modern wooden shingle roofs.” The current roof is 26 years old.

- The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (Standard #6) require that “deteriorated historic 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.” Thus, wood should be replaced with wood unless it is infeasible to do so.
- The applicant has obtained the following estimates:
 - Reroofing with “cedar shake”: \$225,000 (Bruttell Roofing, Inc.)
 - Reroofing with Certainteed architectural asphalt shingles: \$67,151 (Bruttell Roofing, Inc.)
- According to Realtor.com, the house sold in 2021 for \$580,000 and presently has an estimated value of \$820,000; the cost of reroofing with wood shingle might be roughly 27%–39% of the value of the property.
- According to the 1997 application documents, the wood shingle roof cost \$18,000 (\$34,924 today, according to the Consumer Price Index inflation calculator).
- According to the City Code,¹ “in reviewing plans for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness, the Historic District Commission shall follow the U.S. Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for rehabilitation and guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings as set forth in 36 CFR Part 67.” That regulation includes the direction “the Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.”² In determining feasibility, it is the role of the Commission to apply the Standards in the “reasonable manner” cited above. Replacement of the roofing with new wood is technically feasible. In assessing “reasonableness” concerning economic feasibility, staff has recommended in the past that the Commission compare the cost of the historically appropriate repair to the value of the property, among other factors. This is a subjective, case-specific assessment, and can vary from district to district, block to block, or house to house.
- Asphalt shingles are historically appropriate for the garage.
- The other proposed garage work items would not noticeably change the exterior appearance of the garage, though old stucco will be replaced with new stucco and old chimney bricks will be replaced with new chimney bricks.

ISSUES

- Staff suggests reroofing with wood shingles, per Standard #6, is both technically and financially feasible.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78: Determinations of Historic District Commission (Recommendation One: Denial)

Staff concludes that the proposed reroofing of the house with asphalt shingles does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- The work would replace a character-defining historic material with a different material, of noticeably different pattern and texture, when replacement with a matching material would be technically and financially feasible.

Therefore, staff recommends the Commission issue a *Denial* for the work as proposed because it fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular:

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.
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.

Section 21-2-78: Determinations of Historic District Commission (Recommendation Two: Certificate of Appropriateness)

Staff concludes that the proposed chimney repair, stucco repair, and garage roofing replacement meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for this work.

¹ Sec. 21-2-73

² 67.7 (b).