

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MARCH 22, 2016

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE  
PARKER-GRAY DISTRICT BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

**FROM:** BAR STAFF

**SUBJECT:** DRAFT ROOFING POLICY/GUIDELINE AND GUIDELINE TABLE OF  
CONTENTS

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At the Board's request, Staff proposes revisions to the roofing policy for the Parker-Gray District. Staff has also prepared a draft of the roofing chapter of the Parker-Gray Design Guidelines.

### Draft Roofing Policy

The proposed revisions allow for the installation of three-tab composite shingles on Later (post 1931) buildings in the Parker-Gray District. Many of the district's late 1930s-1950s brick row houses originally had 3 tab composite shingles and the revised roof policy would allow for staff approval of this type of roofing material. Requests for this type of composite roofing on new construction (though not rear one-story additions which are allowed without BAR review, per the PG RRG) will still require BAR approval as part of the approval of the new construction project. While staff supports the use of 3 tab roofing on the red brick row-houses, staff is somewhat uncomfortable administratively approving this roofing material on new construction, primarily because many of our new in-fill projects are designed in traditional and more ornate architectural styles. Fortunately, many homeowners prefer architectural shingles over 3 tab shingles for a number of reasons: (1) they come in various shapes and sizes and have more visual depth and architectural character, (2) they more closely reflect historic, natural roofing materials, (3) they are thicker shingles and more long lasting with longer manufacturer warranties. The one potential downside for some homeowners is that the cost of architectural shingles is more than 3 tab shingles. However, the cost of labor for installation is generally the same either way.



## Draft Roofing Guideline

Staff previously drafted the roofing chapter of the Parker-Gray design guidelines but doesn't believe it was ever provided to the Board. Staff is seeking the Board's feedback on the proposed draft guideline, as well as the revisions recommended by Staff below.

- Add clarification regarding no review, Staff review and Board review:
  1. No BAR review for replacement/repair of 25 square feet or less of the same material
  2. BAR staff review for roof replacement consistent with the BAR policy. Some of these replacements may be considered Repairs (historically appropriate replacement of the same design, material and color), meaning no CofA and no fee.
  3. Board review required for roofs not meeting the policy, or for new construction
  4. Regardless of #1-#3, the Virginia Construction Code requires a building permit for roof replacement of more than 100 square feet of roofing, regardless of location or visibility. If located in the historic district, the building permit will be automatically routed to BAR staff.
- Add additional photos of a typical wood shingle roof (not fish scale) and architectural shingles.
- Delete "where permitted" under guidelines and change it to "If using composite roofing, consider architectural grade composition shingles in weathered wood or slate blend colors."
- Update the Don't section.

## ATTACHMENTS

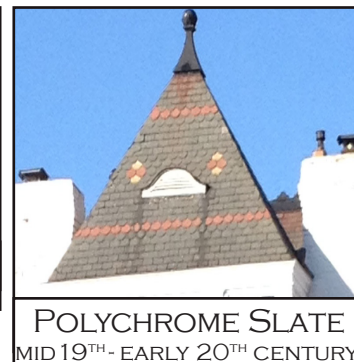
- 1- *DRAFT roofing guideline*
- 2- *DRAFT Parker-Gray roof policy*

# ROOFING

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
PARKER-GRAY DISTRICT

APPROVAL MATRIX			
YEAR BUILT	FRONT (STREET FACING)	SIDE (NON-STREET FACING)	REAR (NON-STREET FACING)
Pre - 1932	STAFF REVIEW	STAFF REVIEW	STAFF REVIEW
Post - 1931	STAFF REVIEW	STAFF REVIEW	STAFF REVIEW

Replacement of more than 25 square feet of any roofing material visible from a public way requires staff review. Upon request, staff will make a written determination whether roofing is visible. Original or existing roofing on early buildings, which has acquired historic importance over time, must be preserved and repaired whenever possible. When this is not feasible, staff can approve replacement materials that match the original roofing material. Historically appropriate, compatible and environmentally sustainable materials and practices are encouraged, including living roofs in minimally visible locations.



## GUIDELINES

### DO . . .

- Repair and patch rather than replace, where practical.
- Preserve and repair historic roof materials wherever feasible.
- Where permitted, use architectural grade composition shingles in weathered wood or slate blend colors.
- Use light colors on flat roofs to reduce air conditioning loads on the building and minimize the urban heat island effect.

### DON'T . . .

- Replace genuine slate with synthetic slate.
- Use three-tab composition shingles.
- Replace genuine slate with synthetic slate.

REGARDLESS OF AGE OR LOCATION:  
A building permit is required for replacement of over **100 sq. ft.** in the historic districts.

# EXAMPLES

*Visible roof area*

*Not visible roof area*



*Roof materials can help differentiate between two periods of construction*



## GUTTERS & DOWNSPOUTS

- Gutters and downspouts require staff review.
- Metal snow guards do not require any review.
- Gutters and downspouts must be metal or wood and painted or factory finished in a color to match the trim.
- K-style or ogee gutters can be used when there is a pre-existing fascia board to which the flat side of an ogee gutter can be easily mounted.
- Half-round gutters hang from the roof bracket and should be used where no fascia board exists.

## TRIM & CORNICES

- Replacement trim must be an historically appropriate profile and design and approved by staff.
- Existing early trim must be preserved wherever possible.
- Synthetic or composite trim may be approved by staff in limited locations on the front of early buildings, such as the fascia board behind gutters where wood trim is consistently exposed to moisture.

photo of trim/cornice/gutter

## SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST

- A survey plat or aerial image indicating the location and extent of proposed roof replacement.
- Photograph showing the current material and physical condition of the roof.
- Specifications, including color selection, for the replacement material.



## Boards of Architectural Review Roof Materials Policy **Parker-Gray Amendments Proposed 3/22/2016**

### 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 201206 USBC VCC sec. 108.2(10) and a City Code amendment, effective June 1, 2010.
1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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*.
4. 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.
5. 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 (No public hearing)

Staff may administratively approve the replacement of roofing if the proposed material complies with all of the policies stated below. Where staff determines that a historically appropriate roofing replacement is an in-kind Repair (same design and material), a Certificate of Appropriateness fee is not required.

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 *historically appropriate 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 *on Later buildings in the Parker-Gray District where the original roof material could have been three tab shingles. 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** (Public hearing)

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.~~ *Architectural grade shingles* in weathered wood or slate blend colors *are encouraged*. 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.

Amended by Parker-Gray BAR on ??