

STAFF REPORT: 07-08-2020 MEETING

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

APPLICATION NUMBER: 20-6761

ADDRESS: 221 EAST BOSTON BOULEVARD

HISTORIC DISTRICT: ARDEN PARK-EAST BOSTON

APPLICANT: JOSHUA DESLOOVES, KEYSTONE PRESERVATIONS

PROPERTY OWNER: MATIOS SIMONIAN

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 06/24/2020

SCOPE: REPLACE COPPER ROOF WITH EUROSHIELD RUBBER SHINGLES

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The house at 221 East Boston Boulevard was constructed in 1899 for Joseph McLaughlin. Original building restrictions for the neighborhood allowed only for single-family residences that were at least two stories in height, and were to be of brick or stone, or a combination. The upper stories could be shingles, cement, or plaster. The cost of residences between Woodward and Brush were to range from \$6,500 - \$8,000.

The house is located at the northeast corner of John R and East Boston Boulevard and is situated on the eastern end of a double lot. Its placement gives the house the effect of being a country estate and is unlike most of its later-constructed neighbors, whose horizontal massing fill the widths of their lots thereby creating a residential street wall.

The house is an example of the Shingle style, due to its irregularity of shapes and massing, the tower which blends into the house by its flat top and continuous cornice, and the second story wood shingles. The use of Colonial Revival details, which was a concurrent architectural style, was common within the Shingle style and can be seen here through the use of Palladian windows, ionic porch columns, and pedimented dormers.

The use of brick, one-over-one windows, and even leaded glass windows sets a subtle contrast to the more patterned and visually contrasting second floor (i.e., the dimensioned wood siding and painted true-divided light windows). The third floor is given equal, if not more, attention. The central hip roof is intersected by multiple gables on the east and west sides; and four differently styled dormers are appointed in architectural detail befitting their physical, and thereby visual, locations: the front dormer features an ogee open pediment; the west elevation dormer (facing John R) features a broken triangular pediment; an arched pediment dormer is on the east-facing roof near the front of the house, whereas the rear roof dormer is a standard gable design. As copper is the roofing material, it allowed the dimensional quality of the roof to be minimal while being visually dramatic through its verdigris finish and its 12/12 pitch. An internal copper gutter system is also present. The garage currently has an asphalt shingle roof and external gutters.



RESIDENCE FOR MR. R. J. McLAUGHLIN, BOSTON BOULEVARD—KASTLER & HUNTER, ARCHITECTS.

Rendering is from an 1899 edition of the Detroit Free Press. Photo: Historical Detroit Area Architecture Facebook Group.



HDC Staff Photo: June 27, 2020

PROPOSAL

Due to multiple leaks, the applicant proposes to remove the copper roof and install a Euroshield rubber roofing shingle system (Beaumont Shake style, Gray) . Per the contractor’s estimate, copper flashing will be installed on the valleys and chimneys and the existing internal gutter system will be retained. Where there is an exposed gutter, a copper gutter will be installed.

Additionally, the asphalt shingle roof on the garage will be removed and Euroshield shingles installed. The external gutter system will be retained.

Listed below are the additional documents comprising this application.

Existing Conditions

Inspection Report	De BrikHaus
Homeowner Insurance Letter	Chubb
HDC Questionnaire	Completed by Kanga Roofing
HDC Email Correspondence	Audra Dye and Evan Fay
Photo Report	Kanga Roofing
Roofing Pictures-Individual (5)	Evan Fay
Narrative	Evan Fay
Eagle View Documents, House & Garage	Kanga Roofing (created by Modern Builder’s Supply)
Roof Schematic Report	Kanga Roofing (created by Rooforders.com)

New Copper Roofing

Copper Replacement Estimate	Kanga Roofing
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New Alternate Roofing

Job Details	Kanga Roofing
Euroshield Estimate	Jimmy Roofing
Euroshield Brochure	Euroshield

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Joseph McLaughlin and Edmund Owen platted the 30 acre subdivision in 1892 and named it the McLaughlin & Owen subdivision.
- The two houses adjacent (to the east) of 221 E. Boston Boulevard were also constructed in 1899.



Photo shows 221 E. Boston, 235 Boston, and 251 E. Boston, circa 1902. Detroit Publishing Company

- Less than 1/5 of the lots within the subdivision had been developed by 1910. The unimproved lots were purchased by the North Woodward Avenue Land Corporation. The president of the land corporation, Max Brook, changed the name of East Chicago Boulevard to Arden Park, and concurrently changed the name of the subdivision.
- The Arden Park-East Boston Local Historic District was established in 1981.
- According to the National Park Service: several factors contributed to the popularity of metal roofing throughout much of the 19th and early 20th centuries - it was lighter than slate or tile, it offered more fire protection than wood, and most metals were less expensive than slate or tile.
- The National Park Service also explained: Though copper roofs were installed on many important buildings in the early 1800s, it was infrequently used until the latter 19th century, when the Lake Superior mines opened in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Even then copper was more often used for flashings, gutters, and downspouts than for roofing. Copper has always been an expensive choice for roofing, but it is easily worked, does not need a coating and weathers attractively. These factors all contribute to copper's use most often and to greatest advantage on the ornamental roofs of major public buildings.
- It is staff's experience, which matches the comments made by the National Park Service, copper roofs on residential homes was not highly common for the era, rather, copper was most often used for major public buildings.
- It is also staff's opinion, as this house was constructed for the original subdivision developer, the use of copper for the roof was likely a calculated one. Not only does a 12/12 pitch roof offer the most dramatic visual expanse for any roofing material, the house's corner location and open side lot further contributed to the house's visual dominance within the neighborhood. Even now, with a developed tree canopy on the side lot and parkway, this house's roof stands out amongst the other historic houses within the historic district, many of which retain their original tile and slate roofs.

ISSUES

- Copper continually changes over time as it reacts with its environment. Even if a metal roof is treated to mimic copper, it is staff's opinion the metal roof will not visually match the range of colors found naturally on a copper roof, as well as being more susceptible to rust and corrosion than copper.
- The photographs support the assertion that leaks have been occurring within the house for longer than the applicant's ownership, and that areas where roofing transitions occur are in need of immediate attention. Additionally, while there are areas on the roof where copper shingles are missing, the photographs show many large expanses of intact copper shingles, thereby leading staff to still believe retention of the roof may be possible.

RECOMMENDATION

The existing copper roof is a substantial character-defining feature of the house, integral to its historic expression. Any replacement product, possibly even new copper, will not match the existing roof installation and will cause the removal of historic materials as well as the removal of distinctive construction techniques and craftsmanship, thus altering features that characterize the property. Therefore, HDC staff recommends the Commission deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for this project as proposed as it does not meet the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards:

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

6. 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. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

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.

The following collection of photographs were taken by HDC staff - June 27, 2020.







East Elevation, Arched dormer partially seen.





West elevation facing John R





Garage



Rear elevation of house, with standard dormer. Largest area of missing roofing.



