

**STAFF REPORT: 02/08/2023 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: B. BUCKLEY**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8200**

**ADDRESS: 94 EAST BOSTON BOULEVARD**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: ARDEN PARK-EAST BOSTON**

**APPLICANT: TARIK NAJIB, PROFESSIONAL CONTRACTING AND CONSULTING**

**PROPERTY OWNER: WE BUY HOMES 123**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 11/22/2022**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 01/24/2023**

**SCOPE: REPLACE TERRACOTTA ROOF TILES WITH ASPHALT SHINGLES**

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

94 E. Boston Blvd., also known as the Albert J. Dunneback House, was designed by the Detroit firm Pollmar & Ropes and constructed in 1913. The Tudor-inspired, two-and-a-half-story dwelling features two full-height projecting bays on the façade that are clad in limestone at the first story, stucco at the second, and half-timbering at the garret. A detached garage sits at the rear of the property and mimics the architectural details of the dwelling, including green terracotta roof tiles and double-hung wood sash windows.



**Figure 1. View of 94 E. Boston Blvd. looking southwest.**



**Figure 2. 1981 designation photograph of 94 E. Boston. HDAB**

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes to remove the existing terracotta roof tiles on the dwelling and garage and replace them with asphalt shingles.



Figure 3: Image of the garage, looking south.



Figure 4: View of rear of dwelling, looking north.



Figure 5: Detail of northeast corner of roof.



Figure 6: Proposed shingle brochure.

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Arden Park-East Boston Historic District was established in 1981.
- HDC records indicate the Chicago Roofing and Slate company installed new terracotta roof shingles that matched the existing in 1994.
- Deterioration of portions of the tile, particularly in areas where the roof slope meets the eaves and near overhanging tree branches, is observable from the public right-of-way and in photographs submitted by the client.

## ISSUES

- The green terracotta tiles are a unique and character defining feature of the dwelling and garage. They provide a depth and texture that cannot be replicated with asphalt shingles. As noted in the Arden Park-East Boston Elements of Design, *“Tile and slate roofing create textural interest, whereas asphalt shingles generally do not.”*

- Portions of the tile roof exhibit deterioration, however applicant submitted photographs and observations made during the staff visit do not indicate the roof is deteriorated beyond repair. The deterioration appears to be limited to specific areas of the roof on both buildings.
- The applicant has indicated they are pursuing quotes to repair or replace the tiles at the deteriorated areas of the roof. No quotes for this work were submitted by the applicant to date.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission**

It is staff's opinion the proposed roof project will destroy architectural features that characterize the property. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a Denial for the work as proposed because it does not meet the Secretary of the 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.*

*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.*

For the following reasons: The existing tile roof is a distinctive feature of the dwelling and garage. The historic roof tiles add a characteristic depth and color to the roof that help define the architectural character of the buildings that would be lost with the installation of asphalt shingles. As noted in Element 8 in the Elements of Design for Arden Park-East Boston "*Tile and slate roofing create textural interest, whereas asphalt shingles generally do not.*" The applicant has not demonstrated the roof is deteriorated beyond repair, nor that repair or in-kind replacement of limited areas of deterioration is not economically feasible.