

REVISED STAFF REPORT: 11/08/2023 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2023-~~0085~~00093

ADDRESS: 400 FISKE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BERRY SUBDIVISION

APPLICANT: DERRICK GILFORD (JCA ENTERPRISES)

OWNER: WADE AND ELLA DAVIS

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 10/23/2023

DATE OF STAFF VISIT: 9/28/2023

SCOPE OF WORK: REPLACE SLATE ROOF WITH ASPHALT SHINGLES (WORK PARTIALLY COMPLETE)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Erected ca. 1925, the building at 400 Fiske is a two-story, single-family dwelling that is located within the Berry Subdivision Historic District. The Tudor Revival-style house displays a cross-gabled roof with a side-gabled, two-story central/main mass and an intersection projecting gabled wing at the rear. A two-story wing with a mansard type roof is also located at the building's rear. The slate has been removed from the side-gabled, main portion of the roof. Newly installed brown asphalt shingles or underlayment has been installed at this portion of the roof. The intersecting projecting rear gabled roof retains the original slate. The shed-roof dormers which top this portion of the roof displays slate at their front and side walls. Exterior walls of the home are clad with stucco and brick. Wood half-timber detailing is located at the building's second story. Windows are the historic-age wood double hung and casement units. An historic-age, detached garage which sits to the rear of the parcel displays a brick exterior cladding and a hipped slate roof.



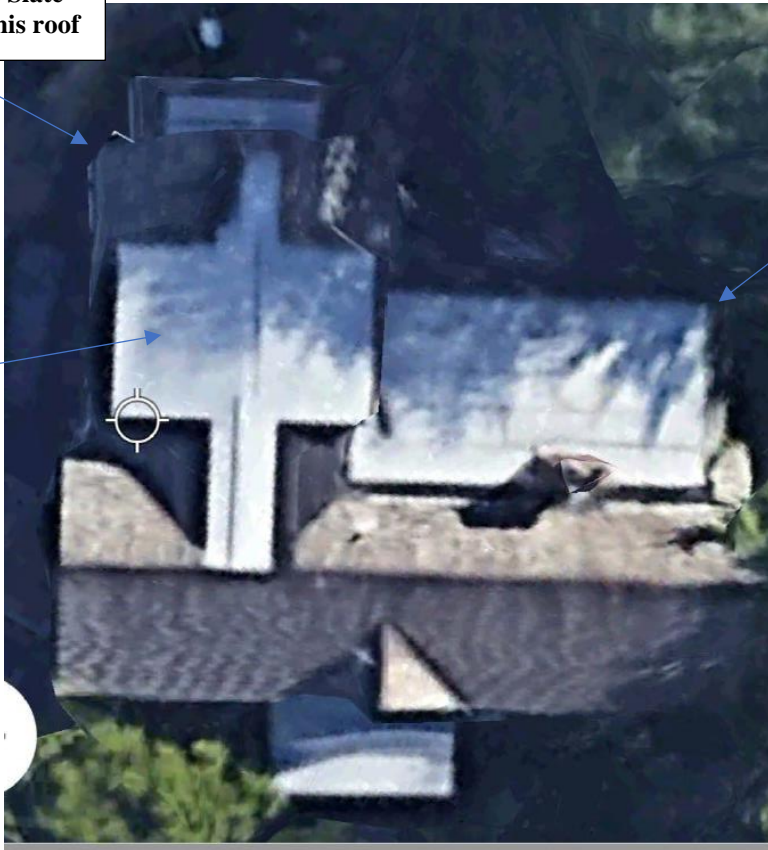
400 Fiske, current. Staff photo taken 11/1/2023, facing southeast

Rear, intersecting gabled wing. Slate remains at this roof

Rear, flat/mansard-roof wing

Shed-roof dormers atop rear gabled wing. Slate remains at the dormer front and side walls

Side-gabled main roof,. The slate has been completely removed from this roof



Aerial photo of roof. Photo provided by applicant



Rear of main side-gabled roof, south portion, facing northwest. Current conditions. Note that the slate has been removed and the area has been covered/weatherproofed with underlayment. Photo provided by applicant



Rear gabled wing and dormer, showing current conditions, facing southeast. Photo taken on 11/1/2023 by staff



Rear gabled wing and dormer, showing current conditions, facing northwest. Photo taken by applicant

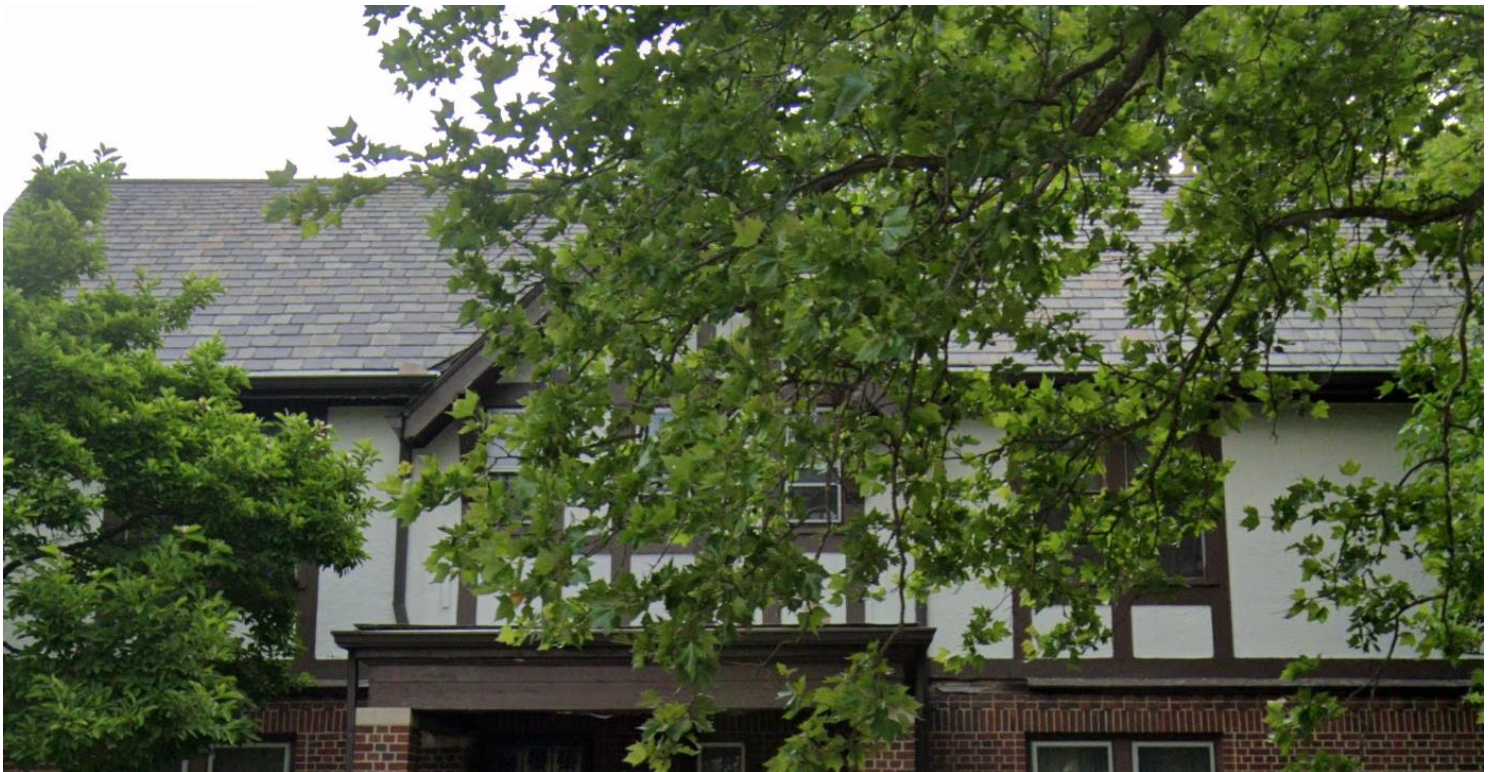
PROPOSAL

With the current submission, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to replace the home's slate shingles and the brown asphalt shingles that were installed without HDC approval with new asphalt shingles (color, dark grey). Note that all of the slate has been removed from the main side-gabled portion of the roof and brown asphalt shingles or underlayment have been installed/is visible. This work was undertaken without HDC approval and/or permit.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- On 9/8/2023, HDC staff was notified that the slate roof at 400 Fisk was in the process of being removed. Staff consulted files maintained by the HDC and the Detroit Building Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) and found that the HDC has not issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work and a permit had not been issued. Staff therefore visited the site that day and informed the contractor of their requirement to acquire HDC approval and permit for the work.
- As noted above, the slate roof has been removed from the main, side-gabled portion of the roof. The portion of the rear, gabled roof and the shed-roof dormers retain their historic slate tiles.
- Staff did view the designation photo of the home, the remaining portions of the slate on the property's roof, and recent Google Streetview images which were taken prior to the current unapproved roof removal. It is staff's opinion that the slate roof was a distinctive, character-defining feature of the home.
- The applicant attended the Commission's 9/13/2023 regular meeting with a proposal to replace the home's slate shingles with new asphalt shingles (color, brown). The application also proposed to repair damaged areas of the rear flat/mansard roof with the addition of new torch down rubberized roofing. The Commission issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition of the torch down roof, but denied the proposed replacement of the slate roof with a new brown asphalt shingle roof for the following reasons:
 - The existing slate roof is a distinctive character-defining feature of the home
 - The application did not provide sufficient documentation that the slate roof is/was deteriorated beyond repair
 - The current brown asphalt shingle roofing which had been installed without HDC approval and/or permit did not provide an adequate replication of the home's historic slate roof
- As noted, the Commission determined that the previous application did not clearly indicate the condition of the slate roof, to include the portion which was removed without approval and/or the portion at the rear which remains. With the current submission, the applicant has made an effort to provide additional information/documentation to speak to the slate roof's condition. Specifically, the current application notes/includes the following:
 - A resume for JCA Enterprises which notes that the applicant has experience with historic roof repair.
 - A quote of \$67,000.00 for the installation of an entirely new slate roof. A separate quote for the cost to cover the "material alone" was \$26,070. It is unclear to staff if the \$67,000 quote is the cost for labor alone or if it also includes materials.
 - Areas of the existing slate at the rear of the roof were damaged due to a past roof repair effort. Specifically, contractors walked on the portions of the rear slate roof which adjoin the flat/mansard roof as they were in the process of repairing the membrane, causing hairline cracks throughout.

- Slate tiles were missing at the front surface of the main side-gabled roof (per the submitted narrative)
- Slate tiles at the vertical areas of the roof/the dormer front and side walls are sliding out of place per submitted photos
- All metal flashing at hips and valleys were/are heavily corroded/rusted. The applicant has noted that the cost to replace these corroded flashing and any abutting slate tiles would have cost approximately \$7,000 to \$10,000 for materials and \$2600.00 for labor.
- The cost to replace the slate roof with a new asphalt shingle roof is \$26,000. Note that the quote does not specifically indicate what type of siding will be installed at the dormer front and side walls.
- Additional annotated exterior photos and interior photos
- In an email dated 11/7/2023, the applicant has indicated that “the Slate that's on the Dormer the back part of the house the Slate is in good condition it can be saved it was just based on making the house uniform instead of shingles and slate is based on your guy's decision but the repair parts of the Slate on the Dormer and the back area of the lower part of the house can be repaired we will have to purchase the slate no more than eight \$900 but the slate is in good condition”
- An email which the applicant sent on 11/8/2023 states that “only 10 to 20% of the Slate as damage crack missing areas but it can be replaced and repaired of the remaining tiles.” This email was referring to the remaining slate at the rear roof gabled wing
- In an email dated 11/8/2023, the applicant stated that he had discovered that the wood behind the slate shingles at the dormer is rotted. He has provided photos of the decking at the flat roof, adjacent to the south dormer to demonstrate the condition of the wood beneath the dormer’s slate tiles (see below).





Google Streetview images, 2022

- The applicant has stated that he will provide a quote for an in-kind repair of the roof prior to the unapproved work at the property as he had the opportunity to assess the condition of the slate at the side gabled portion of the roof prior to its removal as well as the condition of the slate roof tiles that remain. Staff has not received this quote as of the date of this report's completion. Staff therefore withholds a recommendation re: the financial feasibility to retain/repair the entirety of the roof until she receives this quote.

ISSUES

- As noted above, it is staff's opinion that the slate roof proposed for removal/replacement is/was a distinctive, character-defining feature of the building
- During the initial 9/8/2023 site visit, staff observed the condition of slate tiles which had been removed from the roof and dropped to the ground. Staff noted that the slate roof tiles did vary in size and that many appeared to have been in good condition. See below photos taken during the 9/8/2023 field visit.
- The applicant has provided a narrative description/condition assessment ~~and limited photos (from the ground) of the remaining areas of slate at the roof. Staff does accept the applicant's assessment that the remaining areas of slate are generally deteriorated to an extent that merits replacement.~~ The applicant has also provided additional photos of the roof (see below). As noted above, the applicant has indicated that the remaining slate roof (at the dormers and rear portion of the house) is in good condition and can be repaired. He gives a quote of \$900 for that repair, but staff questions the estimate as he also has noted that portions of the slate were damaged by a previous contractor.
- Note that no detailed photos exist of the main, side-gabled roof prior to the unapproved slate removal. Therefore, staff must rely on the applicant to provide a narrative assessment of this portion of the roof as he was able to view the slate roofing before it was removed. The only note which the current application provides re: this portion of the roof is that there were missing slates and a generalized area of deterioration at the front of the main, side-gabled roof. A quote for in-kind repair of the roof prior to the unapproved removal could provide additional perspective re: the condition of the slate roof and would address the financial feasibility of retaining the slate roof. As previously noted, the applicant has stated that he will provide a repair quote based upon his knowledge of the roof condition prior to the slate removal and the areas of remaining slate. However, staff has yet to receive a repair quote as of the date of this report's completion. Staff therefore cannot proffer a

recommendation re: the appropriateness of the project/recommend for the approval of this project at this time.



Front of main, side-gabled roof. Photo provided by applicant



Front of main, side-gabled roof. Photo provided by applicant

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-73 -Certificate of Appropriateness-Denial

~~As noted above, staff does accept the applicant's assessment that the remaining portions of slate roof generally merit replacement. However, as a quote to repair the roof based upon conditions prior to the unapproved slate removal has not been submitted, it is unclear to staff that the entire roof merits replacement with asphalt shingles/the feasibility of retaining and repairing the slate the main side gabled portion of the roof. The applicant has stated that he will provide such a quote prior to the 11/8/2023 regular meeting. Staff will therefore suspend the proffer of a recommendation re: the appropriateness of this project until she receives the outstanding repair quote.~~

It is staff's opinion that the project does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards for Rehabilitation for the following reasons:

- The existing slate roof is a distinctive character-defining feature of the home
- The applicant/project contractor has noted that the remaining slate roof (at the rear gabled wing and dormers) can be repaired for an affordable cost (although staff does question the estimates low amount).
- It is not clear that the slate that has been removed without approval/the slate that was located at the main, side-gabled roof was deteriorated beyond repair. A quote for in-kind repair of the roof prior to the unapproved removal provided by the applicant/project contractor (as he observed the slate) could have provided perspective re: the condition of the slate roof and would address the financial feasibility of retaining the slate roof. However, this information has not been provided to the HDC.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the project because the work does not conform to the district's Elements of Design, nor does it meet the SOI Standards for Rehabilitation. In particular, Standards #:

- 1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*
- 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 historic 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*

Staff photos, taken on 9/8/2023 during unapproved slate roof removal





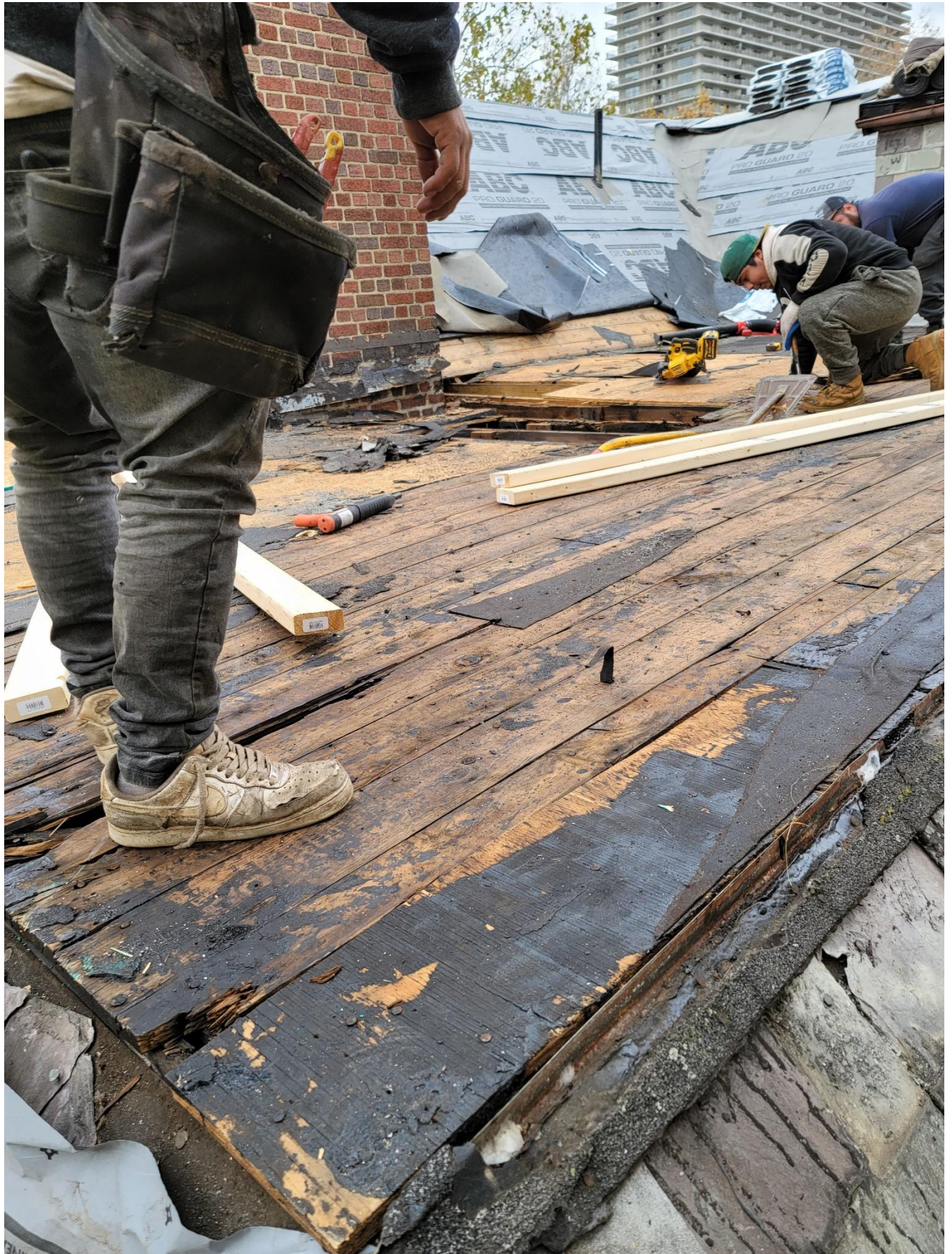




Photos of the deck at the rear flat roof, provided by applicant

















Detailed photos of the remaining slate at the rear roof and dormers, provided by applicant











