

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION



## STAFF REPORT

### Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	April 6, 2022
PROJECT:	20 Calhoun Street – Roof
APPLICANT:	Southern Roof and Wood Care Corporation
PROJECT MANAGER:	Glen Umberger, Historic Preservationist

**APPLICATION REQUEST:** The Applicant, Southern Roof and Wood Care Corporation, requests that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the following application:

**Site Feature Permit-HD.** A request for approval of a Site Feature-HD Permit to allow the installation of a Thermoplastic Polyolefin (“TPO”) roof on a portion of a Contributing Resource known as the “Planters’ Mercantile,” located at 20 Calhoun Street in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District and zoned Neighborhood Center-HD (SFHD-02-22-0517).

**INTRODUCTION:** Section 3.19, Site Feature – Historic District (HD) Permit, of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) authorizes Staff to review and approve Site Feature proposals, provided the application is in conformance with Article 5 (Design Standards). The Applicant is requesting a deviation from this standard and under Section 5.15.6 of the UDO, the UDO Administrator shall have the authority to approve substitute materials for those listed as options under the Architectural Standards.

The Applicant seeks to replace the roof on a relatively flat porch roof and the proposed roofing material meets all of the requirements of the UDO with the exception of the material. The roofing material to be used is Thermoplastic Polyolefin (“TPO”), which is a single-ply membrane bonded to the roof deck. Per Section 5.15.6.J.2. of the UDO, permitted finish materials include Metal (Galvanized, Copper, Aluminum, Zinc-Alum) or Shingles (Metal or Asphalt “dimensional” type, Slate, Composite Slate).

**REVIEW CRITERIA & ANALYSIS:** Town Staff are required to consider the criteria set forth in Section 3.19.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance in assessing an application for a Site Feature – Historic District (HD). These criteria are provided below followed by a Staff Finding(s) based upon review of the application submittals to date.

1. Section 3.19.3.A. The application must be in conformance with applicable provisions provided in Article 5, Design Standards.

- a. *Finding.* The proposed the material is a rubber roofing membrane typically used on flat roofs. As such, this application does not fully meet the requirement per UDO Section 5.15.6.G.3. as it is not a permitted material; however, the substitution of this material would be an appropriate use for the proposed situation. The existing roof has an extremely low pitch (0.25/12 pitch) which does not sheet water as effectively as a more typical slope would. While the proposed material is not considered a traditional building material on residential structures, the materials permitted by the UDO, Metal or Shingles are not effective for sheathing water when applied to such a low slope. In addition, the proposed roofing material will appear indistinguishable from the current roofing materials under the "Eyes Only Rule" which states "[s]ubstitute materials used at or above the second floor must be indistinguishable from the original at a distance of ten feet" (Mouzon, 75).

2. Section 3.19.3.C. For historic structures, in addition to the above and as applicable, conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

*Finding.* The Secretary of Interior recommends "repairing a roof by ensuring that the existing historic or compatible non-historic roof covering is sound and waterproof. Repair may include the limited replacement in kind or with a compatible substitute material." In this case, the proposed TPO materials will provide a sound and waterproof covering for the porch.

3. Section 3.19.3.D. The application must comply with applicable requirements in the Applications Manual.

*Finding.* The application has been reviewed by Town Staff and has been determined to be complete.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ACTIONS:** As granted by the powers and duties set forth in Section 2.2.6.E.2, the Historic Preservation Commission has the authority to take the following actions with respect to this application:

1. Determine the Appropriateness of the use of the TPO roof material as submitted by the Applicant.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** The Town Staff requests a determination from HPC regarding the appropriateness of the use of TPO material on the porch wing of the Contributing Resource as a substitute for those permitted by the UDO.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Location Map
2. Zoning Map
3. Application Narrative
4. Photos
5. Material Product Sheet