

# **PAINT AND ROOFING APPROVAL CRITERIA**

## **MEDFORD NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS (RESIDENTIAL)**

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**"What to Do and How to Do it!"  
from Dutch Boy Paint Company Brochure, circa 1955**

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**Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission  
Medford, Oregon**

**DECEMBER 2007**

The following criteria have been adopted by the City of Medford Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission to expedite the approval of certain applications for exterior painting and roofing projects for designated historic residential property. These criteria delineate approval criteria for quality, historically-based, and historically-compatible, work and establish a limited range of “pre-approved” options for the re-painting and re-roofing of residentially-zoned properties within the Historic Preservation Overlay. Compliance with these criteria enables qualifying projects to be approved by Planning Director without a full commission review.

**1. PURPOSE & INTENT:**

Medford has several designated residential districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places along with other, individually-listed, National Register and locally-designated historic residential properties located elsewhere in the city. Under 10.256 of the Medford Land Development Ordinance, all exterior alterations, including exterior painting and roofing, are subject to review and approval by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission. The purpose of these criteria is to identify a limited range of appropriate re-painting and re-roofing practices that can be approved by the Planning Director. Approval of applications that meet these criteria can be expedited to reduce the time and complexity of the regulatory process for property owners.

**2. AREA OF APPLICABILITY:**

The following criteria apply within the residential historic districts as shown on the following map, specifically including the Geneva/Minnesota, South Oakdale and Corning Court Ensemble areas of the Medford Historic Preservation Overlay zone as defined by the Medford Land Development Ordinance. These criteria are also applicable for all individual Local Landmark or National Register-listed residentially-zoned properties within the city.

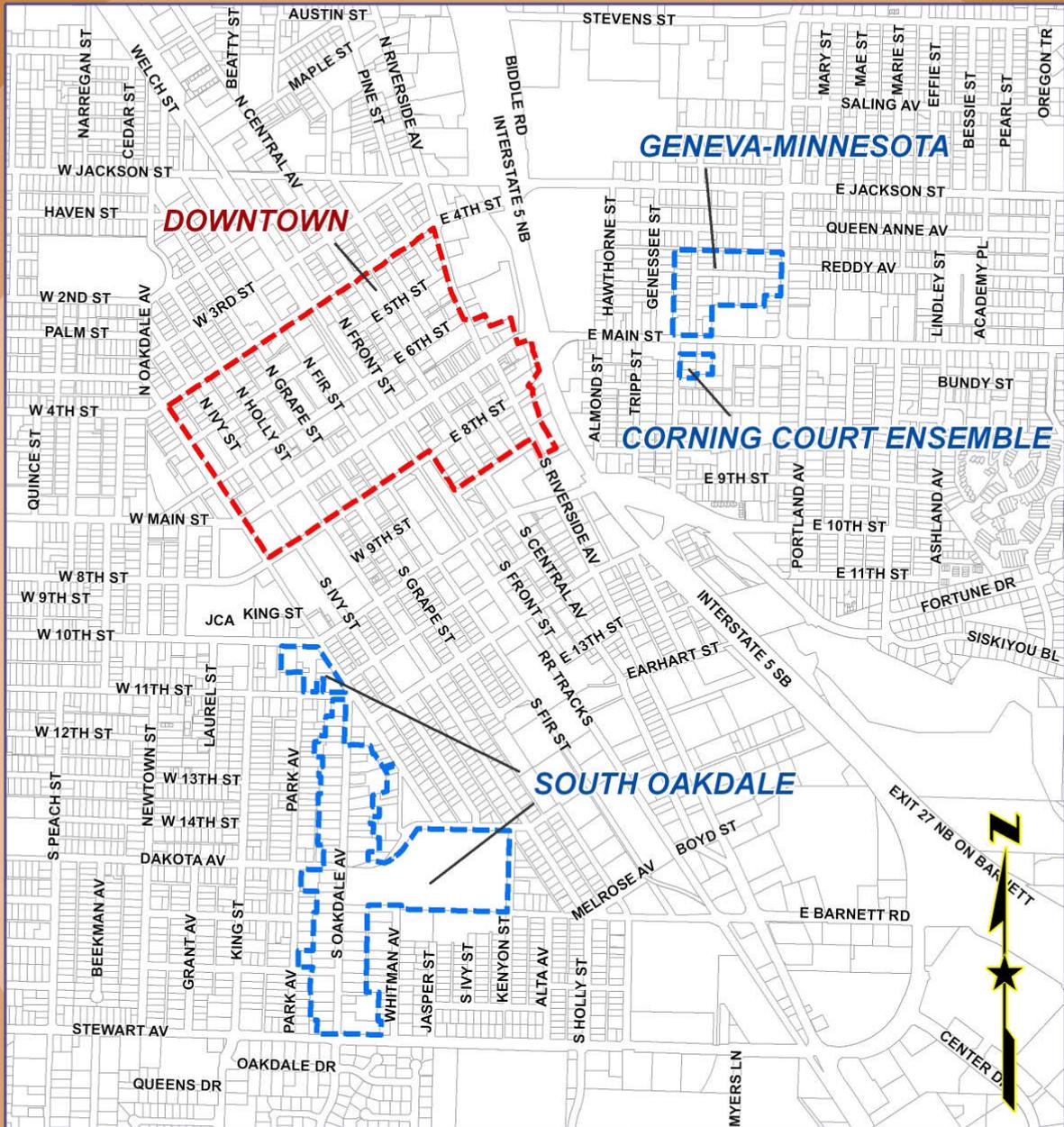
**3. LEGAL AUTHORITY:**

Section 10.408 of the Municipal Code allows Minor Historic Review of Certain Exterior Alterations including “...changes in type of roofing materials [and] exterior color...” that “...may be conducted by the Planning Director according to approval criteria adopted by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission.” These criteria have been adopted by the Commission as the approval criteria for re-painting and re-roofing projects.

**4. APPLICATION PROCESS:**

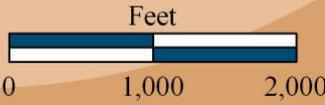
All applications processed under these criteria are subject to the standard submittal requirements and fees associated with historic review as per Medford Land Development Code 10.256 et seq. Applications deemed complete and meeting the requirements of these criteria may be approved by the Planning Director. Applications determined by the Planning Director to NOT to meet these criteria may be withdrawn, modified, or reviewed by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation as per 10.256.

# MEDFORD HISTORIC DISTRICTS



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	Commercial Historic District
	Residential Historic District
	Taxlots



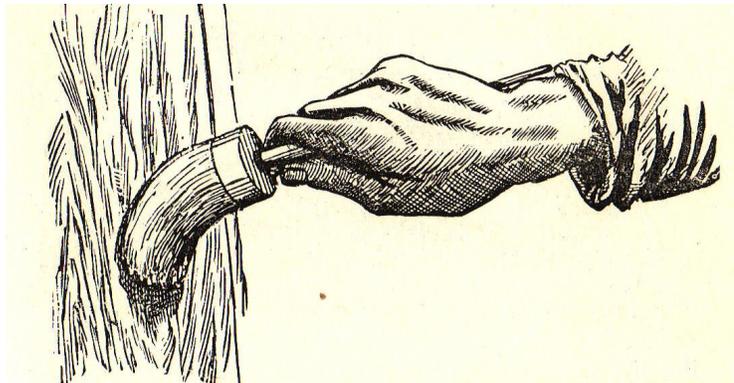
Map produced on 9.20.07



**A. Applications for Paint Approval:**

In addition to the standard 10.256 et seq. submittal requirements, applications for paint approval under these criteria must additionally include the following:

1. TWO complete sets of chips for all proposed colors. Chips may be standard manufacturer sample chips.
2. Sufficient information, either in graphic, narrative, or other format, to indicate the proposed paint scheme. For simple two-color projects this can be “Body in (Sheen/Color) and Trim in (Sheen/Color)” paint charts.. More complicated schemes should include renderings of the proposed paint scheme in section or elevation.
3. At minimum all applications must include color photographs showing the primary (street-facing) elevations(s) with sufficient detail to understand the proposal, 4x6 minimum image size. Supplementary photographs are encouraged.



“Showing the proper manner of holding the brush for the upstroke in perpendicular work”  
*Everybody’s Paint Book*, 1884

**B. Applications for Re-Roofing Approval:**

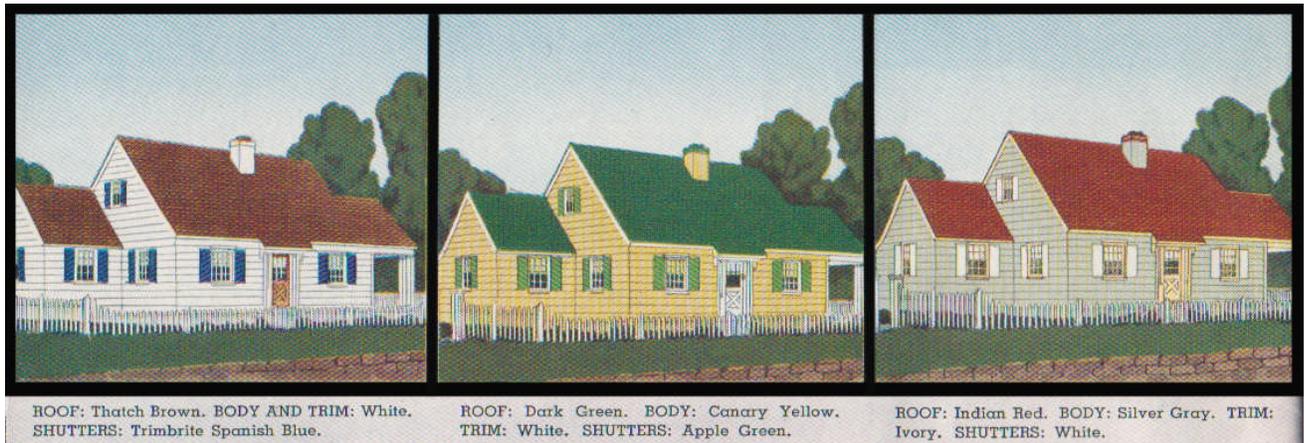
In addition to the standard 10.256 et seq. submittal requirements, applications for re-roofing approval under these criteria must additionally include the following:

1. Samples or manufacturer’s tear sheet (specification sheet) of all proposed roofing materials.
2. All applications must include color photography showing the primary (street-facing) elevations(s), documenting existing roof character, 4x6 minimum image size. Supplementary photographs are encouraged.
3. Applications proposing to recreate historic roofing detail must include historic images documenting the original character. Black and White photos, 4x6 minimum image size, are acceptable. Supplementary photographs are encouraged.

These criteria apply to the 10.256 et seq. process only. Applications for re-roofing remain subject to review and approval as required by the Medford Building Code.

## 5. MINOR HISTORIC REVIEW-EXTERIOR PAINTING

Dollar for dollar, few modifications to the exterior of a residence can create as significant an impact as the choice of paint color. Different combinations of paint and roof color working in concert or in opposition to each other can dramatically effect the character of a dwelling. Paint can make a small dwelling look larger, or reduce the mass of mansion. Bright colors can make an otherwise simple façade the most noticeable thing on the block where neutral colors can enable a building to blend in and visually recede into the background. Throughout history, different architectural styles have been associated with certain kinds of colors and that “look” has become near intrinsic to their traditional character.



“Colors for Cottage or Castle”  
Sherwin Williams, 1938

While inherently impermanent and often a matter of an owner’s personal preference, paint and roof color represent highly visible elements of a building that can either greatly enhance, or greatly detract, from historic character. An inappropriately painted dwelling, particularly in a densely developed historic neighborhood setting, can quickly become a focal point with negative impacts that effect the entire area. As a result, paint review is an appropriate component of the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission’s duties, allowing the Commission to meet its mandated charge of maintaining and protecting historic neighborhood character in those areas of the community already determined to have significant association with Medford’s past.

In Medford’s historic districts, the vast majority of property owners enjoy living in historic neighborhoods and work hard to maintain their homes in keeping with the district’s character. Owners of historic residential structures are encouraged to repaint as needed so as avoid damage to siding and trim. Oft times an owner simply wants to repaint in the existing color scheme to freshen up an exterior appearance that they continue to enjoy. In other cases, an owner has chosen a new color scheme to create a different look that is still clearly appropriate and compatible with the neighborhood’s character.

So, while paint colors have the potential to harm the character of a district, in the vast majority of cases painting with an owner’s proposed color palette is entirely appropriate and compatible with the intent of the district. The Landmarks and Preservation Commission’s design review authority exists, at least in Medford, as an method of providing an opportunity to avoid the occasional inappropriate

application. These criteria were developed to ease the approval process for paint permit applications so as to allow property owners to avoid the necessity of a full Commission review where appropriate.

**A. EXCLUSIONS:**

By definition, certain types of exterior painting activity are excluded from review by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission. These are:

1. Repainting any historic residential resource in its existing colors is considered maintenance activity and is excluded from review under 10.406(2)..
2. Painting any minor work that does not otherwise require a building permit or review and approval under 10.256 et seq. is excluded from review. Examples of such activities include but are not limited to repair and replacement of damaged siding or trim, gutter installation, storm window installation, replacement of a window within the existing opening, replacement of a door within an existing opening, etc.

**B. PRE-APPROVED PAINT PALETTE:**

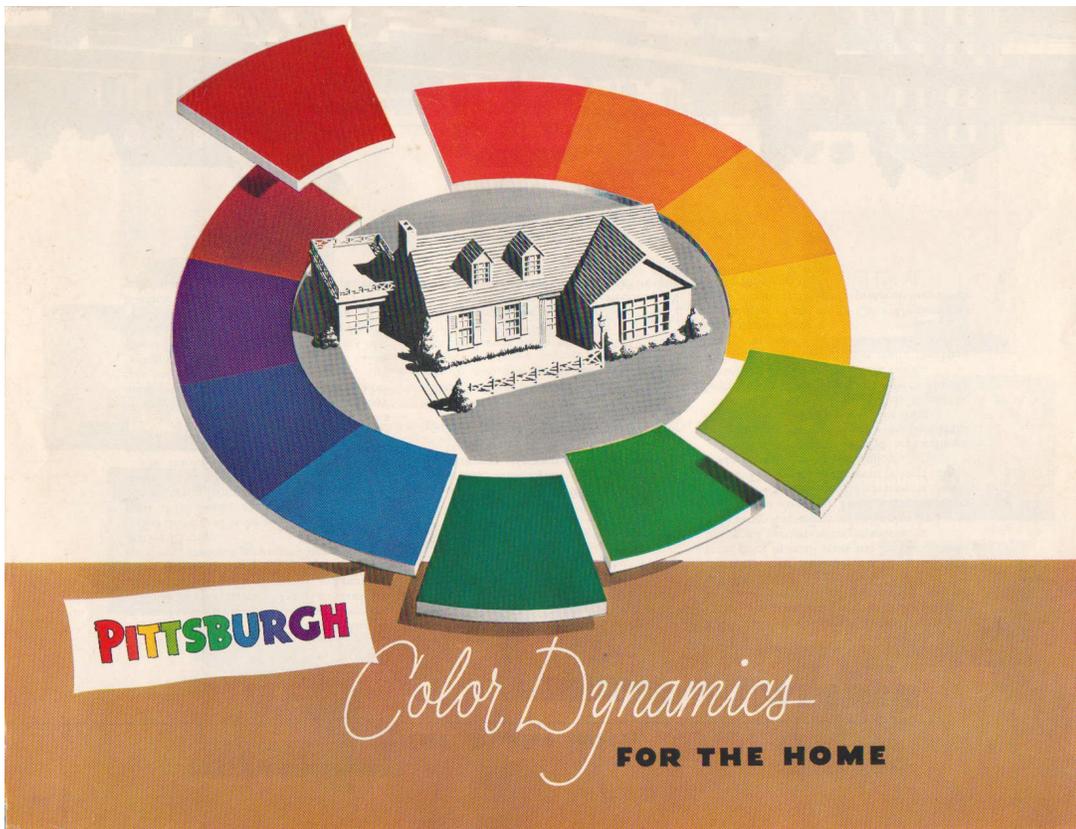
In order to create an objective set of pre-approved colors appropriate for use in Medford's residential historic districts, as well as for individually listed local landmark or National Register properties zoned residential, the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission has adopted a standardized palette of pre-approved colors.

1. At its regularly-scheduled July meeting in even-numbered years the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission will review the standardized palette of pre-approved colors and re-confirm or update the palette for use by the Planning Director for the following twenty-four month period. A copy of the approved palette is attached to these criteria by reference and is available for review at the Medford Planning Department.
2. Adoption of any standard commercially-available paint palette or chart does not constitute an endorsement of any particular vendor or paint manufacturer. Applicants may propose paint from any brand or source provided the hue and tone is determined identical in all visual characteristics to the colors of the pre-approved palette by the Planning Director.
3. Planning Director approval of applications for re-painting under these criteria are subject to the following criteria:
  - a. The application is limited to re-painting or minor maintenance work only and that such work is not part of any other proposed activity at the site that is subject to review by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission under 10.258(2). [Repainting in conjunction with re-roofing approved under these criteria is permitted]
  - b. That the application includes paint colors determined by the Planning Director to be identical in hue and tone to the colors of the approved palette.
  - c. That the application includes no more than three individual colors, hues, or tones.
  - d. Approved paint colors may be applied in any finish or sheen from flat to gloss, at the applicant's discretion. Because it was not a traditional method of painting residential

architecture and does not typically wear well due to sun fading, the use of high-gloss paints for body tones is *strongly* discouraged. It is not, however, prohibited.

**C. PAINT REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS:**

1. Applications may be denied approval under these Criteria when any one of the following conditions is determined by the Planning Director.
  - a. The proposal includes any paint color that is not determined to be identical in hue and tone to the colors of the approved palette.
  - b. The proposal includes more than three individual colors, hues, or tones of paint.
  - c. The proposal is determined by the Planning Director to be counter to the intent of these criteria and counter to intent of the Historic Preservation Overlay.
2. Applications determined to be outside these approval criteria by the Planning Director shall be reviewed by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission as per 10.258(2).



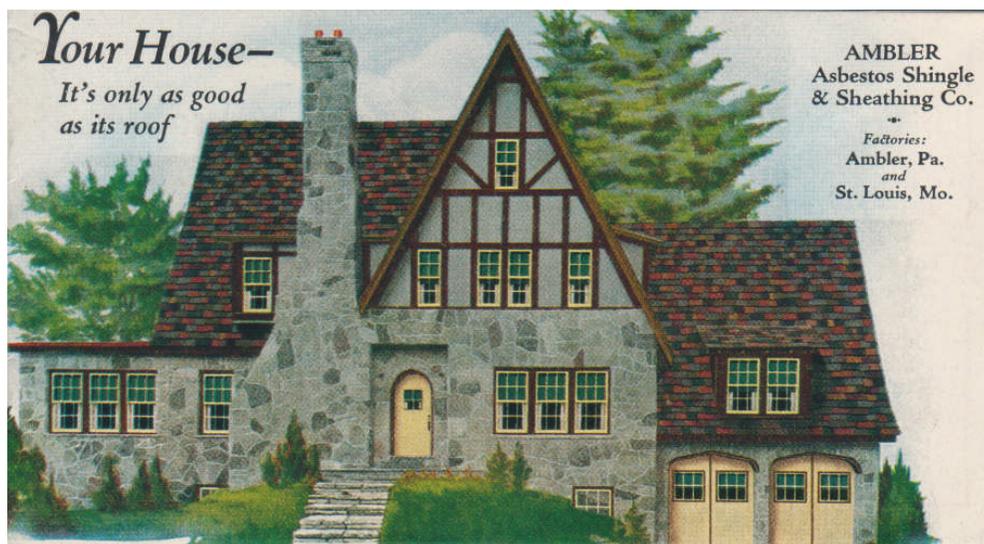
Color Dynamics for the Home, c1950  
Pittsburgh Paint Company

## 6. MINOR HISTORIC REVIEW - ROOFING

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century roofing for most residential structures in southern Oregon was of wood shake or wood shingle. After 1900, many buildings were built, or re-roofed, with newer asphalt based shingle products that were advertised as being both less expensive and more durable than wood. While other materials (slate, terra cotta tile, copper, even asbestos, for example) were available for purchase during much of Medford's late-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, instances of local installations of such products were rare.

Unlike paint, replacing a roof system is a fairly costly and longer-lasting decision for any homeowner. A good roof protects a home from the weather and, as the single most exposed component of the exterior envelope, should be durable so as to protect the interior from rain and heat. New roofing technologies have been developed that compete with wood and asphalt shingles, in some cases offering "forever" solutions that seem cost effective and attractive. And, at least in the case of asphalt, new manufacturing processes and designs have transformed that basic material into roofing products very different from the asphalt shingles available during the historic period reflected in Medford's historic neighborhoods. Though still called "Asphalt," most such shingles are today made from Fiberglas or organic composition products, and are available in wide range of thicknesses, edge profiles, and colors. Some of these new materials may be appropriate for use in Medford's historic districts while others almost certainly are not.

Once again, as with paint, most owners of historic homes are interested in maintaining their investment in a historically compatible fashion, using durable and cost-effective materials that enhance the historic character, and allow them to proceed with their projects in a timely manner. The Landmarks and Preservation Commission's design review authority exists as a method of providing an opportunity to avoid the occasional inappropriate installation that negatively impacts historic neighborhoods. These criteria are intended to create a range of appropriate options that will allow owners to proceed with as little delay as is feasible while still assuring the goals of the Historic Preservation Overlay are met.



"Your House is only as Good as its Roof"  
Ambler Asbestos Shingle & Sheathing Company, c1927

**A. EXCLUSIONS:**

By definition, certain types of exterior roofing activity are excluded from review by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission. These are:

1. Re-roofing any historic residential resource with new materials of the same type, profile, and visual qualities as the existing, subject to the requirements of the City of Medford Building Code, is excluded from review under 10.406(2). Visual quality, as used here, includes material type, shingle pattern, thickness method of installation *exclusive* of color.

**B. PRE-APPROVED MATERIALS:**

The following roofing materials are pre-approved for residential use in the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone, subject to the specific criteria in Section C.



Wood Shakes: Split wood appearance, usually cedar, applied in traditional fashion. Shakes are thicker in profile at the butt end than shingles, creating a more variegated visual character. Shakes come in multiple grades of two basic varieties: Hand split and Taper-sawn.



Wood Shingles: As above, again typically cedar, but sawn flat with a more uniform profile. Shingles are available natural tones (which weathers) or in pre-stained color coatings. Standard shingles come with straight-cut butt ends. Decorative shingles are also available in a variety of patterns including diamond, half-cove, fish-scale and other ‘fancy’ cuts (See C(1)c, below for exclusions).

FIBERGLASS COMPOSITION (ASPHALT) SHINGLE:



3-Tab: The most common, and least expensive form of composition shingle, generally rated for 25-years and available in numerous colors. 3-Tab, as the name implies, comes in strips of three, universally with straight ends and near smooth profiles. **NOTE:** This material, lacking visual character, is not typically appropriate for historic properties. *Pre-Approval is LIMITED to structures built 1935 or later only.*



Architectural Grade Fiberglass Composition (Asphalt)  
Cut with angled sides in more random-appearing patterns, Architectural Grade create a more three-dimensional profile, are slightly more expensive and have a generally longer life-expectancy.



Asphalt Shake/Multi-Layer Asphalt  
Although made of the same basic materials as the above, multi-layer asphalt includes a dark “shadow” layer(s) that adds additional depth and, in some cases, color, to increase the three-dimensional quality of the roof. Such shingles can approach the visual quality of slate or wood shake. These shingles come in various ‘cuts’ or patterns [See C1(c)].

**C. RE-ROOFING REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS:**

1. Planning Director approval of applications for re-roofing under these criteria is subject to the following:
  - a. The application is limited exclusively to the installation of replacement roofing on an existing residential structure where that request is not part of any other proposed activity subject to review by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission under 10.258(2). [Roofing in combination with re-painting approved under these criteria is permitted]
  - b. The application requests use of roofing materials determined by the Planning Director to be consistent with the pre-approved materials listed in Section B, above.
  - c. The application request is for straight-cut end or “butt” shingle or shake profiles only, excluding any fancy pattern end cut shingles except when such fancy cut shingles are used for exact replacement of an existing or historically documented roofing design.
  - d. A single pre-approved material is proposed, in a single manufacturer’s color/pattern. Mixture of more than one material, shingle pattern, or color is excluded from pre-approval, even when both such proposed materials are pre-approved materials from Section B. Use of a multi-colored shingle pattern as part of single manufactured product color/pattern is acceptable.
  - e. The application complies with all applicable Medford Building Code requirements governing re-roofing an existing residential structure.
  - f. The application does not include any high-profile ridge or edge treatments unless such treatment replicates a historically documented roofing character. (See photo for typical “high profile” type treatment)



2. Applications for replacement of existing wood shake or wood shingle roof materials with asphalt composition materials is discouraged but is allowed under these criteria. Use of composition “shake” type multi-layer shingle patterns that approximate the visual appearance of shake is strongly encouraged.



“Shake” look roofing materials are a multi-layer dimensional product, often multi-toned, made of fiberglass or asphalt composite materials. Such shingles are available from numerous manufacturers.

As shown at left, these random-appearing shingles approximate the pattern and texture of wood shake and are typically available at significantly

lower cost than true wood shake materials. The use of such materials when replacing existing or historic wood shake roofing with asphalt or composition products, while not required, is strongly encouraged.

3. Applications under these criteria may be denied when any one of the following conditions is determined by the Planning Director.
  - a. The proposal includes any roofing material that is not included as pre-approved in Section B.
  - b. The proposal includes more than one approved roofing material and is not an exact recreation of the existing or a historically documented roof design.
  - c. The proposal includes the use of ‘fancy’ or decorative edge materials but is not an exact re-installation of the existing or a historically documented roof design.
  - d. The proposal is determined by the Planning Director to be counter to the intent of these criteria and counter to the intent of the Historic Preservation Overlay.
4. Applications determined to be outside these approval criteria by the Planning Director shall be reviewed by the Landmarks and Historic Preservation Commission as per 10.258(2).