

Email Communications

The following are the emails communications between myself and Tim Askins beginning on October 30st and ending on January 3rd. Except for my initial phone call on October, 30th all our communication was through email.

The text is unedited.

I have removed auto-stamps, auto-signatures and the City of Milwaukee communications disclaimer in order to make the text easier to follow.

I have included a few notes; they are labeled and italicized.

One attachment is included in-line, Asphalt & Fiberglass Shingle Roofing Products for Historic Properties in Milwaukee May 2019 sent by Mr. Askins on October 30th. I chose the Belmont from this list.

October, 30th

***Note:** Initial inquiry about COA for new roof*

Askins:

Assuming you're sticking with a standard, relatively flat asphalt/composition shingle roof, the following applies. If you want to change the type of roofing material to tile, metal, plastic or rubber, we need to talk more.

1. Pick out your shingles, include a picture with your application. You can change color if you want, but please stick to earth tones. Some suggestions are attached.
2. I can't tell what kind of gutters you have right now. If you have built-in/yankee gutters or you have copper gutters, you must fix them. If you have standard modern "K-Type" gutters, you can keep them, adjust them, and patch them, etc., as long as you're not replacing all of them. If gutters are entirely replaced, you must replace with half-round gutters.
3. No bare metal downspouts. Standard factory beige should look good on your house anyway.
4. The short version of the rest is to have your roofer agree to do it this way.
<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS4260>
When it comes to asphalt roofs, city historic preservation is in 100% alignment with the tax credit project requirements. As a roof is guaranteed to cost you more than \$10,000,

I strongly recommend you pursue the credit.

<https://wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS3942>

Sample application from your neighborhood here. It is more thorough than strictly necessary.

<https://milwaukee.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3913858&GUID=A17FB6EF-7373-48F6-96A3-D8CB748B5BB8&Options=ID|Text|&Search=roofing+certificate>

Attachment: From Tim Askins

***Note:** This is the HPC handout that led me to the Belmont shingle. I can say from experience this publication is more far confusing than helpful. There is no explanation why some shingle are in the Maybe column – I still do not know why there is a Maybe column. And statements like the shingles are “examples for products that meet both the standards of the Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission” are incorrect and misleading.*

It’s more than a bit surreal that the list was given to me as “some suggestions” for asphalt roofing material. It is titled Asphalt and Fiberglass Roofing Products. It’s a list of asphalt shingles on an HPC asphalt roofing products handout but there are apparently asphalt shingles listed which are unacceptable for an asphalt roof.

There is nothing I from the Yes column I would have considered for my house. The majority are small scale, dimensional, imitation wood shake; they have a puzzle piece appearance.

Asphalt & Fiberglass Shingle Roofing Products for Historic Properties in Milwaukee May 2019

Roofing products change availability seasonally and product lines are updated nearly every year. This is a list of places to start looking for roof shingles, but is not comprehensive and has not been updated since the date above. If you do not currently have an asphalt/fiberglass shingle roof on your property, you will likely be required to match your current roofing material.

There is no intent to endorse specific products, it is presented as examples for products that meet both the standards of the Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission. These products probably meet the standards of the Wisconsin Historical Society also, but you must confirm with them directly if a project is also subject to their review (tax credit, federally funded/licensed project, or government-owned property).

Certainteed

YES	Maybe	No
Landmark regular	Slateline	Landmark Pro

Landmark Premium	Highland Slate	Presidential series
Landmark Solaris	Grand Manor	
	Belmont	

Tamko

YES	Maybe	No
Heritage regular	Elite Glass-Seal	Heritage Vintage
Heritage IR		
Heritage Woodgate		

GAF Timberline

YES	Maybe	No
Natural Shadow, most colors	Cool Series, Weathered Wood only	HD
American Harvest, most colors		HD Reflector
XT, no light colors		Armorshield II
Northgate, no light colors		UHD

Malarkey

YES	Maybe	No
Legacy		Vista / Vista AR
Highlander NEX		Legacy XL
		Windsor / Windsor XL

Atlas

YES	Maybe	No
Tough-Glass, Weathered Wood only	Stormmaster Shake	Legend
Glassmaster, most colors		Briarwood

Prolam, Weathered Wood or Heather		Stormmaster Slate
Pinnacle Pristine, Weathered Wood only		

October, 31st

Communication regarding gutters.

Monroe:

Hi Tim,

I have a gutter question!

Here goes...Why half-round and not another pre 1940's profile? Granted half round was the most common, but I'm not a huge fan; to me it looks countrified and bulbous.

I was going to go with the standard k-gutters with a fitting profile, in a dark bronze to blend with the original varnished bead-board soffits.

If I find a period example that's not half round is that ok? I want something that will give crisp miters.

Or is there something particular to this house?

Askins:

Right you are, I wasn't considering the hipped roof (darn trees on google). Pick out something you like and show me. K is not bad on your house if you don't find anything else

Monroe:

That is good news! Thanks for all your help!

December, 9th

Note: COA application submitted.

When I submitted my application the ONLY conversation that should have occurred was 1. Clearly informing me that the Belmont shingle was not an acceptable choice for my house. 2. Why it was not an acceptable choice. 3. What kind of shingle would be acceptable, why it was acceptable and how it differed from the Belmont. 4. Because there was nothing from the Yes column I would choose, maybe a little guidance with finding a product I would accept that also met HPC guidelines.

Put another way; I should have been given the basic, necessary and appropriate information in order to make an informed decision my application, and more importantly about the work to my house. Applicants should not have to pry information from the HPC staff nor puzzle out meaning.

I also would like to add that I had no knowledge of HPC inner workings or procedure nor was it clear what the Commission's level of involvement was or even their exact role. When Mr. Askins said that the products would need to be reviewed by the Commission it was presented as a procedural norm, not staff rejection of my application. I was disappointed that I couldn't get immediate approval, but there was nothing to suggest handing my application over to the Commission for review a negative.

Monroe:

Tim,

Because of the 1mb restriction on photo attachments I will send 2 emails (maybe more?) subjects numbered sequentially.

Please find attached the COA application for work to the roof and gutters on 3039-3041 N. Sherman Blvd.

Also attached are photographs of the residence, photographs of the proposed materials and the technical specifications of the materials.

A few important notes:

For personal safety, I prefer not to include my email and phone number on the application.

The roof is 3 stories up. That along with the close proximity of the adjacent houses and mature trees in the yard mean that photographs of the roof itself are practically impossible.

I have included photographs of garage which has the same type of asphalt shingles.

Work can begin weather permitting, which means there is no set start date. It also makes waiting for the official committee COA impractical.

If the materials are deemed appropriate I am hoping the rest can be viewed as a formality?

Please let me know if you have any questions or if there is difficulty with the attachments.

Regards,

Martha

P.S. I have a new computer and had a bit of difficulty with the digital signature!

Askins:

Hi Martha,

These products will have be reviewed by the Commission. To date, the only faux-slate they have been willing to approve is GAF Slateline. (<https://www.gaf.com/en-us/roofing-products/residential-roofing-products/shingles/designer/value-collection/slateline>). They have not been convinced of the durability or appearance of the DaVinci products. Belmont is a “maybe” and subject to the judgment of the Commission.

Additionally, per the attached map, it appears that your original roof was an asphalt composition roof (that’s what the tiny filled-in circle “●” in the bottom right corner of your house means). Curiously, it also indicates your front porch roof with the open circle was something else. The “o” indicates “non-combustible” and can be nearly anything fitting that descriptor, but usually metal, slate, tile, or asbestos.

The public meeting would be on January 6. If you work from the yes column or pick something really close to them, I can give you instant approval. I will schedule you for the meeting if I don’t hear back from you by noon tomorrow (Tuesday). You can change or add to your requested products any time before then, as long as you give me a full week’s notice before the meeting

December, 10th

Note: My second email is after I learned the shingles had been ordered. Mr. Askins should have corrected course and made sure I understood. Of all the troubling things that occurred, this troubles me the most.

The reason I told Randy I didn’t want work done till after the meeting is because I was expecting to have a thoughtful conversation with the HPC Commission. I didn’t want fib about work that had already started.

Monroe:

A thousand thanks for pointing out that the original overhang material was different than the roof. It seemed like a logical choice to have something different on that area, but I didn't know for sure!

I have a few questions and also want to clarify some points.

To clarify:

Belmont is for the roof.

Davinci slate tiles are for the overhang on the entryway (FYI, I was considering the colors of the fancy-brickwork).

I have to say I am very, very surprised the commission has reservation about the Davinci tiles. Because the tiles my contractor would use are left over from a recent renovation of Frank Lloyd Wright's, Thomas P. Hardy residence in Racine.

That house is historically protected and subject to intense scrutiny on all matters so I naturally assumed they were a no-brainer.

As to the Belmont, I know that the commission's take on roofing material is 100% in line with the state's; so if there was an objection what specifically would they site?

Thanks, Martha

***Note:** I was mistaken about the shingle used on the Frank Lloyd Wright house. It was a DaVinici product but the shingle submitted was from another historic home in Racine.*

Monroe:

I just spoke to my contractor and said I wasn't comfortable with any work starting before you gave the official thumbs up (plus that's a sticky wicket for you).

I did learn he had already ordered the Belmont.?. But I'm certain it meets all the commission's standards.

I just want to make sure everything is in order first.

Is there any further information I can provide you with?

Askins:

If the state has signed off the Belmont specifically for your house, show me and go ahead.

For the DaVinci, I'm bound by two prior decisions. The Milwaukee Commission has not found it to be a convincing replica of real slate. They are sticklers for authenticity.

<https://milwaukee.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=1446842&GUID=601FCC3D-9E88-44DB-8890-EB02F8EFBF1B&Options=ID|Text|&Search=slate+certificate>

<https://milwaukee.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=2905259&GUID=5BD21E9C-84AE-4B79-B018-E19294E6CBB5&Options=ID|Text|&Search=faries+certificate>

They probably would approve flat terra cotta in that location. Possibly even more shaped/barrel/S tile. <https://www.ludowici.com/products/roof-tile/interlocking-tile/classic-14/http://vereaclaytile.com/products/flat-tile/>

Also, I misread the deadlines, we have until Thursday at noon to sort this out.

December, 11th

Monroe:

I LOVED the barrel shaped, but it's discontinued.

And I completely understand that the slate tiles look a bit strange at first glance. I almost said no myself...but they have a weird quality (and this was an actual reaction); if you are 3 feet or more away the plastic appearance completely disappears and they look amazing.

It is rather shocking!

Nevertheless, it's a small ledge so I hope that it can be approved in that area.

Then you can swing by and see what I'm talking about!

December, 12th

Askins:

After conferring with my colleague Carlen, both materials will have to go to the Commission.

Respectfully,

Tim Askin, Senior Planner

Historic Preservation Commission

City of Milwaukee

Monroe:

Ok, I think it's best to have it all official. When does the committee meet?

And quickly, you asked about the state; I haven't heard back from them, but their guidelines are specific about technical specs.

The Belmont is pretty straight forward - an architectural weight asphalt shingle - I know the website calls it a "shake" but it's not made to imitate other materials. I guess they call it that because it's plane, but they have to call it something.

Is there any further information I can provide you with?

Thanks,

Martha

Askins:

Meeting is January 6. You'll get a certified letter with full details sometime next week. Please send in pictures of the house. The attachment limit is at least 20MB on my end.

Monroe:

I thought it was 1 mb!

December, 13th

Monroe:

Tim,

Just to be sure, you and Carlen think the Belmont needs to go to committee?

Martha

Askins:

Yes.

Monroe:

Just to let you know, there is a serious leak in my roof and it is coming into the south wall. It's eating away at the molded plaster work and I am scared what it might be doing to the electrical system.

Askins:

Emergency patch measures are authorized, just not a complete re-roofing.

January, 3rd

Askins:

Note: No text

Staff Report attached.

Monroe:

Has there or will there be any changes to the agenda for monday's meeting?

Askins:

To be safe, I'm just sending the latest version. #1 is almost certain to be skipped. The rest will proceed as indicated.

MHPC agenda attached