

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

January 12, 2026

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name & Address: 1123 Jenifer Street

Application Type(s): Certificate of Approval for a roof replacement

Legistar File ID # [91099](#)

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

Date Prepared: January 7, 2026

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: John Bottensek, Isthmus Roofing

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Approval for a roof replacement on the house and detached garage

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The subject property is located within the Third Lake Ridge local historic district

Relevant Ordinance Sections:

41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

A Certificate of Approval shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (1) New Construction or Exterior Alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of Approval for exterior alteration or construction only if:
 - (a) In the case of exterior alteration to a designated landmark, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
 - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
 - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of Approval is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.

41.25 STANDARDS FOR ALTERATIONS.

- (1) General.
 - (a) Alterations are defined as any change to any portion of the exterior of a building or site that replaces existing materials or changes its appearance. This section provides standards for building alterations.
 - (b) Materials and Features.
 1. Alterations shall be in keeping with the original design and character of the building or site.
 3. The introduction of conjectural architectural features without historic precedent on the building or site is prohibited.
 - (c) Replacement.
 1. Existing features shall be replaced in-kind if they are too deteriorated to repair.
- (4) Roofs.

(b) Materials.

2. Replacement materials shall replicate the appearance of historic roofing materials found on the structure or be compatible with roofing found on historic resources in the district.

Analysis and Conclusion

The proposed project is to replace the existing asphalt shingle roof on the house and garage with a standing seam metal roof. The rear balcony would receive a new EPDM roof. Staff has been working with the applicant on this alteration as it would typically be an administrative approval. The proposed standing-seam roof material would dramatically change the look of this historic resource. Staff has recommended either a new shingle roof or a metal roof that replicates the appearance of shingles. The applicant has expressed environmental and longevity concerns with the fiberglass and asphalt of architectural shingles and does not want to pay the additional cost of the metal roofing systems that replicate the appearance of shingles. Staff believes this standing seam roof would be a material deviation from the historic district standards, which require replacement roofs on historic resources to replicate the appearance of the historic materials and could not issue a Certificate of Approval as proposed. A search of building permit records and historic images show that this historic building has likely always had an asphalt shingle roof and standing-seam metal roofs were not found historically on residential buildings in the district. The property owner requested that this project be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission because they believe their roofing materials do comply with the historic district standards.

The subject property is a two-unit residential building constructed in 1910. The Wisconsin Historical Society identifies this as an American Foursquare form building. While Foursquares tend to have Prairie or Colonial Revival decorative elements, this is transitional between architectural styles with late Folk Victorian architectural elements. The building has dentil trim under all roof overhangs and features a complex roof with a hipped roof and a centrally located large dormer on the front and each side. The dormers are ornate with a clipped gable roof and the dormer is then flanked by gable-returns that frame the window opening. The roof is very visible.

The application materials cite several examples of metal roofs in the district. Staff has explained why those are not valid comparables under the current ordinance. The project request before us is for an alteration to a historic structure. Comparables need to be similar style historic resources and either cite precedent for the Landmarks Commission approving this type of alteration using the current ordinance or provide examples of this style of roofing being used on similar residential-style structures or this house during the period of significance.

517 S Baldwin

This house now has a standing seam metal roof. This building underwent a substantial remodel in 2011, including extensive demolition and installation of a silo addition. Most of the work approved under the previous ordinance would not meet the current ordinance standards. One of the items that would not be approved today would be the transition from the asphalt shingles that had been on this building and installation of the standing-seam roof. The old ordinance resulted in a loss of historic integrity in the district and this is an excellent example of why we adopted the new ordinance and standards of approval in 2022. There was no historic precedent for this type of roofing on the building or in the district.

1037 Williamson

This project was a new construction multi-unit residential building approved in 2001 under the old ordinance. This building has asphalt shingles for most of the roof, but there is a metal standing-seam roof for the conical roof on a turret. The roof on the vast majority of the building is asphalt shingles. We do historically see standing-seam roofs on architectural features like turrets or projecting bay windows, but not on the entire roof of a residential-form building. Again, this is a project that was approved under a different set of design standards. However, this is an example of new construction with an asphalt roof, not an alteration to a historic building. It is also an example

of roofing on a building feature with the applicant asking for the roofing on the feature to serve as the style of roofing for their main roof.

1012 Williamson

This is a commercial building that is a historic Trachte with a storefront constructed on the front. We do not have Trachtes serving as residential buildings in the district, and the house at 1123 Jenifer is not a Trachte. We would not approve installing a standing-seam barrel roof on a residential building.

430 S Thornton

This example is of roofing on the garage structure. As this is a property outside the boundaries of the Third Lake Ridge local historic district, we have not reviewed or approved any changes to the buildings on this property.

826 Williamson

The applicant asked for this project to be added to their list of comparable properties. This is new construction that was approved in 2023 under the current ordinance. The applicant is citing the standing seam that is on the projecting bays of the new construction. The roof on this new mixed-use building is flat and per the new construction standards, any style of roof is allowed on a flat roof. But the applicant is wanting to use the style of roofing on an architectural feature on a new commercial building as the justification for an alteration to the roof to a historic structure.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

41.25 STANDARDS FOR ALTERATIONS.

(1) General.

- (a) Alterations are defined as any change to any portion of the exterior of a building or site that replaces existing materials or changes its appearance. This section provides standards for building alterations.
- (b) Materials and Features.
 - 1. Converting the roofing material on this house to standing seam is not in keeping with the original design and character of the building or site.
 - 3. Introducing a standing-seam roof on the house would introduce a conjectural architectural feature without historic precedent on the building or site, which is prohibited per this standard.
- (c) Replacement.
 - 1. The roofing must be replaced in-kind, but the applicant is proposing to change to a different visual style of roofing material.

(4) Roofs.

(b) Materials.

- 2. Replacement materials shall replicate the appearance of historic roofing materials found on the structure or be compatible with roofing found on historic resources in the district. This building has never had standing-seam roofing and other historic residential resources did not have standing-seam roofing. The appearance of this roof was historically shingles. There are matte-finish metal roofing products that replicate the appearance of shingles and fiberglass architectural shingles are also an option.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Approval are not met and recommends the Landmarks Commission deny the project.