

Written testimony received by the Planning Department at least 24 hours prior to the February 16, 2023 Kauai Historic Preservation Review Commission meeting (February 14, 2023, 2:14 p.m.) regarding the following agenda item:

**Kauai Museum** proposed roof repairs to the Wilcox building, property address 4428 Rice Street, Tax Map Key: (4) 3-6-005:005, Lihue, Hawaii.

# HISTORIC HAWAII FOUNDATION

**To:** Carolyn Larson, Chair  
Stephen Long, Vice Chair  
Kaua'i Historic Preservation Review Commission

**From:** Kiersten Faulkner  
Executive Director, Historic Hawai'i Foundation

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, February 16, 2023, 1:30 p.m.  
Lihu'e Civic Center, Moikeha Building, Meeting Room 2A-2B,  
4444 Rice Street, Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i

**Subject:** **Kaua'i Museum – Wilcox Building – Roof Replacement**

On behalf of Historic Hawai'i Foundation (HHF), I am writing with comments and recommendations related to the Kaua'i Museum (aka Wilcox Building) at 4428 Rice Street and the proposed replacement of the original historic roof.

## Interests of Historic Hawai'i Foundation

Historic Hawai'i Foundation is a statewide nonprofit organization established in 1974 to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, sites and communities on all the islands of Hawai'i. As the statewide leader for historic preservation, HHF works to preserve Hawai'i's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believes that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, environmental sustainability, and economic viability of the state.

## Identification of Historic Properties

The Kaua'i Museum, also known as the Wilcox Building and the original Wilcox Library, is listed in the Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places (January 1977 and April 11, 1979). The nomination form describes the historic significance as:

“The Kaua'i Museum was originally the first library on Kaua'i island. Designed by prominent Honolulu architect Hart Wood the building housed the Kaua'i Library until Statehood was achieved. After implementation of a new statewide library system in 1969, the old building became the home of the Kaua'i Museum. ...

The Albert Spencer Wilcox Building is a particularly fine example of a truly indigenous style of architecture, completely original to Hawai'i with no counterpart anywhere else. It is the finest example of architecture in the downtown Lihu'e area. It is one of the few surviving Hart Wood designed buildings in the State of Hawai'i.”

Character-defining features of the building were summarized as:

“This building was designed as a single storied structure of beige concrete and native black and brown lava rock with a half basement and a high pitched blue tile roof. It is a typical Hawaiian design of Hart Wood who emphasized the use of native lava rock and the adaptation of the steep Hawaiian grass roof to contemporary architecture...” (emphasis added).

HHF notes that although the Kāuaʻi Museum is not in a historic district, it is adjacent to the Līhuʻe Civic Center Historic District, which is also listed on both the Hawaiʻi and National Historic Registers and could be considered a contributing resource to the context of the Civic Center Historic District. Originally constructed as a civic building, the context and setting of these historic buildings at the core of Līhuʻe retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

### Proposed Project

The Applicant is proposing a full replacement of the historic clay tile roof. The purpose is to eliminate ongoing water intrusion likely caused, and aggravated, by recent extreme weather incidents.

### Kāuaʻi Planning Department Request

The Department is requesting assistance in locating an “in-kind” replacement for the historic roof tile.

## **HISTORIC HAWAIʻI FOUNDATION COMMENTS and RECOMMENDATIONS**

Historic Hawaiʻi Foundation’s historic architect reviewed the roof replacement proposal for consistency with the Secretary of the Interior’s (SOI) Standards and Guidelines of the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. Key relevant standards include:

Standard #2 The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

Standard #5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Standard #6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

In keeping with SOI Standard #6, replacement in-kind of the distinctive character-defining roof feature is important. Please refer to the attached document (Attachment A) that illustrates several of these characteristics.

- Photos clearly show that the roof style is a Mission Style barrel tile roof;
- The material is glazed terra cotta, examples of which exist on historic buildings of the era throughout Hawaiʻi;

- The color is a unique blue hue.

Based on the above characteristics, an **appropriate replacement would be a glazed terra cotta mission style barrel tile in blue.**

Two roof tile companies that provided clay tile in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and still exist, are:

- Ludowici (<https://ludowici.com/>) based in New Lexington, Ohio - (800) 945-8453
- Gladding-McBean (<https://www.gladdingmcbean.com/our-history>) based in Lincoln, California (800) 964-2529

Both companies have technical expertise to assist with identification and accurate replacement of the original roof tiles.

A cursory search of their websites indicates that Ludowici features a barrel roof tile in “Heritage Blue” that appears to closely match photos of the Kaua‘i Museum. Gladding-McBean’s website contains a tile manual produced by the “Tile Roofing Institute and Western States Roofing Contractors Association” with extensive installation details.

Barrel tiles come in different lengths and can be either straight or tapered, all of which will affect the end result, as will the detailing at the ridge and edges.

As a starting point a qualified roofing contractor should remove an intact whole tile from an inconspicuous portion of the roof to verify size, shape and dimensions of the barrel tile. The length of the exposed face of the tile course is also an important characteristic. It is likely that the tiles are installed with a copper wire holding each tile in place, in the traditional manner. While the traditional installation technique is the preferred method, contemporary codes and concern for stability in high winds may require that the tiles be installed with additional strength or stability. If that is the case, care should be taken to ensure any adhesives or fasteners are not visible from the exterior views.

Historic Hawai‘i Foundation understands the urgency to repair the roof. We also respect the truly significant status of the Kaua‘i Museum’s Wilcox Building as a recognized State and National treasure and applaud the Museum’s desire to continue the preservation of this historic resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We are happy to continue discussions with the KHPRC, the Planning Department and the applicant if you have any questions.

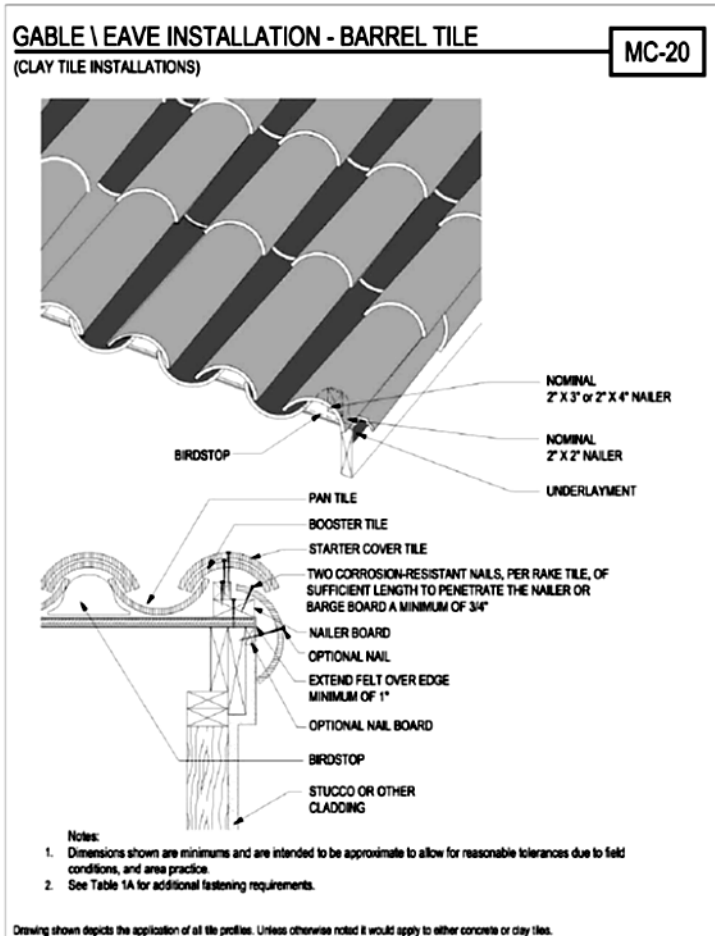
Attachment A  
 Kaua'i Museum – Wilcox Building – Roof Replacement



Rake Detail



Eave Edge showing individual barrel tiles



Rake Detail from TRI/WSRCA Installation Manual (Gladding – McBean website)