

Paul Rudolph Applebee Residence Gets a PVC Reroof by Caldwell's Roofing

Paul, a student of Frank Lloyd Wright, designed and built the home in 1956. The home features a flat roof and many other horizontal line features.

AUBURN, AL, UNITED STATES, April 30, 2025

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Modern architecture may not be the first thing associated with Alabama, yet the state has played host to some remarkable mid-century designs. In 1940, famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright put Alabama on the modernist map with the Rosenbaum House in Florence – a Usonian gem that brought flat roofs and open plans to the Deep South. That pioneering spirit was not without hiccups: the Rosenbaum House's daring flat roof leaked almost immediately, an infamous reminder that bold design often pushes the limits of building technology. But the seed of modernism was planted. A young Paul Rudolph, who earned his undergraduate architecture degree at Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn University) around the same time, would carry this torch forward.

Rudolph emerged as a leading voice in the Sarasota School of Architecture, a movement defined by adapting International Style modernism to local climates and landscapes. His training in Alabama and later Harvard instilled a blend of Southern sensibility and Bauhaus rigor, much as

“

The Applebee project wasn't just a repair — it was an architectural preservation effort that honored the original vision.”

*Brad Caldwell, Owner,
Caldwell's Roofing*

Frank Lloyd Wright's organic architecture philosophy advocated harmony between a building and its environment. By mid-century, Alabama could claim its own modernist legacy – one that intertwined Wright's influence with [Rudolph's inventive regional modernism](#).

One of Rudolph's most significant Alabama-linked projects is the Tuskegee University Chapel, completed in 1969 about 20 miles from Auburn. Rudolph collaborated with Tuskegee's own John Welch and Louis Fry to create a



Applebee Residence Front Yard View

soaring brick-and-concrete sanctuary unlike any other. The design is famously devoid of right angles – a space of pure geometry and spirit that architecture students still study for its daring form.

Tucked in a leafy Auburn neighborhood, the Applebee Residence stands out as a subtle tour-de-force of mid-century residential architecture. Built in the early 1960s (when space-age optimism met Southern ingenuity), the home's design channels the same [Sarasota School ideals championed by Paul Rudolph](#) – albeit on a domestic scale. The structure is raised off the ground on stout concrete piers, letting the humid summer air circulate beneath and protecting the house from damp ground. Its long horizontal form, floating deck, and overhanging roof planes capture the modernist drive for spatial efficiency paired with expressive form.

This winter, the Applebee Residence received a sensitive [roof restoration courtesy of Caldwell's Roofing](#), a local contractor known for tackling tricky jobs on historic homes. The project wasn't your average re-roof; it was more like a surgical rejuvenation. The home's previous flat roof – a built-up tar roof – had failed prematurely, with one particularly bad leak causing structural damage. Rather than simply patching over the issue, the crew performed a full tear-off, exposing compromised substrate and reinforcing it with angle iron and new fasteners. The work was part repair, part preservation.

Using a top-tier membrane product, IB Roof's 80-mil white PVC, Caldwell's Roofing followed manufacturer specifications to the letter — including 6-inch edge and 12-inch field fastener spacings, T-joint covers at intersections, and additional reinforcement strips in areas known to



Applebee Residence Back Yard View



Welding IB PVC Roof

see movement or pooling. This attention to detail enabled them to offer IB's residential No Dollar Limit warranty, a rare offering on a modernist home of this type. They also installed a tapered insulation system that doubled the original slope — increasing the 1/4" per foot pitch to 1/2" per foot — improving drainage across the wide, flat surface without disrupting the razor-thin silhouette that defines the home's roofline. To top it off, they fabricated custom scuppers and perimeter flashings, preserving the clean visual language of the original architect's intent.

While most of this work remains invisible to the casual observer, its effects are tangible. The house now reflects less heat, drains more efficiently, and — crucially — no longer leaks. It's an upgrade that hides in plain sight. The interior spaces stay dry and cool, while from the exterior, nothing disrupts the purity of the form. The roof appears untouched, even though nearly every component above the ceiling plane has been re-engineered.

In a subtly aloof manner, the Applebee Residence almost expects to be appreciated on its own terms. It doesn't beg for attention; it simply sits poised among the ivy and camellias, doing its thing. Local passersby might be unaware of the architectural lineage hidden in plain sight – the floating terrace borrowed from a Sarasota sketchbook, or the way the roof seems to levitate, echoing a Wrightian slab. But they will notice that it looks especially crisp these days. Perhaps on an evening walk, a neighbor pauses to admire the way the low sun plays on the home's clean lines and the newly gleaming roof edge. In that small moment of appreciation, the circle completes: modern architecture once again feels alive and well in Auburn.

And if the house could speak, it might quip that it owes its refreshed condition to some expert local caretakers who understood that preserving a modernist masterpiece is as much about skillful roofing as it is about architectural admiration. In short, the Applebee Residence — thanks to a smart bit of upkeep — continues to live up to its legacy, sheltering its inhabitants in style while reminding the town that good design, like a well-built roof, is made to last.

BRAD CALDWELL

Caldwell Contracting LLC

+1 334-332-7799

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[X](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/808139698>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire,

Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.