MEETING NOTICE
The City of Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission will meet at:

4:30 P.M.
Thursday, September 28, 2017
in the
Five Seasons Room, City Services Center
500 15th Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

AMENDED AGENDA

Call Meeting to Order

1. Public Comment
   Each member of the public is welcome to speak and we ask that you keep your comments to five (5) minutes or less. If the proceedings become lengthy, the Chair may ask that comments be focused on any new facts or evidence not already presented.

2. Approve Meeting Minutes

3. Action Items
   a) Demolition Applications (20 minutes)
      i. 1321 20th Avenue SW – Primary Structure, Private Property
      ii. 927 Wiley Boulevard NW – Primary Structure, Private Property
      iii. 255 15th Street NW – 18x20 Accessory Structure, Private Property
   b) Certificate of Appropriateness Applications (15 minutes)
      i. 1620 Park Avenue SE – Installation of solar panels

4. Discussion Items (20 minutes)
   a) Update to historic district guidelines
      i. Fences

5. Announcements

6. Adjournment

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a City program, service, or activity, should contact the Community Development Department at (319) 286-5041 or email cd-plan@cedar-rapids.org as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours before the event.
MINUTES
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING,
Thursday, September 14, 2017 @ 4:30 p.m.
Five Seasons Conference Room, City Services Center, 500 15th Avenue SW

Members Present:  Mark Stoffer Hunter  Chair
                               Amanda McKnight-Grafton
                               Tim Oberbroeckling
                               Ron Mussman
                               Barb Westercamp
                               Todd McNall
                               Heather Sundermann
                               BJ Hobart

City Staff:  Jeff Hintz, Planner
                               Iván Gonzalez, Planner
                               Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant

Call Meeting to Order
  •  Mark Stoffer Hunter called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.
  •  Eight (8) Commissioners were present with zero (0) absent.

1. Public Comment
  There was no public comment.

2. Approve Meeting Minutes
  •  Ron Mussman made a motion to approve the minutes from August 24, 2017. Amanda McKnight
     Grafton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Items 3bi, 3aii, and 3aiii were considered next to accommodate guests.

3. Action Items
   b) Demolition Applications under Review
   i. 1708 4th Avenue SE – Primary Structure, Private Property, Expires 10/24/17
      •  Jeff Hintz stated that this property was placed on hold at the August 24, 2017 meeting for the
         purposes of exploring options to move the home. The property is eligible under Criteria C.
      •  The applicant stated that they are not interested in moving the property. The former barber shop
         next door has a daycare in it and they would like this house torn down so that the daycare can
         have a play area for the children.
      •  Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that he went through the property and has done photographic
         documentation on it. The corner next to where the property is located is a historic corner, but
         there are not a lot of historical stories associated with this property. Although the HPC
         encourages applicants to explore other options for demolition, Mark Stoffer Hunter recommends
         releasing the hold on this property.
Todd McNall made a motion to release the hold for demolition at 1708 4th Avenue SE. Amanda McKnight Grafton seconded the motion. The motion passed with Tim Oberbroeckling opposing.

a) Demolition Applications

ii. 220 7th Avenue SW - Primary Structure, Private Property

iii. 214 7th Avenue SW - Primary Structure, Private Property

- Jeff Hintz stated that both properties were built in 1900. The area was looked at in the 2009 Kingston Reconnaissance Survey and deemed not eligible. Staff recommends immediate release. The future plan is to build a similar style building to that across Diagonal Drive SW. Any development will go through the land development process.
- The Commission discussed the area of 7th Avenue that will be taken out due to the new project planned for the area after the proposed demolition takes place. Mark Stoffer Hunter discussed the history of other properties located on that block that were demolished after the flood.
- Tim Oberbroeckling stated that there are too many apartment buildings going up in the City and asked if the neighbors are aware that another apartment building is planning to go up there. Jeff Hintz stated that the neighbors will get notice for the zoning change.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton made a motion to approve the demolition of 220 and 214 7th Avenue SW. Todd McNall seconded the motion. The motion passed with Tim Oberbroeckling abstaining and Heather Sundermann opposing.

i. 2057 Washington Avenue SE – 12x18 Accessory Structure, Private Property

- Jeff Hintz stated that this property was built in 1918. The area was looked at in the 2014 Citywide Survey and was recommended for intensive survey. Staff recommends immediate release because the building style and character are not consistent with known historical carriage houses in the City and there are no other unique features present. The owner is open to salvage and they plan to build a new garage.
- Amanda McKnight Grafton made a motion to approve the demolition of 2057 Washington Avenue SE. Barb Westercamp seconded the motion.

iv. 20 22nd Avenue SW – Primary Structure, City Owned Property

- Iván Gonzalez stated that this property was built in 1959. The area was looked at in the 2010 Czech Village Survey and was deemed not eligible. Staff recommends immediate release. The removal of the structure is necessary to allow for the construction of the Flood Control System.
- Tim Oberbroeckling made a motion to approve the demolition of 20 22nd Avenue SW. Todd McNall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion Items

a) Update to Historic District Guidelines

- Jeff Hintz stated that staff has been working on transferring the Guidelines to the new format from the City’s graphic designer. Staff is about a third of the way through the document. Once it is finished they will come back to the full Commission for comment. After the Commission recommends approval staff will take the Guidelines to the Development Committee and then City Council for consideration.

b) Bever Park Pedestrian Bridge

- Iván Gonzalez stated that the Bever Park Pedestrian Bridge is in bad structural shape and the bottom is eroded out. Jeff Hintz stated the Parks Department is considering demolition while they work on a project for the creek underneath as they do not currently have a way to fix the bridge.
bridge. The HPC does not review this type of demolition, but City would like the HPC’s comments and help to save or move the bridge.

- Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that stone structures in Bever Park have been disappearing over the years taking away the historic character of the park. The Commission expressed their frustration with these items not being fixed and left to deteriorate.
- Todd McNall offered some suggestions on how to fix the bridge by utilizing a culvert.
- BJ Hobart would like staff to find out what needs to happen to move the bridge. She would be interested in moving the bridge to the Knutson Building site if the two structures are close to the same age.
- Todd McNall suggested working with the Friends of Old McDonald Farm to see if they can help save the bridge.
- Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that if the public knew that this bridge was in danger then he believes many people would help save the bridge.
- Staff will work with the Parks Department and with the City’s Communications staff.

3. Action Items
   c) Historic Preservation Commission Bylaws
      - Jeff Hintz stated that changes were made and agreed upon at the August 24, 2017 meeting.
      - The Commission discussed whether or not the Chair can vote. The Chair can vote, but should vote last in case there is a tie.
      - Todd McNall abstained from voting since he was not present for the discussion.
      - Amanda McKnight Grafton made a motion to approve the updated Historic Preservation Commission Bylaws. Barb Westercamp seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Todd McNall abstaining.

Todd McNall left the meeting at 5:28 p.m.

5. Announcements
   - Jeff Hintz stated that the unveiling media event for the signs and posts on September 13, 2017 was a success. Mark Stoffer Hunter stated that he has received a lot of good feedback since the event.

BJ Hobart left the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

- Tim Oberbroeckling stated that he did some research on vinyl versus wood fencing and would like the Commission to discuss the research on a future agenda so that they are all on the same page the next time there is a COA for a fence. Jeff Hintz stated that discussion would be in line with the Historic District Guidelines discussion.

6. Adjournment
   - Barb Westercamp made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:33 p.m. Tim Oberbroeckling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Kroll, Administrative Assistant II
Community Development
Historic Preservation Commission Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: September 28, 2017

Property Location: 1321 20th Avenue SW
Property Owner/Representative: Terry Wheeler
Owner Number(s): 319-366-6327 Demolition Contact: Not yet determined
Year Built: 1914
Description of Agenda Item: ☒ Demolition Application ☐ COA ☐ Other

Background and Previous HPC Action: The property is in poor condition per the City Assessor. At 660 square feet in size, it is one of the smaller primary structures that has been reviewed by the Commission in recent years. The applicant has noted damage to walls and hanging wires; at this time the home is not livable. The owner owns the adjacent parcel and plans to combine the lots.

City Assessor Information on the parcel:

Historic Eligibility Status: Eligible ☐ Not Eligible ☒ Unknown ☐ N/A ☐
Explanation (if necessary):
The 2008 Young’s Hill/Kingston Neighborhood Reconnaissance Survey identified this property as Not Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Other Action by City: Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐
Explanation (if necessary): Demolition of the structure once a bid had been awarded.

Recommendation: Immediate release.

Rationale: Determined not historic for state or national significance in an intensive level survey. The structure generally lacks character defining features that would be significant at the local level.
Historic Preservation Commission Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: September 28, 2017

Property Location: 927 Wiley Boulevard NW
Property Owner/Representative: Todd and Carol Okken
Owner Number(s): 319-241-8755  Demolition Contact: Not yet determined
Year Built: 1953
Description of Agenda Item: ☒ Demolition Application ☐ COA ☐ Other

Background and Previous HPC Action: The property is in poor condition per the City Assessor. At 675 square feet in size, it is one of the smaller primary structures that have been reviewed by the Commission in recent years. The owner owns the adjacent parcel and plans to combine the lots, building a garage after the demolition.

The owner has also indicated he has made some attempts to have the home moved, but has not had any success to this date finding an interested party. The owner is willing to allow the home to be moved or explore other options prior to demolition. The home would need to be moved from the lot. The owner also has some documentation through an abstract dating the land in the area to 1848; however, a 1930’s aerial photo indicates the parcel subject to this demolition, to be vacant.

City Assessor Information on the parcel: http://cedarrapids.iowaassessors.com/parcel.php?parcel=132445100800000

Historic Eligibility Status: Eligible ☐ Not Eligible ☒ Unknown ☒ N/A ☐
Explanation (if necessary):

This area of the City was looked at in 2014 as part of the Citywide Survey and was not recommended for intensive survey. The map on page 23 indicates that this area was looked at, but not recommended for any further study.

The State Historic Preservation Office has reviewed and concurred with this survey.

If eligible, which criteria is met:
☐ Associated with significant historical events (Criteria A)
☐ Associated with significant lives of person (Criteria B)
☐ Signifies distinctive architectural character/era (Criteria C)
☐ Archaeologically significant (Criteria D)

Other Action by City: Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A ☐
Explanation (if necessary):

Recommendation: Immediate Release.

Rationale: Aerial photos indicate the parcel was vacant in the 1930’s. The home is not like others built in the 1950’s, but generally lacks defining features which would be significant at the local level.
Historic Preservation Commission Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Meeting Date: September 28, 2017

Property Location: 255 15th Street NW
Property Owner/Representative: Deb Greenwald
Owner Number(s): 319-310-6584
Demolition Contact: Conley Construction 319-551-7233
Year Built: 1940
Description of Agenda Item: ☒ Demolition Application ☐ COA ☐ Other

Background and Previous HPC Action: The structure subject to demolition is the 20x18 garage built in 1940 per the City Assessor. The future plan is to rebuild after the demolition; any development would go through the land development process. The garage is currently in poor shape and has lead paint. The structure is leaning to one side and is not safe to be parked in at this time.

City Assessor Information on the parcel:

Historic Eligibility Status: Eligible ☐ Not Eligible ☒ Unknown ☒ N/A ☐
Explanation (if necessary):

The reconnaissance surveys the City has commissioned generally do not mention accessory structures. This area of the City was looked at in 2014 as part of the Citywide Survey and was recommended for intensive survey. The survey does not mention accessory structures, but generally focuses on primary structures.

If eligible, which criteria is met:
☐ Associated with significant historical events (Criteria A)
☐ Associated with significant lives of person (Criteria B)
☐ Signifies distinctive architectural character/era (Criteria C)
☐ Archaeologically significant (Criteria D)

Other Action by City: Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A ☐
Explanation (if necessary):
Recommendation: Immediate release.

Rationale: The intent of Chapter 18 was not to target garages lacking ornate features, but to target structures designed as carriage houses or garages with ornate features. The building style and character are not consistent with known historical carriage houses in the City.
To: Historic Preservation Commission Members
From: Jeff Hintz, Planner II
Subject: COA Request at 1620 Park Avenue SE
Date: September 28, 2017

Owner Name: Caleb Gates
Address: 1620 Park Avenue SE
Local Historic District: Redmond Park- Grande Avenue Place Historic District
Year Built: 1909

Description of Project: Installation of seven (7) solar panels on the west side of the roof and installation of five (5) solar panels on the east facing roof, for a total of 12 solar panels. All of these would be installed towards the south portion of the roof, closest to the street for maximum exposure to the sun.

Photo illustration of the proposed installation locations submitted by the applicant to the right (north is at the top, Park Avenue SE is to the south, just off the picture).

Information from Historic Surveys on property: The 1995 Site Inventory Form from the District Nomination survey lists the property addressed as 1620 as “good.” The defining features listed include: closed front-gable roof with gable and hipped attic dormers on sides; narrow clapboard siding with belt course between and square-cut shingles in gable end including pent roof slope of closed front-gable; low hipped roof veranda across front; porch has heavy, fluted columns resting on ashlar concrete block pedestals; balustrade has narrowly spaced, thin balusters with matching pattern in porch skirting; windows are 1/1 double-hungs of various sizes; Palladian window group in closed front-gable peak; 1 and 2-story bay windows beneath side attic dormers; oval window with keystones between upper level double-hungs. The home is individually eligible for the National Register and contributes to the district.

Options for the Commission:
1. Approve the application as submitted; or
2. Modify, then Approve the application – only if applicant agrees to modifications made; or
3. Disapprove the application; or
4. Continue the item to a future, specified meeting date in order to receive additional information.
Criteria* for Commission decision on application:

i. If any defining features of the building or structure as indicated, but not limited to those included on the Site Inventory Form(s) are proposed to be modified as a result of the proposal indicated on the application for Certificate.

ii. If the proposal is consistent with the Guidelines for Cedar Rapids Historic Districts and/or the most recent edition of the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

iii. If the proposal mitigates adverse effects on the aesthetic, historic, or architectural significance of either the building or structure or of the local historic district or local historic landmark.

*See 18.08.C.2.a of the Cedar Rapids Municipal Code

Excerpt(s) from Guidelines for Cedar Rapids Historic Districts Applicable to Project:

Roof and Roof Elements:

**Recommended:**
- Asphalt shingles or composition shingles
- Replacing oval gutters with a modern equivalent

**Not Recommended:**
- Roll roofing, metal roofing, or clay shingles
- Covering cornices, eaves, soffits or fascia with vinyl or metal elements
- Removal of dormers
- Removal of non-functioning chimneys

**Analysis:** The phrase solar panel, does not appear anywhere within the Guidelines for Cedar Rapids Historic Districts. Staff has consulted the Secretary of the Interior’s (SOI) Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties for guidance in this instance. Within the section of the SOI [standards on rehabilitation] for Building Exterior Roofs, the following can be found under recommended (see page 111 of the PDF or document page 101):

“Installing mechanical and service equipment on the roof such as air conditioning, transformers, or solar collectors when required for the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.”

It is also important to note that this is not the first solar panel project that has come to the Commission for review. In September of 2015, the HPC approved solar panels on the property at 355 19th Street (Tudor Style Religious Institution) on the alley facing side (south side) of the building’s roof. While every application is looked at individually, knowing this is not the first time an application contemplating this type of project has occurred is beneficial.

Gable sections of the roof are noted as defining features on the home at 1620 Park Avenue SE, however in no way will the installation of solar panels impact the gables of the roof. In terms of not recommended from the Cedar Rapids guidelines, this proposed installation will have no impact on dormers, fascia or eaves. These solar panels will protrude slightly from the roof of the structure, but will not detract from the overall architecture of the building. These panels are proposed to be on the portion of the structure closest to the street in an effort to gather the most
sun, but at the same time, the low profile does keep the installation as inconspicuous as possible. The fact these are closer to the front of the house will obscure them from immediate view when directly in front of the house, in the street in front of the house, or across the street in front of the house.

The view of the solar panels will be somewhat masked so long as street trees remain along the street. During the majority of the spring and summer months while the trees have leaves, these solar panels will not be readily visible to those traveling along Park Avenue SE between 16th and 17th Streets SE. At some point, the street trees could no longer be there and it is a certain factor that the trees will not have leaves in the late fall and winter months.

In no way will these solar panels damage or obscure character defining features of the building. While not contemplated by the current local guidelines, the SOI standards do make reference to solar collection devices so long as installation does not mask or alter character defining features of the structure. Given the sunlight requirements, this is the most inconspicuous location on the property where solar panels would be effective per the analysis done on this property by the solar contractor.

This type of a project is a way to modernize the property while improving the efficiency. Reduction in energy consumption through use of solar panels fits with historic preservation in the way that repair and reuse of materials is recommended within the Guidelines and SOI standards. This type of project is one way to keep a historic structure in use and modernized without compromising any defining features; this theme is one that is overarching throughout the City’s Historic Preservation Plan. Keeping structures in good repair and in use ensures they will be protected for future generations to enjoy. If the gable on the home were oriented the other way, this proposal would be much less conspicuous and the staff recommendation would likely be different, as the solar panels would directly face the street. Given the sunlight requirements necessary for the panels to be effective, they generally need to be where they have been proposed. However, the overall height of the roof coupled with anticipated tree cover for months when people are outdoors are mitigating factors.

As it relates to the Criteria for Commission decision on the application, there are no defining features which would be altered as a result of this application. This type of project is not currently contemplated in the adopted Guidelines for Cedar Rapids historic districts, but is contemplated in the latest edition of the SOI standards. The question for the Commission in deliberating this application is essentially has the proposal mitigated for any adverse impacts the installation would have.

**Staff Recommendation:** Approve as submitted.

**Attachments:** Completed application from applicant and images of the proposed solar panels.
The following information is necessary for all requests for exterior modifications to local historic landmarks or buildings within a designated local historic district as per Chapter 18, Historic Preservation in the Cedar Rapids Municipal Code. Please answer all questions. Failure to provide accurate and complete information will delay review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner Information</th>
<th>Applicant Information (skip if owner)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name Caleb Gates</td>
<td>Name/Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address 1620 Park Ave SE</td>
<td>Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Cedar Rapids</td>
<td>Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State IA Zip 52403</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone 515-201-9905</td>
<td>State Zip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email <a href="mailto:cdogexplore@gmail.com">cdogexplore@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Address of Property where work will occur:** 1620 Park Ave SE

**Project Type:** ☑ House ☐ Garage ☐ Shed ☐ Fence ☐ Other

**Project Description and Location on the property/structure** (please be as detailed as possible):

- Hiring Moxie Solar to Install 12 Photo-voltaic Solar Panels on the roof of the house.
- Solar panels would be installed on the south end of the main east and west side of the roof. 7 solar panels would be installed on the west side of the roof, and 5 solar panels would be installed on the east side of the roof. Panels need to be installed toward the street-side of the east and west facing roofs in order to obtain sufficient sunlight.

**Description of existing materials (e.g. wood, metal, asphalt shingles):**

- asphalt shingles

**Description of proposed materials (e.g. wood, metal, asphalt shingles):**

- Photo-voltaic Solar Panels installed over asphalt shingles

**Will you be permanently removing architectural detailing/ornamentation from the exterior of the structure (e.g. corbel(s), trim, molding, newel post caps)?** Yes ☑ No ☐

If Yes, describe what architectural detailing/ornamentation you are removing and why:-

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

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_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________
Description of how project meets the Guidelines for Cedar Rapids Historic Districts or rationale for why the project is not consistent with the Guidelines for Cedar Rapids Historic Districts:

To my knowledge, the Cedar Rapids Historic District Guidelines say nothing about adding solar panels on the roof. Adding Solar panels to the roof of my house will lower the environmental impact of my house and increase the appeal of the neighborhood.

Supplemental Materials Required:

For all projects, include at least one of the following applicable materials:
- □ Physical Material(s) Sample
- □ Product Catalog, indicating chosen product
- □ Photo of exact product which will be installed

For new construction only, include at least one of the following:
- □ Sketches
- ✔ Renderings
- □ Construction Drawings

I, the owner or designated representative of the property, have read the application and acknowledge the Guidelines for Cedar Rapids Historic Districts, as they relate to my project will be used to determine if my project is approved. If the area where the work on the project is not readily visible from a public right-of-way (alley or street), I also authorize a staff member of the Community Development Department to come onto the property to obtain photo(s) of the area where the work will occur.

I acknowledge that the information provided in this application, including all attachments, are accurate and correct, and that an incomplete application will not be accepted.

I have included the required applicable attachments with this application: ✔ Yes  □ No

Owner/applicant signature: __________________________________________

For staff use only:
Date and time completed application received: ____________________________

City of Cedar Rapids Community Development Department
101 First Street SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
Phone: 319-286-5041 | Web: www.cityofcr.org/hpc

Revised 3/2017
Date: September 28, 2017
To: Cedar Rapids Historic Preservation Commission
From: Jeff Hintz and Iván Gonzalez, Community Development Department
Subject: Historic District Guidelines – Vinyl Fences

Background: The current Historic District Guidelines (Guidelines) and the proposed draft of the Guidelines prepared by the guideline subcommittee include a section on fences. The current Guidelines and proposed Guidelines are included as attachments 1 and 2 respectively. The proposed Guideline page includes the preview of the formatting of portions of the document.

At the request of the HPC during the September 14, 2017 meeting, staff has included information researched by a Commission member related to vinyl/synthetic fencing materials. This information is included in attachments 3 and 4; one is from the City of Jacksonville, Florida and includes guidance on how a vinyl fence would be permitted in a historic district. The final attachment is from the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office and it relates to fencing. The guidance from the Michigan SHPO to local communities is to review synthetic fencing on a case by case basis. Under the applying the standards section, there is some guidance for where a vinyl fence might be appropriate.

Next Steps: The goal of this discussion item is to obtain input from the commission and provide some guidance to help inform the update to the guidelines on fencing. Based on Commission discussion, elements of this discussion could be included in the proposed Historic District Guidelines.

Attachment 1: Current Historic District Guidelines on Fences;
Attachment 2: Proposed Historic District Guidelines on Fences;
Attachment 3: Jacksonville, Florida fencing Guidelines in Historic Districts; and
Attachment 4: Michigan State Historic Preservation Office guidance on fencing.
Fences

Robert Frost once wrote, “good fences make good neighbors.”. Fences that retain their property’s historic feel certainly do, too. In Cedar Rapids Historic Districts, traditional fences were wooden pickets used in the rear, side, and sometimes front yards.

**Recommended:**
- Wooden picket fence
- Opaque privacy fence
- Maximum of 6 feet high in the rear and side yards
- Maximum of 3 feet high in the front yards

**Not Recommended:**
- Chain link fence
- Metal fence

**Home Repair Tips**
The regular washing, painting, and staining will help keep up the appearance of your fence.
Fences

Robert Frost once wrote, “good fences make good neighbors.”. Fences that retain their property's historic feel certainly do, too. In Cedar Rapids Historic Districts, traditional fences were wooden pickets used in the rear, side, and sometimes front yards.

**APPROPRIATE:**
- Wooden picket fence
- Wooden privacy fence
- Ornamental metal fences (e.g. wrought iron)
- Maximum of 6 feet high in the rear and side yards
- Maximum of 3 feet high in the front
- Wood rails of the fence shall face the interior or of the property.

**NOT APPROPRIATE:**
- Chain link fence
- Non-ornamental metal fence
- Plastic or shiny resin

**HOME REPAIR TIPS**

1. Have the final work inspected by the Building Services Department if a permit was required for the work.
FENCING GUIDELINES FOR

Locally Designated Historic Districts

Source: The S.B. Hibbard Co.
GUIDELINES ON FENCES
MATERIALS, DESIGN, HEIGHT AND PLACEMENT OF FENCES
IN LOCALLY DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Guidelines on fencing adopted by the Jacksonville Historic Preservation
Commission on February 26, 2003

Pursuant to 307.107(a), Jacksonville Ordinance Code, the Jacksonville
Historic Preservation Commission adopted the following guidelines for fences
in locally designated historic districts. Applications for fences that comply
with these guidelines may be approved by the Planning and Development
Department. These guidelines are advisory in nature. Deviations from these
guidelines will be determined by the Commission on a case-by-case basis. Any
other fencing request that is not specifically addressed in the following outline
would be forwarded to the Commission for a final determination.

This outline divides fencing appropriateness into four areas: Fencing
Materials; Fencing Design; Fencing Height; and Fencing Placement

GUIDELINES

FENCING MATERIALS
- Wood, wrought-iron and wrought-iron looking (aluminum, steel, etc) and
  masonry columns between wrought iron style fencing are appropriate
  materials for the historic districts.
- Fence colors should complement the façade of the house or the
  surrounding neighborhood. Natural or white is an appropriate color for
  wood material; black is an appropriate color for a wrought-iron style
  fence.
- Inappropriate fencing materials such as vinyl or chain link can be
  installed on the backyard of an interior lot if it will not be visible from the
  right-of-way. These fencing materials should extend off the back corner
  of the house. If the fence extends out into the side yard from the back
  corner of the house and is visible from the right-of-way, this portion of
  the fence should be disguised with an appropriate style fence so the
  inappropriate materials will not be visible from the right-of-way. See
  sketch on the next column.

FENCING DESIGN

Vertical orientated fencing is most appropriate for the historic districts.

Front yard
(the yard from the front wall plane of the primary structure’s main building
mass to the right-of-way)
- Picket style with points is most appropriate for both wood and
  wrought iron style.
- Pickets should include spacing. The fence should be at least 30% non-opaque.
- Free-standing masonry columns between wrought-iron style fencing is
  appropriate when the columns are consistent with the Guidelines.
  (See Fencing Height)
- Scallop design picket fencing with spacing between pickets is
  appropriate. The support posts of the fence should be no more than
  one (1) foot higher than the lowest point of the scallop.
Back yard
- Designs appropriate for the front yard are also appropriate for the back yard.
- Stockade, shadow-box, and board on board style of fencing is appropriate.
- Any fence design that is not visible from the right-of-way is allowable.
- If an inappropriate fence design extends out into the side yard from the back corner of the house and is visible from the right-of-way, this portion of the fence should be appropriately screened with a suitable style fence so the inappropriate design will not be visible from the right-of-way. See previous sketch.

Secondary front yard
(the yard that includes the side elevation of the structure which faces the street on a corner lot)
- Picket, wrought-iron style, stockade, shadowbox, and board on board design fencing is appropriate.
- See Height and Placement section on following page in order to determine which design and at what height is appropriate at different locations on a secondary front yard.

FENCING HEIGHT
Fencing height in the historic districts should adhere to the zoning code when pertaining to street elevations.

Front yard
- Fences should be no higher than four (4) feet with the support posts or columns of a picket style fence reaching no higher than five (5) feet.

Back yard
- Fences should be no higher than six (6) feet.

FENCING PLACEMENT
Fencing enclosing the back yard should be placed behind the front wall massing of the structure. The fence should begin behind the front porch and any significant features of the structure visible from the street. (i.e. wrap around porches, bay windows, etc.)

Interior lots - back and side yards
- If the proposed fence is higher than four (4) feet, it must meet the Zoning Code requirements on placement. In order for a fence to be taller than four (4) feet along the side yard of a property, the fence must be set back at least twenty (20) feet from the right-of-way of the primary front yard. Twenty (20) feet is the required front yard setback for fencing over four feet high.

Corner lots
The back yard and side elevations of a corner lot are more visible from the right-of-way than an interior lot. A fence on a corner lot could negatively affect neighboring property or streetscapes. The Guidelines recommend a fence up to four (4) feet in height for street elevations and a fence up to six (6) feet in height for side and rear elevations.

A corner lot includes two street elevations - one along the front elevation of the structure on the property and one along the side elevation. The area on the front elevation is considered the primary front yard while the area on the side elevation facing the street is considered the secondary front yard.
- A four (4) foot fence is appropriate for both street elevations of a corner lot.
Secondary front yard
- Fences greater than four (4) feet in height must meet the following conditions:
  A. The fence should be placed at least ten (10) feet back from the right-of-way line; or
  B. The fence should be aligned with the wall plane of the subject structure.
*If the front wall plane of the adjacent house is farther from the right-of-way line than either conditions A or B above, then the fence shall be located no closer to the right-of-way line than the front wall plane of the adjacent structure or the side wall plane of the subject structure, whichever distance is less.

- Fence designs appropriate for a front yard (see Front yard subtitle under the Fencing Design section) should be used when installing a four (4) foot fence within ten (10) feet from the right-of-way.
- Fence designs appropriate for a secondary front yard (see Secondary front yard subtitle under the Fencing Design section) are allowable when the previously stated conditions for placement of a fence over four (4) feet in height are met.

SPRINGFIELD
Six (6) foot wrought-iron style fences in Springfield have been approved for front yards. This style of fencing does not block the visual appearance of the historic structures. Lots in Springfield tend to have been developed in a more regular pattern than the lots found in Riverside/Avondale. The use of this style and height of fencing in the front yard has received neighborhood support and does not negatively affect the historic structures or the surrounding district. However, the installation of a six-foot fence in a front yard is in conflict with the Zoning Code. An Administrative Deviation must be sought to allow the fence under the Zoning Code before a COA is granted for Historic Preservation approval.

FENCING REQUIRING THE COMMISSION’S REVIEW AND APPROVAL
- Masonry Walls visible from the right-of-way
- Fences over six (6) feet high
- Requests not considered in these recommendations

For additional information or questions on any of the information contained in this brochure, please contact:

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Fences in Historic Districts

Fences in Historic Districts

Michigan State Historic Preservation Office

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"While not often found at the front of a city lot, the fence is frequently a delightful feature of the back of the premises, where it may enclose the kitchen garden or perhaps screen a quiet resting spot, for backyards can be used for storing peace and comfort and beauty as well as garbage cans, clothes lines, and rubbish. Fences for such a purpose are usually wood lattice or mesh wire, overgrown with flowering vines. They screen the garden not only from the street, but from the next door neighbor and with their wealth of climbing vines and blossoms give pleasure to all who look upon them."


“Good fences make good neighbors.” This sentiment taken from the poem Mending Wall by Robert Frost is applicable today in residential neighborhoods where some degree of privacy or separation may be desired. While there may be truth to the line from Frost's poem, one could argue that what kind of fence separates neighbors can play a role in how the neighbors view each other. For example, a six-foot tall, solid privacy fence has a much different impact than a four-foot tall ornamental wire fence.

Fences in Designated Local Historic Districts
Because the issue of fences, fence material, and fence design can become an issue in a historic district, we have developed an opinion on appropriate fence design and materials in local historic districts. Much as we would like to give a firm yes or no on, say, the use of specific modern materials, like vinyl fencing, we don’t feel it is appropriate. Fencing material must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine what affect it has on the resource and its feeling and setting.

What follows are some things to consider when reviewing a proposal for modern fencing material.

**Applying the Standards**

Historic lawn features, such as fences, should be retained and repaired or replaced in kind whenever possible.

Fencing a front yard would typically not have been done historically and should be discouraged.

Any modern fencing material that is used in a local historic district should meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Cultural Landscapes which state that a feature should be visually compatible in its “mass, scale, form, features, materials, texture or color” to the landscape so that it does not “detract from” or “alter the historic character of” the landscape. Many of the fence designs and materials that can be obtained at home improvement centers do not replicate the look and feel of historic materials and “detracts from” the landscape. The modern fence stands out in the landscape and is not visually compatible with it. Such a fence becomes the central focus of the landscape, not the frame, and thus is not in keeping with gardening trends of the past that set the feeling and setting for a historic home. If modern fencing material meets the Standard then it could be used. A fencing material can never be rejected outright; it must be reviewed in terms of its size, shape, profile, and texture and for its affect on the visual harmony of the landscape. Commissioners should also consider where the fence will be placed, its visibility factor, and its function (decoration, screening, or utilitarian). Example: A vinyl fence at the back of a property that is secluded by hedges may be appropriate. A vinyl fence to screen trash bins on a back alley may be appropriate. A vinyl fence in a front yard is probably not appropriate.

Chain link and wire fence are historically appropriate materials for historic landscapes. The use of vegetation to hide or soften these fences should be encouraged.

High Board privacy fences and lattice fences were commonly used in backyards to screen or create private areas. Modern diagonal lattice was not typical and is not appropriate. Such fences were erected for the decorative value as well as the screen functioning.

**Determine the Appropriate Standards**

Use the Secretary of the Interior’s Rehabilitation Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes when reviewing landscape features. Under Structures, Furnishings, and Objects these guidelines state:

**Alterations/Additions for the New Use**

**Recommended**

Designing and installing a new structure, furnishing or object when required by the new use, which is compatible with the historic character of the landscape.

**Not recommended**

Placing a new structure, furnishing, or object where it may cause damage, or is incompatible with the historic character of the landscape.

Locating any new structure, furnishing or object in such a way that it detracts from or alters the historic character of the landscape.

Introducing a new structure, furnishing, or object in an appropriate location, but making it visually incompatible in mass, scale, form, features, materials, texture or color.
Determine the Historic Context

Whenever possible, historic district commissions should work to collect historic images of the community's historic districts in order to have a foundation of information about the historic character of the district that will assist them in making decisions. If individual photographs of the specific house cannot be found, then use images of the neighborhood or other similar neighborhoods in the community.

Publications from the period are also good sources of information. There are a wide range of landscape architecture and gardening books available at the Library of Michigan or at your local university library. Many of the books can be accessed through your local library using the Michigan Electronic Library (MEL) system that lets you request books from around the state. Period magazines that deal with landscapes such as *American Homes and Gardens*, *Country Life in America*, *The Craftsman*, *House and Garden*, and *House Beautiful* are on the shelves at the Library of Michigan and at many university libraries. *Old House Journal* is a modern magazine that often has advertisements for reproduction materials that could be used.

The following information regarding yards and fencing was summarized from landscape architecture books and gardening magazines published between 1910 and 1930.

Front Yards

Property owners were encouraged to view front yards as public space. Sweeping open lawns bordered by undulating shrubbery were recommended. Lawns should be united along the street giving an impression of open space. Uniformity in plant choices, such as street trees, was encouraged. Fencing front yards was discouraged. If fencing did occur in the front, it was decorative and served as a frame for the picture of the house on the site.

Side Yards

Side yards should be considered a continuation of the front yard. Open lawns, with perhaps some additional plantings to provide screening for the back yard may be appropriate. Typically, however, enclosing a side yard with a privacy fence is not recommended.

Back Yards

Back yards should be considered to be the area behind the line drawn parallel with the primary rear wall of the structure. For example, on a two-story house with a one-story rear kitchen addition, the back yard should be considered to start at the two-story rear wall. Back yards were viewed as having separate areas with different functions: areas of repose and relaxation; work areas for drying laundry, performing outdoor tasks, or growing vegetable gardens; and service areas for storage or trash bins. Thus fences had three functions: 1) Screening - create areas of privacy or to hide service areas, 2) Decorative – frame vistas or add visual interest to the garden, and 3) Utilitarian - keep out children and animals (they never mention keeping them in!)

Screen Fencing

*High Board Fence*

What we today would call a privacy fence was considered to be a good choice for screening or for creating privacy in the back yard. A solid fence with a lattice top was considered a "good choice." It was advised that such fences should be in a "subdued color" and "partly concealed by vines and tall shrubs."

*Lattice Fences*

Wood lattice fences “with their wealth of climbing vines and blossoms give pleasure to all who look upon them.” (Note: the wood lattice of the past was not the diagonal slat lattice of today. Slats were perpendicular and openings were square. Openings could be small or large.) One author cautioned that “Lattice is both decorative and utilitarian in purpose; the only danger is using it so freely that it becomes tiresome."
and utilitarian in purpose; the only danger is using it so freely that it becomes tiresome.

Decorative Fencing

The overriding advice: the simpler the architecture of the house, the simpler the fence designs. For example while decorative iron fencing lent an element of beauty to a country estate, it was thought to be too “formidable” for cottages and bungalows. So, the black aluminum fencing that simulates iron fences and is so poplar today is probably too “formidable” for most middle or working class neighborhoods. Picket fencing that didn’t obscure the view and let the eye travel over and through it was considered most appropriate for medium to small homes. Simple picket fences with a more elaborate gate way (such as an arbor or a pergola) were encouraged.

Utilitarian Fencing

Wire fence was considered to be the simplest and most effective type of utilitarian fence. “Coarse wire mesh fence hung on an iron frame” was considered to be “almost invisible and really imperative where fruit, vegetables, not to speak of flowers, need protection.” Wire fence could be simply utilitarian—single strands of horizontal and vertical wire joined together perpendicularly. The Page Fence Company of Adrian, Michigan, made Style 1648, a 16 bar, 48-inch high fence for “fencing gardens in between town and city lots.” The openings were smaller at the bottom to keep out small animals. Another popular—and charming—fence was the more decorative twisted wire fence. This galvanized wire fence had a decorative pattern and finished crown and bottom. A third type of wire fence was chain link fence, which came into popularity in America in the 1890s. Most garden magazines of the early twentieth century encouraged the use of wire fence for its practicality. However, they took issue with its plain, utilitarian look and encouraged the use of climbing vines and shrubbery to hide it. The use of a wood decorative gate (pergola or arch) attached to a wire fence that was covered in flowering vines or masked with shrubs was encouraged.

Conclusion

In conclusion, local decisions on appropriate fencing should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The history of the district and its landscape features, publications from the period, and National Park Service Guidelines can all be used to assist in an appropriate determination regarding fences. Caution should be exercised in making any blanket statements or policies regarding fence material or design. Fences of an appropriate material and design can indeed make for good neighbors.