

Docket Item # 1  
BAR CASE # 2011-0072

BAR Meeting  
April 27, 2011

**ISSUE:** Fence Construction and Waiver of Section 7-202 (Height Requirement)  
**APPLICANT:** Henry and Jessica Almond  
**LOCATION:** 419 North West Street  
**ZONE:** RB/ Residential Townhouse Zone

---

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness and the Waiver of Height Requirement per section 7-202(C), with the conditions:

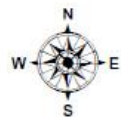
1. That the cedar fence commences 6 feet from front elevation, adjacent to the electric meter on the side elevation of the house, in order to preserve the view shed of the neighboring building's entrance.
2. That the aluminum fence to be installed in the front yard not exceed 3'-6" feet high.
3. That all new fencing to be installed must be located entirely on the subject property.

**\*\*EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of final approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

**\*\*BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including siding or roofing over 100 square feet, windows and signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.



**BAR CASE #2011-0072**



**I. ISSUE:**

The applicant is requesting removal of the existing 36 inch high chain link fence which surrounds the front and south property lines at 419 North West Street and requests approval for:

1. A Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a new, 42 inch high, black, aluminum three-rail fence to enclose the front yard. A gate will be installed at the sidewalk and front walkway intersection.
2. A Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a 6 foot high cedar, board fence along the south property line. A segment of the proposed 6 foot high cedar fence with a gate will also be constructed to extend from the building face and join the new and an existing fence on the south property line to enclose the rear yard.
3. A Waiver of Height Requirement for a 13 foot length segment of fence along the south property line in excess of 6 foot high (per Section 7-200(C) of the Zoning Ordinance). The applicant proposes to construct a 7 foot high fence for 13 feet in length in the location where the adjacent apartment building's entrance abuts the property.

**II. HISTORY:**

The free-standing, two story brick house was constructed in **1938** according to city real estate records. This date is supported by the fact that the house is not shown on the 1931 Sanborn map but does appear on the 1941 map. The date of the rear addition is unknown. Visual inspection indicates that it postdates the main block. It does not appear on Sanborn maps dated 1941, 1986 and 1996 and is not found in the BAR records or the city's computerized building permit records.

The existing house is representative of the modest housing that was built for and by the predominantly working class, residents of the Parker-Gray area from the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. This house is unusual in that it is completely freestanding. It is very plain but its red brick exterior, gabled portico and six-over-six double hung windows suggest a connection to the Colonial Revival style which was favored in Alexandria through much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The modern frame rear addition was approved by the Board in 2007 and constructed in 2008/2009.

**III. ANALYSIS:**

The Zoning and T&ES Staff advise that the existing fence segments along the northern and western property lines must be removed from the public right-of-way. If the applicant wishes to install the new fence in its current location, as shown on the plat (See Figure 3), the applicant will need to request an Encroachment, and defer the BAR decision.

The proposed new fences comply with zoning ordinance requirements only if they are located on the subject property and if the BAR grants the waiver to Section 7-202(C), which would permit the segment of the fence along the southern property line above the permitted six feet in height.

The Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review recently called into question the historic context of chain-link fences in the Parker-Gray District. Staff has performed a survey of the Parker-Gray District and has prepared a recommendation regarding these fences and the context in which they belong within the neighborhood and will be making a formal presentation on the subject at the Board's April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Public Hearing. Based on Staff's findings, it is recommended that the subject chain-link fence does not need to be retained. Our research has indicated that the fence is not original to this house nor fits into the context of this streetscape. This portion of North West Street is not a cohesive streetscape, as it contains a variety of house styles. Due to the age of the fence and the loss of context along this street, Staff does not feel that this chain-link fence is a character-defining feature.

The applicant is proposing a 6 foot cedar fence with gate to extend from both sides of the dwelling's front elevation. Staff recommends that the segment of the fence to be extended from the right elevation be recessed back 6 feet behind the front facade of the dwelling into the side yard in order to preserve the view shed of the garden apartment building at 415 North West Street. The entrance to this apartment building is adjacent to the south side elevation of the dwelling and includes many character-defining features such as 15-light door, side lights, and a prominent door surround. Staff believes that the entrance to this neighboring building is a significant detail, which should remain visible from the existing streetscape for aesthetic and security reasons. Staff has discussed the modification to the submittal with the applicant and the applicant has verbally agreed to this revision to their proposal.

Staff supports the 7 foot high wood fence for the portion that is adjacent to the neighboring building's entrance in order to preserve the privacy of the applicant. It is set well back from the street and will be minimally visible once landscaping matures.

Staff recommends the approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness and the Waiver of Height Requirement with the condition that the 6 foot cedar fence with gate on the south side yard be recessed back 6 feet from the face of the dwelling in order to preserve the view shed of the adjacent garden apartment building.

***Waiver of Height Requirement - Section 7-202(C)***

*Per Section 7-202 (C): In the Old and Historic Alexandria and the Parker-Gray Districts, the requirement of sections 7-202(A)(1) and 7-202(B)(3) may be waived or modified by the board of architectural review where the board finds that a proposed fence would be architecturally appropriate and consistent with the character of the district.*

Staff recommends that the Board finds that the proposed fence would be architecturally appropriate and consistent with the character of the district and supports the waiver of Section 7-202(C), to permit the 7 foot high fence for a 13 foot length.

**STAFF:**

Michele Oaks, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Courtney Lankford, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning  
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

**V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**

Legend: C – Code Requirement R – Recommendation S – Suggestion F- Finding

Zoning Section:

All new fences must be located on the subject property. The existing front fence is located within the public right of way. Portions of the side and rear fence are located on adjacent properties. Relocate all replacement fences so they are on the subject property.

Code Administration:

C1- A building permit will be required to be issued prior to the start of work.

C4- The following information will be required to be submitted for review at the time of permit application;

- Approved BAR documentation
- Plot plan showing type, height, and length of fence

Transportation and Environmental Services (T & ES)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- R1. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R2. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R3. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design and must be included on the required Grading Plan. (T&ES)
- R4. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on all plans submitted for approvals. (T&ES)

- R5. An Erosion and Sediment Control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R6. Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R7. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)

**FINDINGS:**

- F1. An approved grading plan may be required at the time of building permit application. In summary, City Code Section 5-6-224 requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving: Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site Plan Coordinator at (703) 746-4064. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.  
**<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf>**

**CODE REQUIREMENTS**

- C1. An Encroachment will be required for the front fence installation as it is within the public right-of-way. (Sec. 5-2-29) (T&ES)
- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)
- C-3 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-4 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.5-6-224) (T&ES)
- C-5 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-2) (T&ES)



VI. IMAGES:

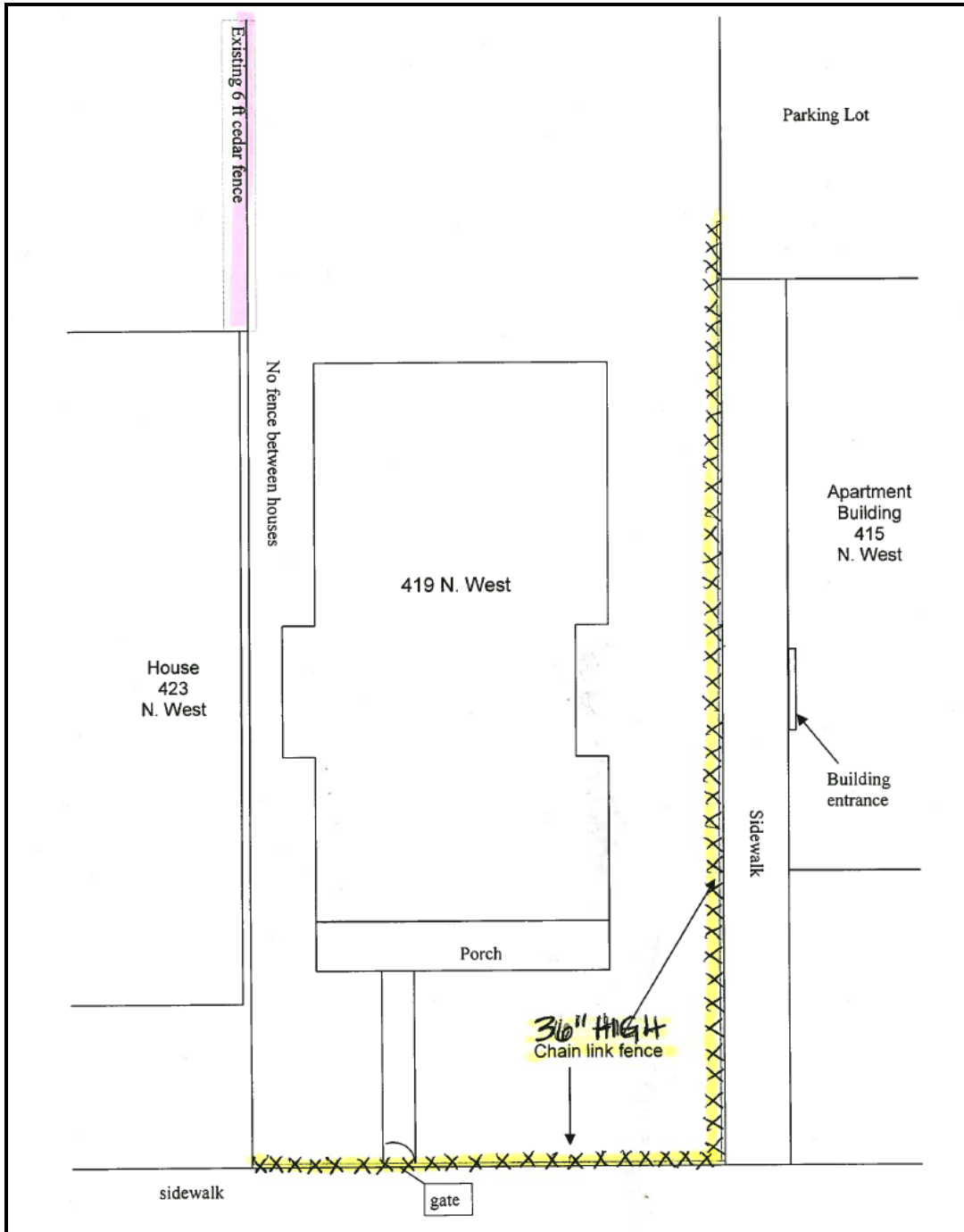


Figure 1: Site Plan - Existing Conditions

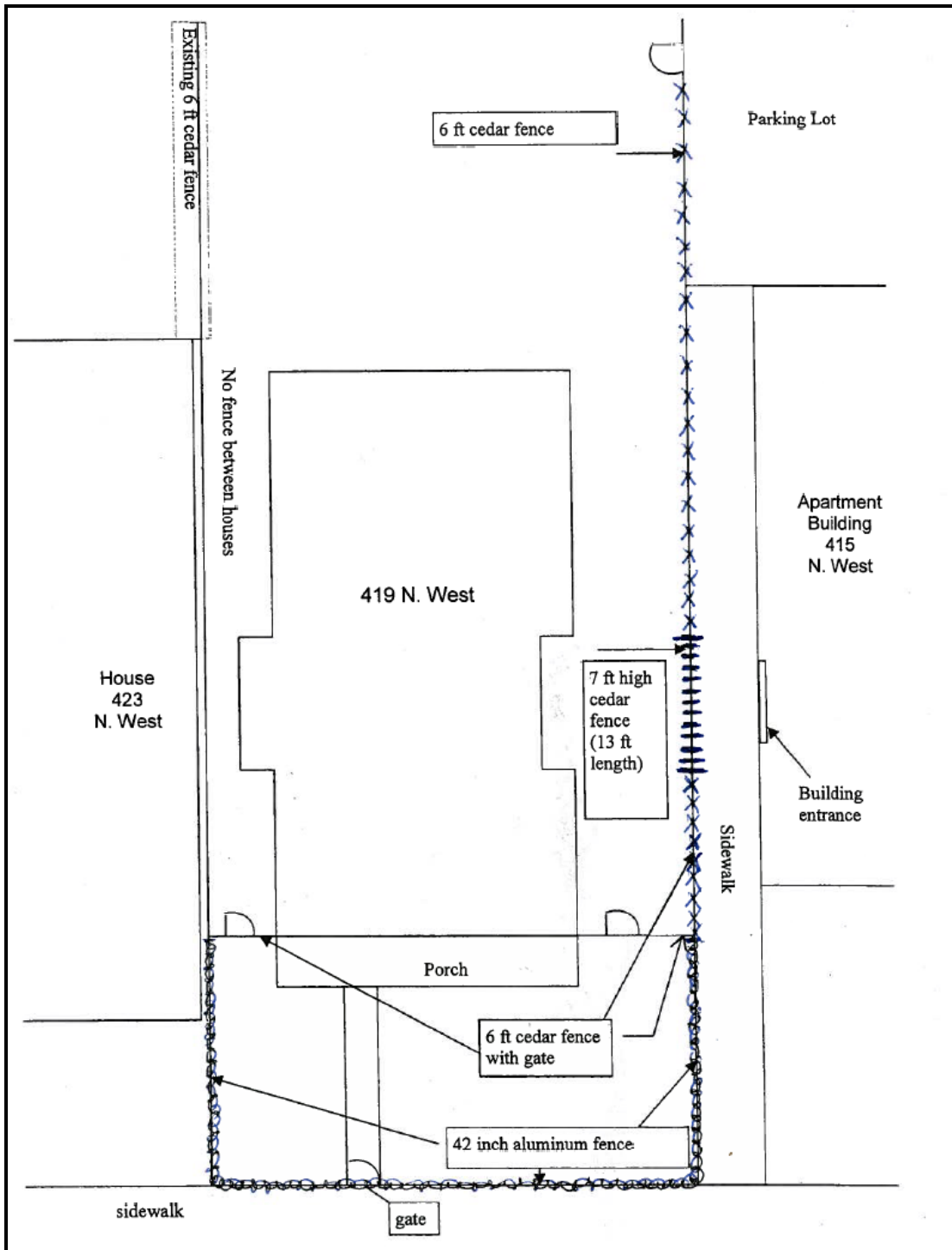


Figure 2: Site Plan - Proposal



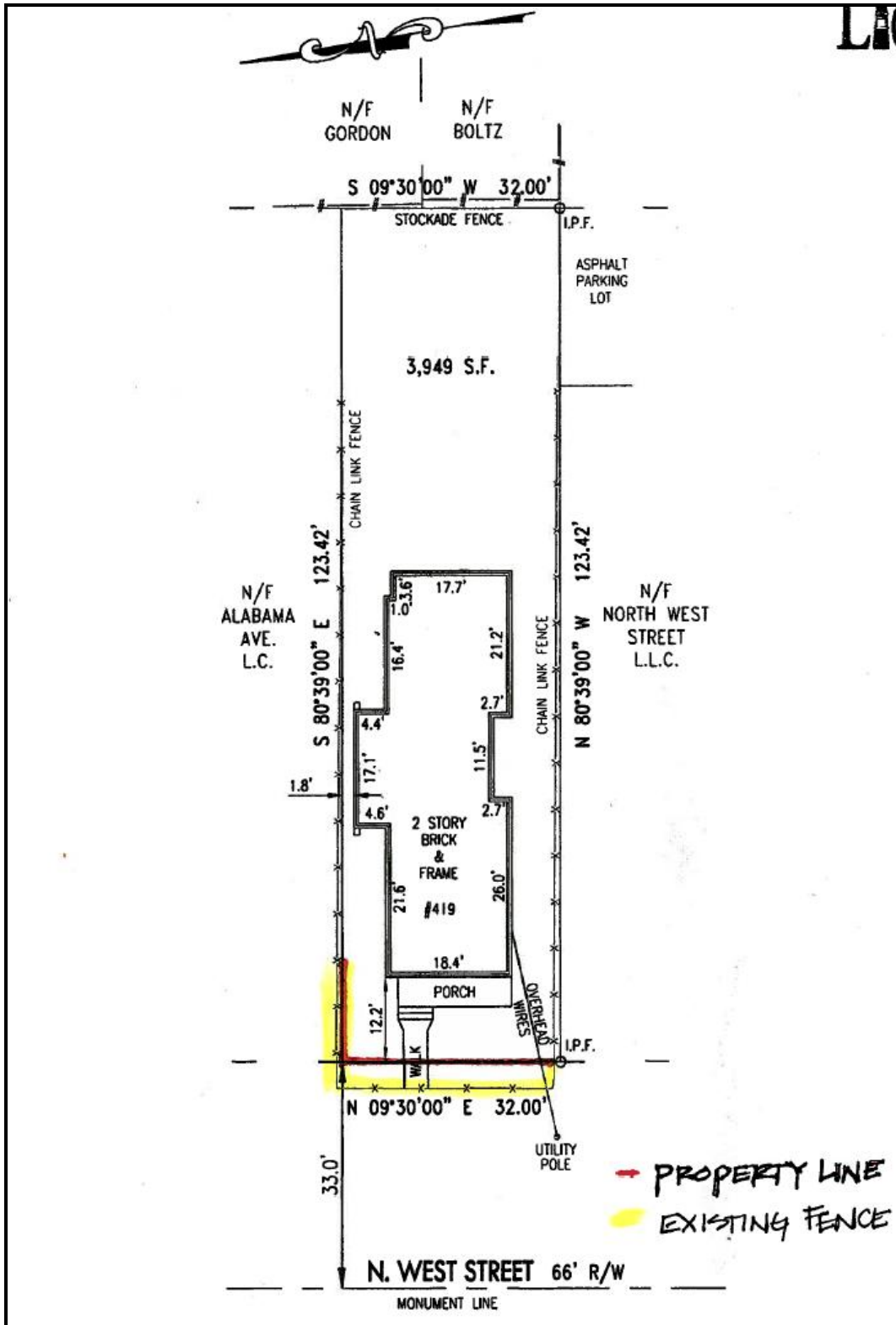


Figure 3: Plat – Locations of Existing Fence and Property Lines



**Figure 4: Front Elevation and Existing Fence**

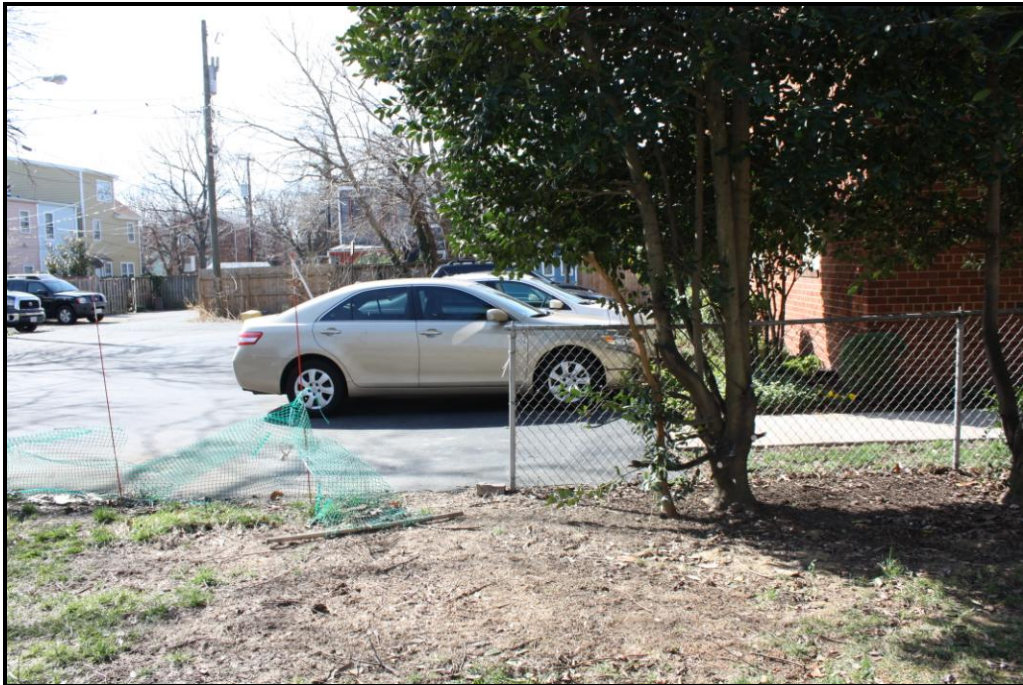


**Figure 5: View of Front Elevation and Adjacent Building**





**Figure 6: View of Front Entrance of Adjacent Building**



**Figure 7: View of the Parking Lot of Adjacent Property & Subject Existing Chain-link Fence**





**Figure 8: Proposed Board Fence**



**Figure 9: Proposed Elba Three-Rail 42H x 72.75W Fence**