

Docket Item #8
BAR CASE# 2005-00125

BAR Meeting
June 22, 2005

ISSUE: Fence
APPLICANT: Wilson Thompson
LOCATION: 302 North Fayette Street
ZONE: CL/Commercial

****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 issuance 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 the Code Enforcement Bureau (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Enforcement, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the fence be located entirely on the applicant's property;
2. That the fence be either painted or stained;
3. That the design of the gate be approved by Staff; and,
4. That the existing chain link fence be removed.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new wood fence along the east property line of 302 North Fayette Street. The fence is proposed to be placed behind the existing chain link fence. The wood fence will be six feet in height, approximately 5" taller than the chain link fence. Information on a gate providing access to the property has not been provided.

II. HISTORY:

The two-story, two bay, frame residence at 302 North Fayette Street was constructed in the late nineteenth century. The building appears on the 1902 Sanborn map, the first year this area of the City was mapped.

According to a 1957 building permit, a 2'6" horizontal wood fence was added on top of a 1'6" concrete wall at the side of the property. This wood fence was later changed to the existing chain link. At the same time that the original wood fence was approved, the main entrance was relocated from the front elevation (North Fayette Street side) to the north elevation. The former entrance was converted to a window to match the existing windows (Building permit #13365, 6/10/57).

There are no previous BAR approvals for this property.

III. ANALYSIS:

Fences in required front yards must be open and cannot exceed 3'6" in height. However, section 7-202(C) of the Zoning Ordinance allows the Boards of Architectural Review to waive or modify the fence requirements if the board finds that the proposed fence is architecturally appropriate and consistent with the character of the district. The house is unusual in that it has a large side yard and virtually no rear yard. As mentioned above, there is no door on the front elevation of the house. Therefore, Staff believes the height and closed character of the proposed fence is appropriate in this location as it will "read" as a rear yard fence.

According to the *Design Guidelines*, metal chain link fences are not appropriate in the historic districts except in certain institutional uses (Fences - Page 3). Staff does not support the proposal to keep the chain link fence with the new wood fence placed behind it. The new fence eliminates the functional need for the chain link fence and Staff believes a double fence at the front property line will create an awkward appearance. Staff recommends that the entire chain link fence be removed.

The proposed fence complies with the *Design Guidelines* with the condition that it be painted or

stained (Fences - Page 3).

Staff notes that the existing chain link fence at 302 North Fayette Street encroaches into the public right of way. Staff has discussed with the applicant the need to ensure that the new fence is constructed entirely on his property. Staff recommends that the Board approve the fence with the condition that it be erected entirely on the subject property.

Staff also notes that the entrance to the house is located on the north elevation rather than the front elevation facing North Fayette Street. Therefore, a gate will be required to provide access to the building. Staff recommends that the design of a wood gate be submitted to BAR Staff for approval prior to installation.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the fence be located entirely on the applicant's property;
2. That the fence be either painted or stained;
3. That the design of the gate be approved by Staff; and,
4. That the existing chain link fence be removed.

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F- finding

Code Enforcement:

No comments.

Historic Alexandria:

“No comment.”