

817-817 West High Street
Woodward Heights District Historic District

The Heights LLC, Owner
Kimberly C. Baughman, Applicant

Scope of Work

Reinforce existing retaining wall; create curbing.

Background

The owner of this modern apartment building has been working towards renovating and upgrading the structure. She is now addressing the site work.

At this time the new owner is requesting that the Board grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to conduct the following work:

1. Replace fencing with new wood fence that mimics railing of existing railings of the building.
2. Build/reinforce the existing retaining wall.

The proposal calls for the reinforcement of the existing retaining wall with decorative concrete block. This wall has more exposure in the interior of the yard. The new facing will now create a 5”curb that will be seen from High street. In addition, as the elevation slightly changes, the southeast section of the curb will have more exposure than the west. The proposal calls for the interior yard to be back filled and landscaped. The wall will still be 2 ½’ tall. A chain-link fence will be replaced with a new wood fence that matches the railings of the building. The applicant states that the fence height will not change and the existing metal post will be boxed out. The gate will remain. The steps will be replaced with same material.

Guidelines

III. GUIDELINES FOR SITE AND SETTING

In addition to buildings, elements of the surrounding site and setting contribute to the character of historic properties. These elements include both natural and manmade features such as trees, fields, gardens, fences, driveways, retaining walls and boundary definers. Historic site elements help to define a property’s historic character and appearance. Historic site and setting features should be preserved and maintained.

1. FENCES

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Fences were typically constructed of wood, cast or wrought iron, brick, stone or woven wire. Lexington has a number of historic metal fences. Historic fences should be preserved and maintained. The construction of new fences based upon historic designs and materials is also appropriate. Cast iron or woven wire is preferable for 19th and early 20th century buildings. Wood fences are also allowed; however, it is important to keep the fence as transparent as possible so as not to obscure the view of the historic building.

Fences:

Background cont'd

(III.1.)

- C. of wood pickets are appropriate for front yards. Wood fences in front yards should be no taller than four feet, have pickets no wider than four inches and set no farther apart than three inches. Woven wire fences in front yards should also not be more than three feet tall.
- B. of wood boards for privacy should be located in rear yards and generally be no taller than six feet (most pre-fabricated wood fence sections are 8' wide by 6' high). Privacy fences of this height should be at least half-way back from the front of the building to the back walls on the side of the house. Privacy fences of flat boards in a single row are more historically correct than shadowbox (alternating boards) designs but both designs are acceptable. Fences with flat tops, "dog ear" or Gothic (pointed tops) designs are all acceptable. "Stockade" designs are discouraged.

2. Walls

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Some properties in Lexington's historic districts include stone or brick walls. Historic walls should be preserved and maintained.

Walls:

- (III.2.)E. that are retaining walls should be retained and repaired as needed with matching material and mortar mix. New retaining walls, where needed, may include split face concrete block, if appropriate.

4. Sidewalks, Walkways and Curbs

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Sidewalks, walkways and curbs in Lexington's historic districts are constructed primarily of concrete with some brick walkways and some limestone curbs. These elements help to define the character of the districts and should be preserved and maintained.

Sidewalks, Walkways, and Curbs:

- A. that are significant paved surfaces should be maintained and preserved.
- B. that are added or altered should be compatible with the principal and accessory structures on the property and surrounding historic properties.
- C. that are added should not be visually dominant, intrusive or suggest a false sense of history.

6. LANDSCAPE, LAND FEATURES, LAND FORMATIONS, VIEWSHEDS AND ARCHAEOLOGY

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Landscape, land features, land formations, view sheds and archaeology define many site elements in historic areas throughout Fayette County. These elements include resources above and below the ground surface. As a result, landscape and land features are more difficult to define than built features and elements. Landscape and land features can be either man-made or natural. These features include, but are not limited to: trees and shrubs, decorative gardens, utilitarian (functional) gardens, fields, documented historic topography, archaeological and cultural resources and other land features and land formations.

Guidelines cont'd

Landscape, Land Features, Land Formations, Viewsheds and Archaeology:

- A. that are significant should be preserved and maintained.
- B. that are altered or introduced should be compatible to the site and with surrounding properties.
- C. should not be visually dominant, intrusive or suggest a false sense of history.

Findings

The proposal to reinforce the existing retaining all and creating a curb along West High Street is within Guidelines III.7.A. and III.7.B respectively state: "Landscape elements and site elements should not be visually intrusive or suggest a false sense of history" and "Landscape elements and site elements: open space should only be developed in scale, use and character with the site and the local historic district." Staff does suggest that the fence be a picket fence.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval as submitted with the condition.

1. The fence be picket fence.
2. Any material changes comeback to staff.
3. Once reviewed by any other LFUCG Departments, any changes come back to staff for review.

Deadline for Board Action

September 20, 2016