

336 Desha Road
Historic District

Jane E. Graham, Owner

Scope of Work

Construct new front yard stone wall.

Background

The owner is requesting that the BOAR grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct two new front yard stone walls; the walls are proposed to be located eighteen inches off of the street sidewalk and either side of the walk to the structure. Each wall is proposed to be of dry laid limestone nineteen inches high and twenty inches wide at the capstone.

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:

- (III.1.) A. of cast iron, stone, metal, wire, or brick that are original to the property should be preserved and maintained or if missing, may be reconstructed based on physical or pictorial evidence.
- B. of cast iron may be added to properties with buildings constructed to the early 20th century. Cast iron fences are not appropriate for buildings built after 1920.
- C. of wood pickets are appropriate for front yards. Wood fences in front yards should be no taller than three 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.
- D. 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.

Guidelines cont'd.

- E. of free-standing brick or concrete walls are not appropriate in front yards but are acceptable at rear yards and side yards.
- F. of stone should be repaired/restored with the same material and mortar mix as the historic stone fence. If it is a dry-stacked stone wall, it should remain so. Please be aware that stone fences in Fayette County within the public right-of-way are protected by the Stone Wall Preservation Ordinance Section 14-83 (see following section, Walls) and require permits through the DHP.

6. Landscape, land features, land formations, view sheds 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.

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.
- D should not be created by the demolition of existing structures.
- E of open space should only be developed in scale and character with the neighborhood or designated historic landmark.
- F of vistas and approaches should be preserved and maintained.
- G trees with trunks greater than 10 inches in diameter should not be removed unless diseased or unsafe.
- H new construction or rehabilitation activity should work around trees with trunks greater than 10 inches in diameter.
- I the determination of archaeological/cultural resource significance is recommended before site work begins. If archaeological or cultural significance is determined, this should guide proposed alterations, new construction or demolition.

Findings

The construction of the front yard stone walls does not meet the guidelines as stated in:

- The Design Principle states that “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.”

Findings Cont'd.

- III.6.B.&C. The new stone walls are not “compatible to the site and with surrounding properties.” Is “visually dominant, intrusive” and does “suggest a false sense of history.”
- III.6.E. The new stone walls are not “developed in scale and character with the neighborhood or designated historic landmark.” Desha Roads streetscape does not have any stone walls along the street and has been developed using only low manmade features such as concrete walks.

Recommendations

Staff recommends denial of the application.

Deadline for Board Action

October 24, 2016