

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
July 24, 2018 Meeting**

9. COA-037932-2018 (S. Krumbein)

**2308 Jefferson Avenue
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description: Install a fence around a vacant lot.

Staff Contact: K. Chen

Proposal: The applicant requests approval to install a fence around a vacant lot in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The applicant presented 4 options. Option 1 is to enclose the lot entirely with a chain link fence; Option 2 is for a wood privacy fence, and Options 3 and 4 are for a combination of wood and chain link. In all of the options the side and rear fences will not exceed 6 ½ feet and the front fence will be 4 feet in height, there will be two walk gates located on either side of the property near the back, and wide gate at the front to accommodate a commercial mower.

Staff recommends approval of Option 2 with conditions.

Options 1, 3 and 4 do not meet the *Guidelines*. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that chain-link fences, split-rail fences and concrete block walls are not appropriate in any City Old and Historic Districts (pg.78, #8). While there is evidence that the lot was once enclosed with a chain-link fence (remaining fence posts) it is no longer present and should not be reinstalled. The *Guidelines* further state that when considering the design of new fences, remember that some districts, such as Church Hill North and Union Hill, historically featured modest wooden picket fences (pg. 78, #5). However, the Zoning Ordinance does not allow picket fences in non-residential districts and as this lot is located in an Urban Business (UB) zone, a traditional front picket fence would not be allowed. The simple, 4' wood fence along the front of the property would be acceptable. The zoning ordinance also limits the space between the palings to ¾", the application states that the spaces will not exceed 2". The spacing between the palings should not exceed ¾". Finally, the *Guidelines* state the fences in Old and Historic districts located along main thoroughfares shall be painted or opaquely stained a color or colors complementary to the main structure (pg. 78, #7). Since there is not a structure on the property, the paint guidelines contained in the Appendix recommend that wood fences be painted or opaquely stained in shades of white or neutral shades of brown or grey. The paint or opaque stain color for the front portion of the fence should be submitted for administrative review and approval.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the acceptance of the stated conditions, the application is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30.930.7(c) of the City Code, as well as with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of code.