



## Commission of Architectural Review

5. COA-186201-2026	Final Review Meeting Date: 6/23/2026
Applicant/Petitioner	Jeff Shryer
Project Description	Construct new brick privacy wall
Project Location	
Address: 4101 Hermitage Road	
Historic District: Hermitage Road	
<p><b>High-Level Details:</b></p> <p>The applicant requests approval to construct a new brick wall around the rear and side yard of an extant building, on a corner lot.</p> <p>The wall will extend 103 feet across the rear and 126 feet along the side yard adjacent to Pope Avenue.</p> <p>The Brick wall will be six feet tall with 7 ½ foot piers. Panels between piers will be 10ft. apart.</p> <p>Currently in this location, there is a six-foot wood fence. .</p>	
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, Alex.Dandridge@RVA.gov, (804)646-6569
Previous Reviews	Previously the commission reviewed and approved the construction of a rear addition and other exterior alterations at the property IN August 2025.
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The wall be reduced in length on the Pope Avenue side to align with the rear face of the building, removing approximately the last four wall panels (see figure 8),</li> <li>• The wall be reduced in height so that the height of the panels and piers are no taller than the 6 foot height of the extant rear privacy fence. Final design and dimension submitted for staff review and approval.</li> <li>• Brick piers be made in design similar to those found in the historic district in both color and width.</li> <li>• applicant plant an evergreen hedge along the street facing</li> </ul>

	side of the Pope Avenue Side of the wall to further soften the walls presence a better relate to district precedent. Final planting plan submitted for staff review.
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## Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
<p>New Construction, Residential Outbuildings, pg. 51</p>	<p><i>1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of the historic structures they surround, as well as the character of nearby fences, walls, and gates.</i></p> <p><i>2. Fence, wall, or gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.</i></p> <p><i>3. Privacy fences along the side and rear of a property should be constructed of wood of an appropriate design. Privacy fences are not appropriate in front of a historic building.</i></p>	<p>The Hermitage Road City Old and Historic District is characterized by estate homes with large, open, landscaped yards.</p> <p>At the subject property, there is an extant six foot rear and side wooden privacy fence, located in place of the proposed masonry wall, that screens a rear pool and gazebo.</p> <p>Staff found no historic documentation indicating that a brick wall previously existed on the subject property and was unable to locate examples of similar brick privacy walls within the district. There are many examples of wooden privacy fences within the district. Most brick site features within the district are in the form of individual brick piers that flank driveway entrances.</p> <p>Staff finds that most rear privacy fences within the district only obscure rear yards. The extant building is located on a highly visible corner lot. The wall is proposed to extend along the side yard adjacent to Pope Avenue, its termination point aligning with the front face of the building.</p> <p>To maintain the open character of the site and views of the prominent side yard and the buildings character defining, large sunroom wings, <u>staff recommends that the wall be reduced in length on the Pope Avenue side to align with the rear face of the building, removing approximately the last four wall panels (see figure 8), only obscuring the rear yard of the property.</u></p> <p>In addition, staff finds that the scale of the wall is quite large. To not further obscure visible elements of the extant historic building, <u>staff recommends that the wall be reduced in height so that the height of the panels and piers are no taller than the 6 foot height of the extant rear privacy fence. Final design and dimension submitted for staff review and approval.</u></p>

<p>Standards for Site Improvements, Fences &amp; Walls, pg. 78</p>	<p><i>3. If not original to a site, new street-front fences, walls, and gates should be compatible with the historic structure in design, materials, and location, and should be based on physical or documentary evidence does not exist, the proposed fence, wall, or gate should be compatible in design, materials, and location, and should look to precedent on the block face or the block face opposite, or within the district, but not outside the district. By following this guidance, in some circumstances, permission for new fences, walls, or gates may be granted.</i></p> <p><i>5. 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, while some districts, such as Monument Avenue and West Grace Street, more rarely had fences, and when they did occur, were rarely wooden picket fences. In the event of a conjectural fence, the design should seek simplicity, rather than elaboration.</i></p> <p><i>9. Rear-yard privacy fences should mimic traditional fence designs.</i></p>	<p>The proposed wall will be constructed of red brick. It will be built around the rear corner of the property adjacent to Pope Avenue.</p> <p>The Hermitage Historic District contains many rear-yard privacy fences, all of which are constructed out of wood. Front-facing fences that include brick piers have open facing iron bars or are made up of hedges as to keep the open feeling of the district.</p> <p>The proposed design's piers are similar to other brick piers in the neighborhood. These piers are built on either side of the entrance of driveways or adjacent to property edges and walls. Examples are found at addresses below:</p> <p>3812 Hermitage Road; 4019 Hermitage Road; 4109 Hermitage Road; Intersection of Princeton Road and Hermitage Road; 4211 Hermitage Rd; 4219 Hermitage Road</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the brick piers be made in design like those found in the historic district in both color and width.</u></p> <p>Given that the district is characterized by open, landscaped yards, privacy fences and walls should be situated in locations that do not obstruct character defining features of historic buildings, as well as other historic site features.</p> <p>While no historic documentation exists indicating that a masonry wall existed in this location, and there are not many precedents in the district for masonry walls, staff finds that if the wall is placed properly on the site, and in a way that doesn't obscure character defining features of the site and building, and maintains open views of the front and side yards, a masonry wall would could be appropriate for the site. Furthermore, the extant wooden privacy fence, along with other wooden privacy fences are more contemporary site features more recently introduced into the district's landscape. Staff finds that brick is a more traditional material that is more appropriate than wood in the context of Richmond City's Old and Historic Districts.</p>
	<p><i>6. A new fence or wall should be constructed using materials and designs appropriate to the District. Height restrictions are governed by the Zoning Ordinance.</i></p>	<p>The extant historic budling is constructed of brick and features cross pattern brick balustrades on the rear porch area. In addition, there are examples of brick piers at driveway entrance throughout the district. Staff finds that the brick of the wall and brick piers utilized in the walls design relate to the materials and designs of brick construction and site features found in the district.</p>
		<p>It is common the Hermitage Road City Old and Historic District for properties to have low privacy hedges. Because brick walls are not a common site feature in the district, to soften its presence, Staff</p>

		<p><u>recommends that the applicant plant an evergreen hedge along the street facing side of the Pope Avenue side of the wall to further soften the walls presence and better relate to district precedent. Final planting plan submitted for staff review.</u></p>
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*It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (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 the code.*

## Figures



Figure 1 3812 Hermitage Rd



Figure 2 4019 Hermitage Rd



Figure 3 4109 Hermitage Rd



Figure 4 Intersection of Hermitage and Princeton



Figure 5 4211 Hermitage Rd



Figure 6 4219 Hermitage Rd

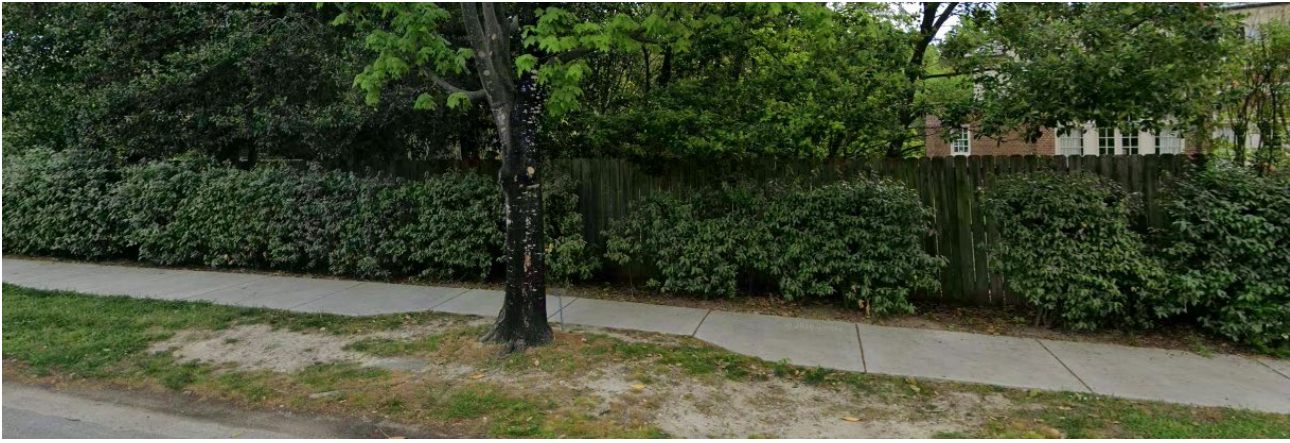


Figure 7 4101 Hermitage Rd Existing Fence

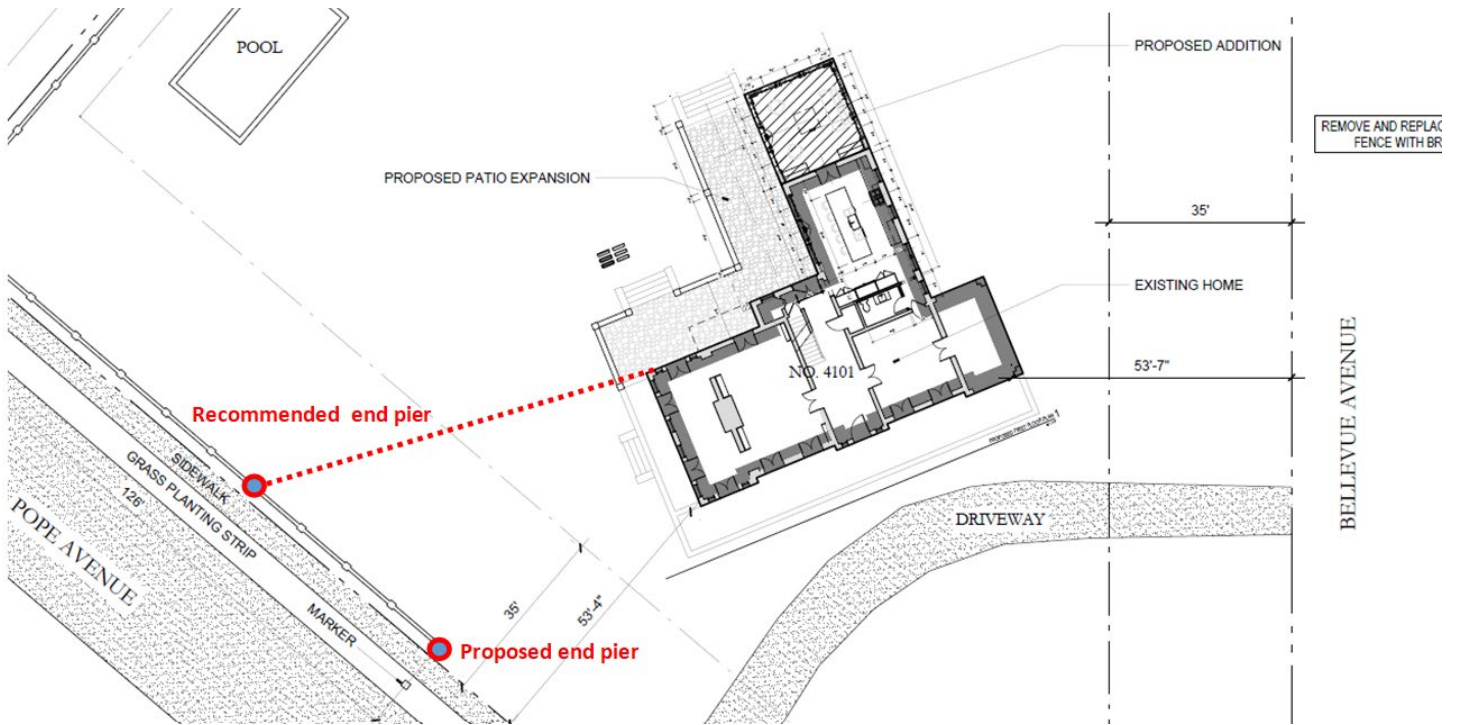


Figure 8. Recommended end pier to preserve views of side yard and side elevation of building. Recommended to remove last four panels of brick wall.