



Commission of Architectural Review

2. COA-167469-2025	Final Review	Meeting Date: 6/24/2025
Applicant/Petitioner	Jennifer Schooley	
Project Description	Replace an existing wood fence with a new brick fence.	
Project Location		
Address: 405 N Allen Avenue		
Historic District: Monument Avenue		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to replace the existing rear wood fence with brick footer and column with a full-height six-foot brick wall/fence capped with limestone, punctuated by four brick columns and interplanted boxwood planters, featuring a gated pedestrian entry toward the alley. The southeast portion visible from the public right-of-way will include a stucco wall inset between brick columns to house fountain equipment. The existing southwest-side brick wall will remain intact, with added boxwoods. The applicant will attempt to reuse the existing gate on site, and will match the new brick color to the existing fence wall.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Yara Iwaz, Yara.Iwaz@RVA.gov, (804)646-6031	
Previous Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2009: the commission approved an application to install fence and gates at the alley • 2014: the commission approved an application to replace cracked concrete with brick-edged concrete pavers. • 2022: the commission approved an application to enclose a rear, screened-in porch and replace a wooden railing with metal 	
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff finds that the proposed fence is in keeping with the guidelines and with the character of the alleyway, and recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applicant to provide final brick and mortar colors for staff review and approval. • applicant to submit final stucco finish and color for staff review and approval • ensure that the overall fence height complies with zoning regulations applicable to rear and side yard enclosures. 	

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for Site Improvements, Fences & Walls, p.78	<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>The proposed 6-foot masonry fence uses brick piers and stucco panels, which are visually consistent with traditional materials in the district. The overall scale, alignment, and pattern reflect established rear yard masonry walls, particularly along alley-facing lots. The applicant has provided a photograph of the existing brick wall on the south side of their property, showing the color of the brick which the applicant aims to replicate.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends approval of the proposed masonry fence, with the condition that final brick and mortar colors are submitted for final review to ensure consistency with surrounding materials and textures.</u></p>
Standards for Site Improvements, Fences & Walls, p.78	<i>2. Existing brick or stone walls, boxwood hedges, wooden picket fences and cast or wrought iron fences should not be removed or replaced with contemporary features.</i>	<p>The brick, stucco, and limestone cap are compatible with the surrounding district and consistent the utilitarian character of the alley. The design does not seek to replicate historic detailing, nor does it replace the existing fence with a contemporary design.</p> <p>Staff recommends approval of the materials as proposed, <u>with the condition that stucco finishing/ colors are submitted for final review.</u></p>
Standards for Site Improvements, Fences & Walls, p.78	<i>9. Rear-yard privacy fences should mimic traditional fence designs.</i>	<p>The only portion of the wall visible from the street (the southeast elevation) is treated with appropriate materials and minimal ornamentation, in keeping with the utilitarian character of the alley. The selected materials reflect surrounding precedent and do not distract from the main structure.</p> <p>The overall height of the fence is 6'0, and it is punctuated by brick columns that mimic the design of the existing columns on site.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the height of the new fence should also abide by any other zoning regulations.</u></p>
Standards for Site Improvements, Fences & Walls, p.78	<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>The proposed boxwood plantings and planters between brick piers are a low-profile landscape element. Additionally, the choice of trees (Pyramidal European Hornbeam) provides a dense, upright and shapely appearance. The selected landscaping features will frame the brick wall and soften the visual edge without obscuring architectural features.</p>

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

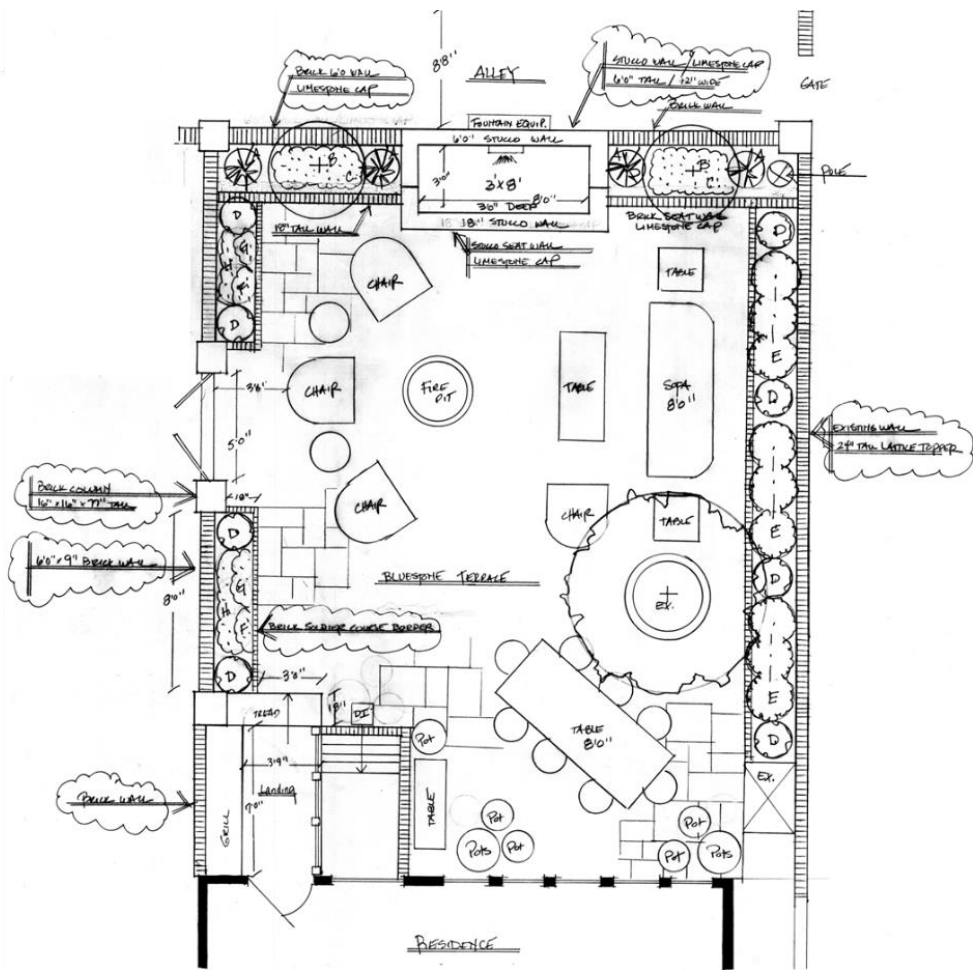


Figure 1

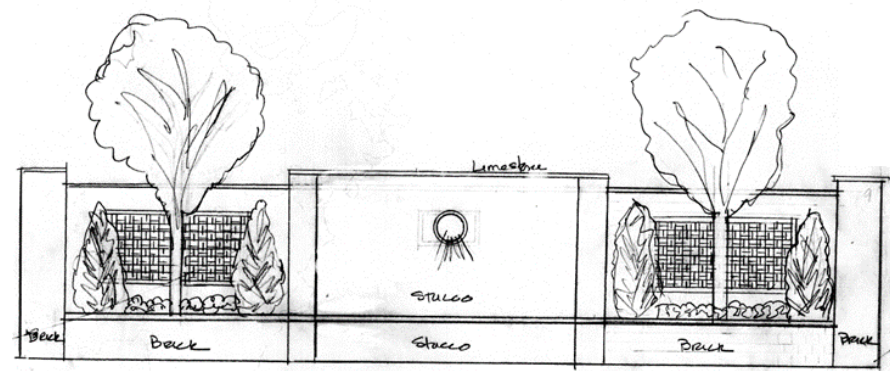


Figure 2

PLANT MATERIAL

NO.	LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE
A. 2	Buxus 'Dee Runk'	boxwood	36"bb
B. 2	Carpinus betulus 'Fastigiata'	Pyramidal European Hornbeam	9-10'
C. 30	Helleborus 'Bridesmaid'	lenten Rose	4 qt.
D. 8	Buxus 'Green Mound'	Boxwood	24"bb
E. 9	Hydrangea 'Niko Blue'	Hydrangea	3 gal.
F. 10	Allium 'Millenium'	Allium	4 qt.
G. 10	Nepeta 'Walkers Low'	Catmint	4 qt.
H. 14	Paeonia 'Coral Fay'	Peoney	4 qt.

Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5