



Commission of Architectural Review

3. COA-170385-2025	Final Review	Meeting Date: 8/26/2025
Applicant/Petitioner	John Waters	
Project Description	Replace wood fence with new masonry wall	
Project Location		
Address: 2614 West Grace Street		
Historic District: West Grace Street		
High-Level Details: The applicant proposes to remove the existing deteriorated wood fence located between 2614 and 2612 West Grace Street, extending from the front to the rear property line, and replace it with a masonry wall composed of brick, filled with concrete or structural grout. The new wall will include brick end treatments and a brick cap. The application also proposes reconstruction of the low concrete wall in the front yard along the property line, to be rebuilt in either concrete, or brick that matches the new wall.		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Yara Iwaz, Yara.Iwaz@RVA.gov, (804)646-6031	
Previous Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff recommends approval of the proposed removal of the existing wood fence and reconstruction with a masonry brick wall and low concrete wall, with the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all heights abide by zoning regulations Submit a drawing clarifying the height and profile of the proposed masonry fence for final staff review and approval Low concrete wall in front yard along the property line should be reconstructed in concrete, matching the existing in height and dimension Any changes to fencing that extend into a neighboring property must be submitted under a separate application. 	

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 existing wood fence is not a character-defining feature of the property or the district (as substantiated by historic photographs). The proposed brick wall provides a compatible replacement, aligning with common masonry wall treatments along West Grace Street. The use of brick piers and brick facing fill is consistent with district materials. The use of reinforced concrete is restricted to the construction below grade.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends approval of the replacement of the deteriorated wood fence with a masonry wall. Staff further recommends ensuring that all heights abide by zoning regulations.</u></p>
Standards for Site Improvements, Fences & Walls, p.78	<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 from the site. In instances where 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.</i>	<p>The selected brick is compatible with the surrounding district and consistent the existing materials on site. The applicant has provided a sample of the brick and mortar of appropriate color.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends approval of the proposed masonry and mortar selections.</u></p>
Site Improvements: Fences, & Walls, p. 78	<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 from the site. In instances where 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.</i>	<p>The applicant's site plan identifies two boundary elements: a "reconstructed concrete or masonry low wall" at the sidewalk edge and a "proposed masonry fence" set deeper into the property. The siting of these features generally reflects the existing conditions and maintains continuity with the building massing on both the subject property and the adjacent 2612 West Grace Street. This approach supports the rhythm and alignment of walls found along the block.</p> <p>However, the plan does not clearly indicate the profile or total height of the proposed masonry wall.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the applicant submit a drawing clarifying what the exact height and profile of the proposed masonry wall.</u></p>

<p>Site Improvements: Fences, & Walls, p. 78</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>Low concrete walls/curbs are a common site feature found in the West Grace Street City Old and Historic District.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the low concrete wall in front yard along the property line should be reconstructed in concrete, matching the existing in height and dimension.</u></p>
		<p>During a site visit, staff observed that the existing fence separating the subject property from its neighbor, extends at a right angle into the neighboring property (2612 West Grace Street). The applicant's plan indicates that the proposed reconstructed masonry wall will remain only along the property line. However, any modification that extends onto the neighboring property constitutes work outside the scope of the present application and would require a separate application.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that any changes to fencing that extend into or affect the neighboring property at 2912 West Grace must be submitted under a separate application.</u></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

PROPOSED NEW MATERIALS



Figure 3

