

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
September 23, 2014 Meeting**

12. **CAR No. 14-104** (Homeowners Assn. Inc.) **2611 E. Broad Street
St. John's Church Old & Historic District**

Project Description: **Replace existing wooden fence with brick wall**

Staff Contact: **W. Palmquist**

The applicant requests approval to replace a non-historic, dilapidated wooden fence with a new brick wall. The existing fence runs along the north side of the alley bounded by E. Broad, E. Grace, N. 26th, and N. 27th streets, also known as the Mann-Netherwood block. The fence is located along part of the side yard of 209 N. 26th Street and along the rear of the common area of the Mann-Netherwood Homeowner's Association. The dimensions, locations, and openings of the new wall will be mostly identical to the existing fence. The height of the new wall will match the existing fence at 5', and it will be located in the same configuration as the existing fence. There are three openings with gates on the existing wall, two for persons and one for vehicles. The gate openings will be duplicated exactly with exception to the vehicular gate, which will now be 8' wide instead of 14'.

The gates will be constructed of wooden pickets with rounded edges at the top of the palings. An example of the proposed gates is found one block to the west, in the N. 25th-26th Streets' alley, between E. Broad and E. Grace Streets. The vehicular entrance of the new wall will be a double gate of the same style.

The bricks will be laid in a fashion similar to that found on walls behind "The Priory," and "The Mews," each located in the alleys within the blocks that are one and three blocks to the west, respectively. The brick wall will have turned bricks at the top and piers at each gate location. The applicant has provided a sample of bricks proposed to be used for this new wall.

Staff recommends approval of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* notes that, "Fence, wall, and gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood" (pg. 49, #2). They also state that, "A new fence or wall should be constructed using materials and designs appropriate for the District" (pg. 68, #2). The new brick wall would relate well to materials found through the district where brick is a common building material used on homes, churches, sidewalks and other walls.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Site Improvements outlined in Section 114-930.7(e) of the City Code, as well as with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.