

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

September 6, 2023

HDRC CASE NO: 2023-338
ADDRESS: 326 MISSION ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 944 BLK 1 LOT W 95.52FT OF 34
ZONING: RM-4, HS, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: King William Historic District
APPLICANT: Jose Adrian
OWNER: Stanley Marcus
TYPE OF WORK: Front fence and gates installation and hardscape modifications
APPLICATION RECEIVED: August 4, 2023
60-DAY REVIEW: October 3, 2023
CASE MANAGER: Bryan Morales

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Remove the existing front concrete walkway and replace with red brick.
2. Install a flared brick design where the front walkway meets the house.
3. Install four stone pavers between the driveway and walkway.
4. Install a six feet tall, white wrought iron fence at the front of the property with red brick detailing at the bottom.
5. Install a six feet tall, white wrought iron pedestrian gate at the front of the property over the walkway.
6. Install a six feet tall, white wrought iron vehicle gate at the front of the property over the driveway.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

1. Topography

A. TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

- i. *Historic topography*—Avoid significantly altering the topography of a property (i.e., extensive grading). Do not alter character-defining features such as berms or sloped front lawns that help define the character of the public right-of-way. Maintain the established lawn to help prevent erosion. If turf is replaced over time, new plant materials in these areas should be low-growing and suitable for the prevention of erosion.
- ii. *New construction*—Match the historic topography of adjacent lots prevalent along the block face for new construction. Do not excavate raised lots to accommodate additional building height or an additional story for new construction.
- iii. *New elements*—Minimize changes in topography resulting from new elements, like driveways and walkways, through appropriate siting and design. New site elements should work with, rather than change, character-defining topography when possible.

2. Fences and Walls

A. HISTORIC FENCES AND WALLS

- i. *Preserve*—Retain historic fences and walls.
- ii. *Repair and replacement*—Replace only deteriorated sections that are beyond repair. Match replacement materials (including mortar) to the color, texture, size, profile, and finish of the original.
- iii. *Application of paint and cementitious coatings*—Do not paint historic masonry walls or cover them with stone facing or stucco or other cementitious coatings.

B. NEW FENCES AND WALLS

- i. *Design*—New fences and walls should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, transparency, and character. Design of fence should respond to the design and materials of the house or main structure.
- ii. *Location*—Avoid installing a fence or wall in a location where one did not historically exist, particularly within the front yard. The appropriateness of a front yard fence or wall is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences or wall should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them.
- iii. *Height*—Limit the height of new fences and walls within the front yard to a maximum of four feet. The appropriateness of a front yard fence is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences

should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them. If a taller fence or wall existed historically, additional height may be considered. The height of a new retaining wall should not exceed the height of the slope it retains.

iv. *Prohibited materials*—Do not use exposed concrete masonry units (CMU), Keystone or similar interlocking retaining wall systems, concrete block, vinyl fencing, or chain link fencing.

v. *Appropriate materials*—Construct new fences or walls of materials similar to fence materials historically used in the district. Select materials that are similar in scale, texture, color, and form as those historically used in the district, and that are compatible with the main structure. Screening incompatible uses—Review alternative fence heights and materials for appropriateness where residential properties are adjacent to commercial or other potentially incompatible uses.

C. PRIVACY FENCES AND WALLS

i. *Relationship to front facade*—Set privacy fences back from the front façade of the building, rather than aligning them with the front façade of the structure to reduce their visual prominence.

ii. *Location* – Do not use privacy fences in front yards.

3. Landscape Design

A. PLANTINGS

i. *Historic Gardens*—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.

ii. *Historic Lawns*—Do not fully remove and replace traditional lawn areas with impervious hardscape. Limit the removal of lawn areas to mulched planting beds or pervious hardscapes in locations where they would historically be found, such as along fences, walkways, or drives. Low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas; invasive or large-scale species should be avoided. Historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%.

iii. *Native xeric plant materials*—Select native and/or xeric plants that thrive in local conditions and reduce watering usage. See UDC Appendix E: San Antonio Recommended Plant List—All Suited to Xeriscape Planting Methods, for a list of appropriate materials and planting methods. Select plant materials with a similar character, growth habit, and light requirements as those being replaced.

iv. *Plant palettes*—If a varied plant palette is used, incorporate species of taller heights, such informal elements should be restrained to small areas of the front yard or to the rear or side yard so as not to obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the historic structure.

v. *Maintenance*—Maintain existing landscape features. Do not introduce landscape elements that will obscure the historic structure or are located as to retain moisture on walls or foundations (e.g., dense foundation plantings or vines) or as to cause damage.

B. ROCKS OR HARDSCAPE

i. *Impervious surfaces*—Do not introduce large pavers, asphalt, or other impervious surfaces where they were not historically located.

ii. *Pervious and semi-pervious surfaces*—New pervious hardscapes should be limited to areas that are not highly visible, and should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design.

iii. *Rock mulch and gravel* - Do not use rock mulch or gravel as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. If used, plantings should be incorporated into the design.

C. MULCH

Organic mulch – Organic mulch should not be used as a wholesale replacement for plant material. Organic mulch with appropriate plantings should be incorporated in areas where appropriate such as beneath a tree canopy.

i. *Inorganic mulch* – Inorganic mulch should not be used in highly-visible areas and should never be used as a wholesale replacement for plant material. Inorganic mulch with appropriate plantings should be incorporated in areas where appropriate such as along a foundation wall where moisture retention is discouraged.

D. TREES

i. *Preservation*—Preserve and protect from damage existing mature trees and heritage trees. See UDC Section 35-523 (Tree Preservation) for specific requirements.

ii. *New Trees* – Select new trees based on site conditions. Avoid planting new trees in locations that could potentially cause damage to a historic structure or other historic elements. Species selection and planting procedure should be done in accordance with guidance from the City Arborist.

iii. *Maintenance* – Proper pruning encourages healthy growth and can extend the lifespan of trees. Avoid unnecessary or harmful pruning. A certified, licensed arborist is recommended for the pruning of mature trees and heritage trees.

4. Residential Streetscapes

A. PLANTING STRIPS

i. *Street trees*—Protect and encourage healthy street trees in planting strips. Replace damaged or dead trees with trees of a similar species, size, and growth habit as recommended by the City Arborist.

ii. *Lawns*—Maintain the use of traditional lawn in planting strips or low plantings where a consistent pattern has been retained along the block frontage. If mulch or gravel beds are used, low-growing plantings should be incorporated into the design.

iii. *Alternative materials*—Do not introduce impervious hardscape, raised planting beds, or other materials into planting strips where they were not historically found.

B. PARKWAYS AND PLANTED MEDIANS

i. *Historic plantings*—Maintain the park-like character of historic parkways and planted medians by preserving mature vegetation and retaining historic design elements. Replace damaged or dead plant materials with species of a like size, growth habit, and ornamental characteristics.

ii. *Hardscape*—Do not introduce new pavers, concrete, or other hardscape materials into parkways and planted medians where they were not historically found.

C. STREET ELEMENTS

i. *Site elements*—Preserve historic street lights, street markers, roundabouts, and other unique site elements found within the public right-of-way as street improvements and other public works projects are completed over time.

ii. *Historic paving materials*—Retain historic paving materials, such as brick pavers or colored paving, within the public right-of-way and repair in place with like materials.

5. Sidewalks, Walkways, Driveways, and Curbing

A. SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

i. *Maintenance*—Repair minor cracking, settling, or jamming along sidewalks to prevent uneven surfaces. Retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—in place.

ii. *Replacement materials*—Replace those portions of sidewalks or walkways that are deteriorated beyond repair. Every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material.

iii. *Width and alignment*—Follow the historic alignment, configuration, and width of sidewalks and walkways. Alter the historic width or alignment only where absolutely necessary to accommodate the preservation of a significant tree.

iv. *Stamped concrete*—Preserve stamped street names, business insignias, or other historic elements of sidewalks and walkways when replacement is necessary.

v. *ADA compliance*—Limit removal of historic sidewalk materials to the immediate intersection when ramps are added to address ADA requirements.

B. DRIVEWAYS

i. *Driveway configuration*—Retain and repair in place historic driveway configurations, such as ribbon drives. Incorporate a similar driveway configuration—materials, width, and design—to that historically found on the site. Historic driveways are typically no wider than 10 feet. Pervious paving surfaces may be considered where replacement is necessary to increase stormwater infiltration.

ii. *Curb cuts and ramps*—Maintain the width and configuration of original curb cuts when replacing historic driveways. Avoid introducing new curb cuts where not historically found.

C. CURBING

i. *Historic curbing*—Retain historic curbing wherever possible. Historic curbing in San Antonio is typically constructed of concrete with a curved or angular profile.

ii. *Replacement curbing*—Replace curbing in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair. Where in-kind replacement is not be feasible, use a comparable substitute that duplicates the color, texture, durability, and profile of the original. Retaining walls and curbing should not be added to the sidewalk design unless absolutely necessary.

Policy Document: Fences in Historic Districts

When new fences are appropriate to the site-specific conditions of the property, applicants must also ensure that the style, height, and configuration of the fence is also appropriate per the Historic Design Guidelines for Site Elements and the Unified Development Code 35-514.

- **REAR/PRIVACY FENCE** – Rear yard privacy fences should be no taller than 6 feet in height and feature wood construction. Historic evidence may support installing stone, masonry, or stucco walls. They should be set back from the front façade of the building, rather than aligning them with the front façade of the structure, to reduce their visual prominence.

- **FRONT FENCE** – Front yard fences should match in height of neighboring fences or be limited to 4 feet in height and be compatible with the heights of adjacent historic fences. Historic evidence may support installing stone, masonry, or stucco walls and fence bases.
- **FENCE STYLES** – While maintaining respect to individual architecture styles and historic districts, the most common appropriate fence type includes (a) black wrought iron, (b) painted wood picket, and (c) garden-loop.
- **NONCONFORMING FENCES** – Chain-link, barbed wire, corrugated metal, and make-shift fences should be avoided. Grandfathered items may be replaced with appropriate fencing, but should not be reconstructed or expanded upon.
- **PEDESTRIAN GATES** – Pedestrian gates should be located at the intersection of the property’s walkway and the public sidewalk. Pedestrian gates should relate to the design of the fence while maintaining a 4-foot height limit.
- **VEHICLE GATES** – Vehicle gates should be set behind the front façade plane of the house and not span across the front of the driveway. A Front vehicle gate may be considered if the site features an atypical condition including: (a) a wraparound porch, (b) a narrow driveway less than 10 feet wide, and/or (c) front driveways abutting rear yards or commercial properties. Electrical, mechanical, or solar collector equipment should be concealed and minimally visible if used.

FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure located at 326 Mission St is a one-story, Folk Victorian house c. 1904 and first appears on the 1904 Sanborn map. The structure features gable and hipped roof forms, historic wood windows, an inset front porch, and a metal roof. This property contributes to the King William Historic District.
- b. **FRONT WALKWAY** – The applicant is requesting approval to replace the existing concrete walkway with red brick in a bordered herringbone design using the same footprint. In addition, the applicant is proposing to add a flared section of walkway where the walkway terminates at the front steps. The Historic Design Guidelines for Site Elements 5.A.i. states to retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials – often brick or concrete – in place. Site Elements 5.A.iii. states to follow the historic alignment, configuration, and width of sidewalks and walkways and to alter the historic width or alignment only where absolutely necessary to accommodate the preservation of a significant tree. Staff finds the material change from concrete to brick and the incorporation of the flared section of walkway generally appropriate.
- c. **PAVER INSTALLATION** – The applicant is requesting approval to install four stone pavers between the front walkway and driveway. Site Elements 3.B.i. states to not introduce large pavers where they were not historically located. Staff finds the introduction of the four pavers generally conforms to guidelines.
- d. **FRONT YARD FENCE** – The applicant is requesting approval to install a six feet tall, white wrought iron fence at the front of the property with red brick detailing at the bottom. Site Elements 2.B.i. states that new fences and walls should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, transparency, and character and that the design of the fence should respond to the design and materials of the house or main structure. Site Elements 2.B.ii. states to avoid installing a fence or wall in a location where one did not historically exist, particularly within the front yard and that the appropriateness of a front yard fence or wall is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. The Fences in Historic Districts Policy document states that historic evidence may support installing fence bases. Site Elements 2.B.iii. states to limit the height of new fences and walls within the front yard to a maximum of four feet. Staff finds the installation of a six feet tall, wrought iron fence with red brick detailing at the bottom does not conform to guidelines.
- e. **FRONT YARD GATE (PEDESTRIAN)** – The applicant is requesting approval to install a six feet tall, white wrought iron pedestrian gate at the front of the property over the walkway. Site Elements 2.B.iii. states to limit the height of new fences and walls within the front yard to a maximum of four feet. Fences in Historic Districts Policy Document states that pedestrian gates should be located at the intersection of the property’s walkway and the public sidewalk. Staff finds the installation of a six feet tall, wrought iron pedestrian gate does not conform to guidelines.
- f. **FRONT YARD GATE (VEHICLE)** – The applicant is requesting approval to install a six feet tall, white wrought iron vehicle gate at the front of the property over the driveway. Site Elements 2.B.iii. states to limit the height of new fences and walls within the front yard to a maximum of four feet. Fences in Historic Districts Policy Document states that vehicle gates should be set behind the front façade plane of the house and not span across the front of the driveway. Staff finds the materials requested for the proposed gate generally conforms to guidelines; however, the location of the vehicle gate does not conform to guidelines, the color of the gate should be black, and, if approved at the requested location, should not exceed four feet in height.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of items 1 through 5, based on findings a through e, with the following stipulations:

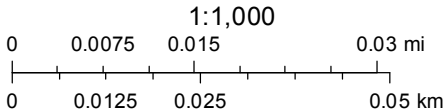
- i. That the existing concrete public sidewalk be replaced in kind.
- ii. That the applicant submits an example of the proposed pavers to staff for final approval.
- iii. That the front yard fence and pedestrian gate be black in color.
- iv. That the front yard fence and gate not exceed four feet in height.

Staff does not recommend approval of item 6, based on findings a and f. Staff recommends that the applicant not install a vehicle gate due to the lot's constrictions.

City of San Antonio One Stop



September 1, 2023

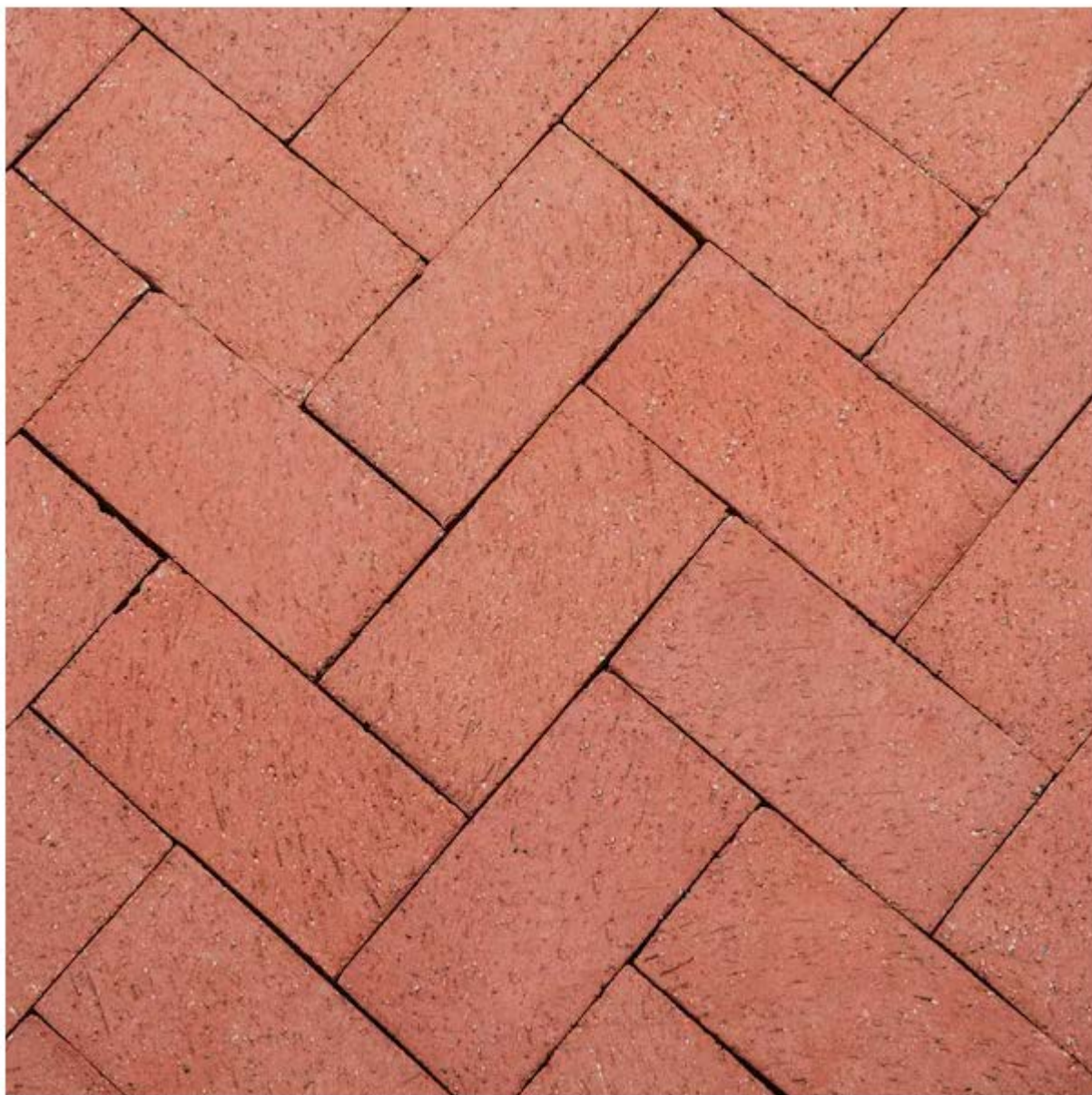












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