

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	4717 Drummond Ave., Chevy Chase	Meeting Date:	09/19/17
Resource:	Master Plan Site Susan B. Chase House	Report Date:	09/12/17
Applicant:	Joshua Leifer & Elizabeth Brenner-Leifer	Public Notice:	09/05/17
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	n/a
Case Number:	37/160-17B	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Fence Installation		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the HPC **approve with three (3) conditions** the HAWP application.

1. The fence and gate on the east side of the house may not be taller than 48" (forty-eight inches). Additional information demonstrating the change in grade may be submitted to Staff for evaluation, with final authority for approval delegated to staff.
2. The fence along the eastern property boundary in front of the proposed fence and gate may not exceed 48" (forty-eight inches) in height.
3. The fence and gate on the west side of the house may not exceed 5' (five feet) in height. Additional information demonstrating the change in grade may be submitted to Staff for evaluation, with final authority for approval delegated to staff.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Foursquare - Craftsman
DATE: 1903-04

The house is a two-and-half story dwelling set on an uncoursed rubble granite foundation, three bays wide with a rectangular form augmented by a rear wing. This house is constructed of wood balloon framing and clad in a combination of weatherboard siding on first-story and two-story wing addition and includes square-butt wood shingles on the upper stories. The house contains three interior chimneys; two which pierce the front-gabled roof, which replaced the original hipped-roof with dormers that was destroyed by fire in 1941. Fenestration on the façade has 1/1 double-hung, wood sash windows and features tripled narrow wood casement windows with diamond lights set symmetrically over the main entry opening.

BACKGROUND

This house was reviewed and approved for a HAWP in April 2017 related to the patio construction on the east side of the house. The fencing proposed in this HAWP was not part of that proposal.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to construct a 6' (six foot) tall flatboard fence surrounding the rear of the property. The fencing will have a gate to provide access to the rear along the east side of the house and will have a wide entrance for the driveway to the west. Additionally, a section of fencing will project along the east property boundary and will terminate at a location that is co-planer with the front edge of the front porch.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

Proposed alterations to individual Master Plan Sites are reviewed under Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (*Chapter 24A*) and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (*Standards*). Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A Historic Resources Preservation

(b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to insure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:

- (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
- (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter;

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, space and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportions, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The applicants propose to install a 6' (six foot) tall flatboard fence surrounding the rear of the property with an additional extension along the eastern edge of the property to align with the front plane of the front porch.

The design and height of the fence behind the rear wall plane are consistent with the Historic Preservation Commission's typical guidance for fencing within historic districts. However, there

are sections of the fencing that do not comport with the guidance which Staff feels need to be altered prior to approval.

East Side of the House

On the east side of the house, the turn of the fence and gate towards the house is in front of the rear wall plane. Staff feels, however, that there are mitigating circumstances that make this placement acceptable. The un-adopted design guidelines for fencing states that fences in front of the rear wall plane should be no higher than 48" (forty-eight) inches. The unique shape of the rear of the house with its multiple setbacks and the lot's slope downward makes the proposed location, in Staff's opinion, appropriate. The proposed location for the fence will integrate with the hardscape features approved as part of the previous HAWP. Staff is concerned with the height of the proposed fencing in this location. As the photo below shows, the site slopes away from the street. Based on Staff's site visit, a determination of exactly how far the grade has dropped off where the fence is proposed cannot be made. As the submitted site plan did not include topographic lines, Staff cannot support a fence taller than 48" without evidence showing how far above grade the fence would extend. Staff recommends approval of the fence and gate proposed for this location with the condition that they not extend 48" (forty-eight inches) in height. If the applicant can provide documentation showing the slope or change in ground level at this location, Staff feels the height of the proposed fence may be adjusted accordingly.



Figure 1: East side of the house with the fence to be installed behind the stone patio.

The applicant additionally proposes to install a section of fencing that will extend from the fence's turn toward the house, discussed above, along the eastern property boundary that will end at the front plane of the front porch. This proposal does not comport with HPC's fencing guidance and needs to be revised. Fences that extend beyond the rear wall plane of the house are to be no taller than 48" (forty-eight inches). While the site does slope to the east (see photo below), the prominent placement at the front of the property coupled with the proposed height would disrupt the openness between the houses found in the Somerset Historic District. This would also appear to contravene Standards 2 and 9 by changing the relationship of the subject property to its neighbors and the surrounding district. Staff recommends the approval of a fence

in this location provided it comply with the condition that it be no higher than 48" (forty-eight inches) per the typical guidance provided by the HPC.

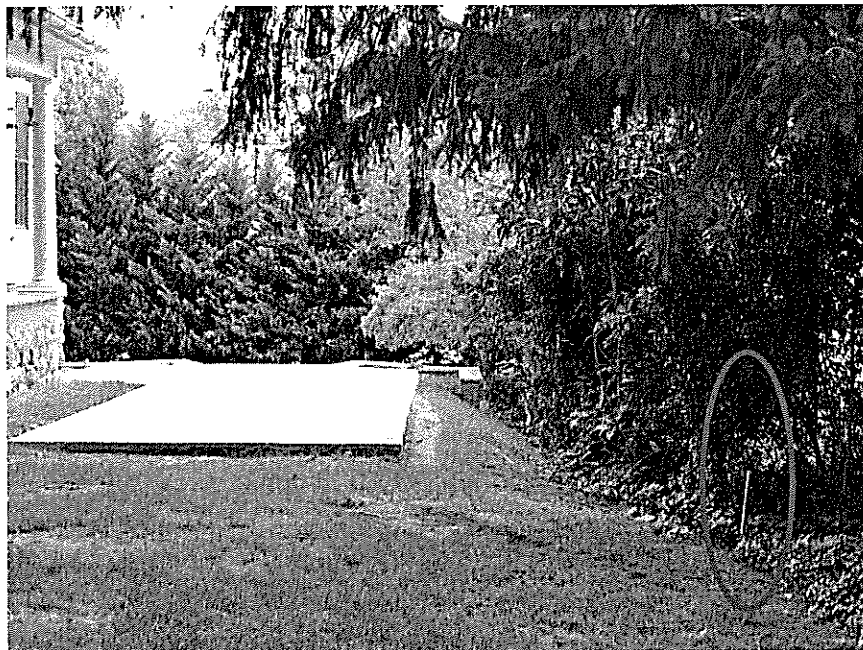


Figure 2: East property boundary, circled stake shows proposed location of fence

West Side of the House

The applicant is proposing to construct a gate at the back corner of the front porch. The gate will match the design of the proposed fencing and will be 6' (six feet) tall. While the design of the proposed fence is acceptable, the proposed height does not comport with the HPC's typical fence guidance. As the proposed location is well in front of the rear wall plan of the house, based on the HPC guidance, it should be no taller than 48" (forty-eight inches).

Staff recognizes that the site slopes away from the front and that a fence taller than 48" (forty-eight inches) may be acceptable, however, the grade of the slope was not included with the applicants' submitted materials. Based on a site visit, Staff believes that the grade has dropped off by approximately 12 – 18" (twelve to eighteen inches) at the proposed fence and gate location (see the photo below). However, without measured drawings of the site, Staff does not feel that a fence and gate exceeding 5' (five feet) at this location would be appropriate. Staff feels that if the applicant can produce either a topographical site plan or an elevation of the driveway and porch with the proposed fence from grade at the front, Staff could thoroughly evaluate the appropriateness of a 6' (six foot) tall fence. Absent this additional information, Staff supports approval of a 5' (five foot) tall fence in this location.



Figure 3: West side of the house and driveway. The proposed fence and gate will terminate at the rear porch column on the left.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the HPC **approve with three (3) condition** the HAWP application;

1. The fence and gate on the east side of the house may not be taller than 48" (forty-eight inches). Additional information demonstrating the change in grade may be submitted to Staff for evaluation, with final authority for approval delegated to staff;
2. The fence along the eastern property boundary in front of the proposed fence and gate may not exceed 48" (forty-eight inches) in height;
3. The fence and gate on the west side of the house may not exceed 5' (five feet) in height. Additional information demonstrating the change in grade may be submitted to Staff for evaluation, with final authority for approval delegated to staff;

and with the general condition applicable to all Historic Area Work Permits that **the applicant will present 3 permit sets of drawings to HPC staff for review and stamping prior to submission for permits (if applicable)**. After issuance of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) permit, the applicant will arrange for a field inspection by calling the DPS Field Services Office at 240-777-6370 prior to commencement of work and not more than two weeks following completion of work.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400

**APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**

Contact Email: tim.walters@dcalandarch.com Contact Person: Tim Walters
Daytime Phone No.: 202-337-1160
Tax Account No.: 484693
Name of Property Owner: Joshua Leifer & Randy Elizabeth Brenner-Leifer Daytime Phone No.: 202-213-2022
Address: 4717 Drummond Ave., Chevy Chase, MD 20815
Street Number City State Zip Code
Contractor: Potomac Fences, Inc Phone No.: 301-468-1228
Contractor Registration No.: MD#: 9989
Agent for Owner: Tim Walters - DCA Landscape Architects Daytime Phone No.: 202-337-1160

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE

House Number: 4717 Street: DRUMMOND AVENUE
Town/City: CHEVY CHASE Nearest Cross Street: WARWICK LANE
Lot: 36 Block: _____ Subdivision: District 07 - Sub 022 - Village of Drummond
Liber: _____ Folio: _____ Parcel: _____

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

☒ Construct ☐ Extend ☐ Alter/Renovate
☐ Move ☐ Install ☐ Wreck/Raze
☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Revocable

CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

☐ A/C ☐ Slab ☐ Room Addition ☐ Porch ☐ Deck ☐ Shed
☐ Solar ☐ Fireplace ☐ Woodburning Stove ☐ Single Family
☒ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4) ☐ Other: _____

1B. Construction cost estimate: \$ \$10,000.00

1C. If this is a revision of a previously approved active permit, see Permit # N/A

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTEND/ADDITIONS

2A. Type of sewage disposal: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Septic 03 ☐ Other: _____
2B. Type of water supply: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Well 03 ☐ Other: _____

PART THREE: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL

3A. Height 6 feet 0 inches

3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:

☐ On party line/property line ☒ Entirely on land of owner ☐ On public right of way/easement

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct, and that the construction will comply with plans approved by all agencies listed and I hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Timothy H. Walters
DCA LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Signature of owner or authorized agent

8/3/17

Date

Approved: _____ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application/Permit No.: _____ Date Filed: _____ Date Issued: _____

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4717 Drummond Ave. Application - Mailing Addresses for Notifying

To the East:

Ye Zhang and Fengyu Jiang
4713 Drummond Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

To the West:

Michael Mosley and Zoe Ambargis
4721 Drummond Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

To the Northeast:

Sixto Requena and Keta Ruiz
4710 Hunt Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

To the Northwest:

Gail Solomon
4712 Hunt Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

To the South (across Drummond Ave.):

Matthew and Trina Gandal
4716 Drummond Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

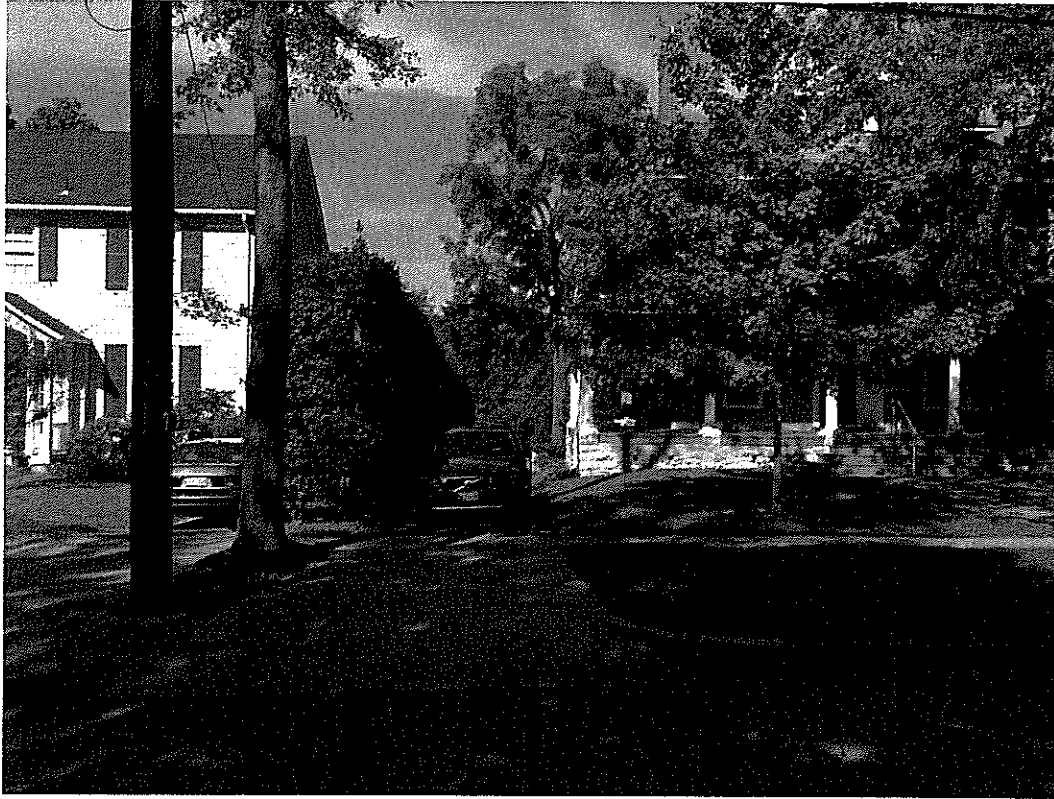
4717 Drummond Ave. Application – Existing Conditions



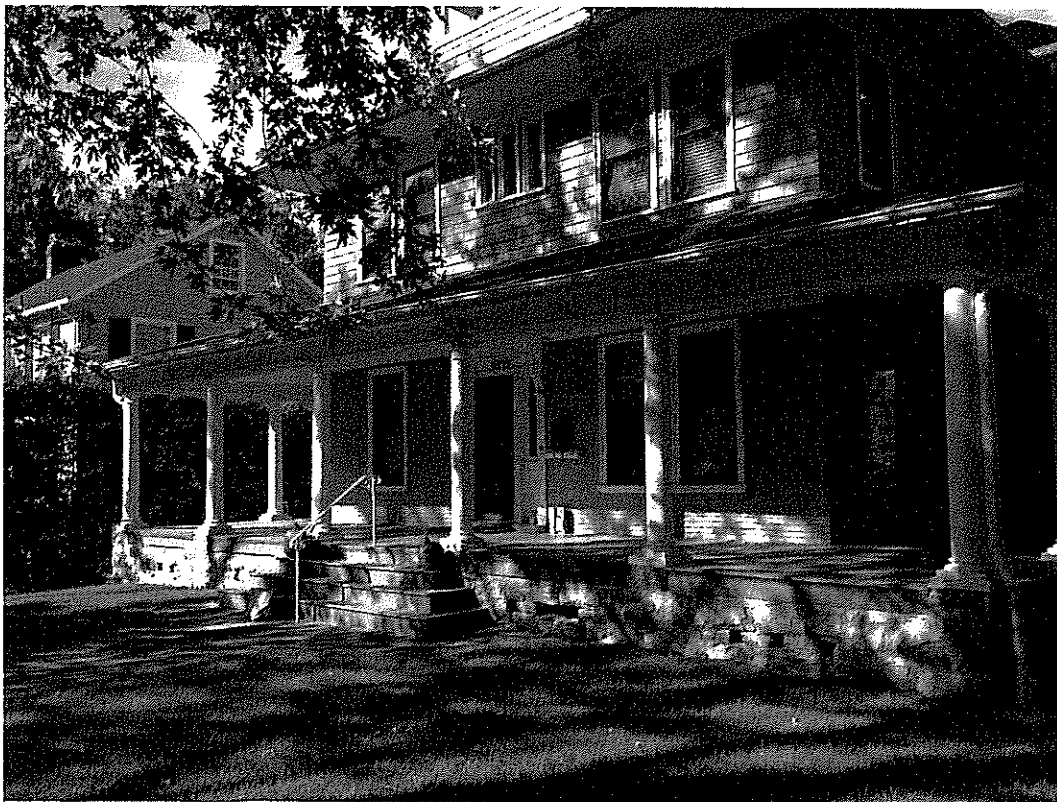
Front of property (slightly to the east)



Front of property (straight on)



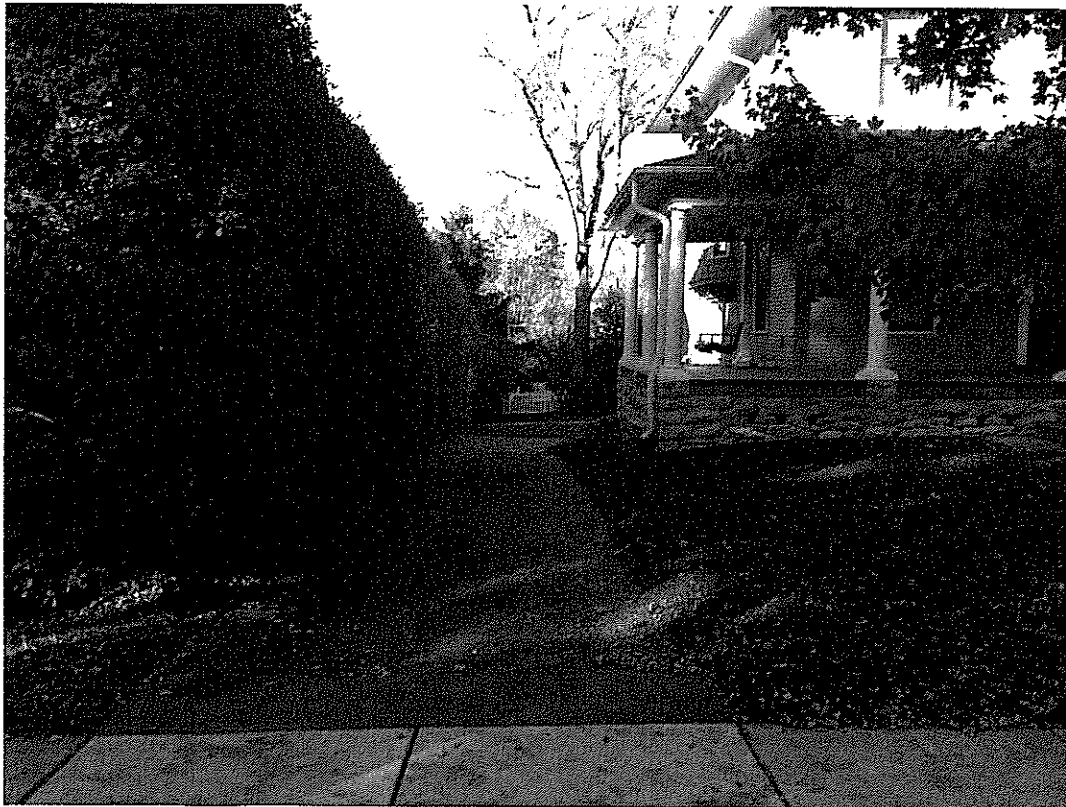
Front of property (slight to the west)



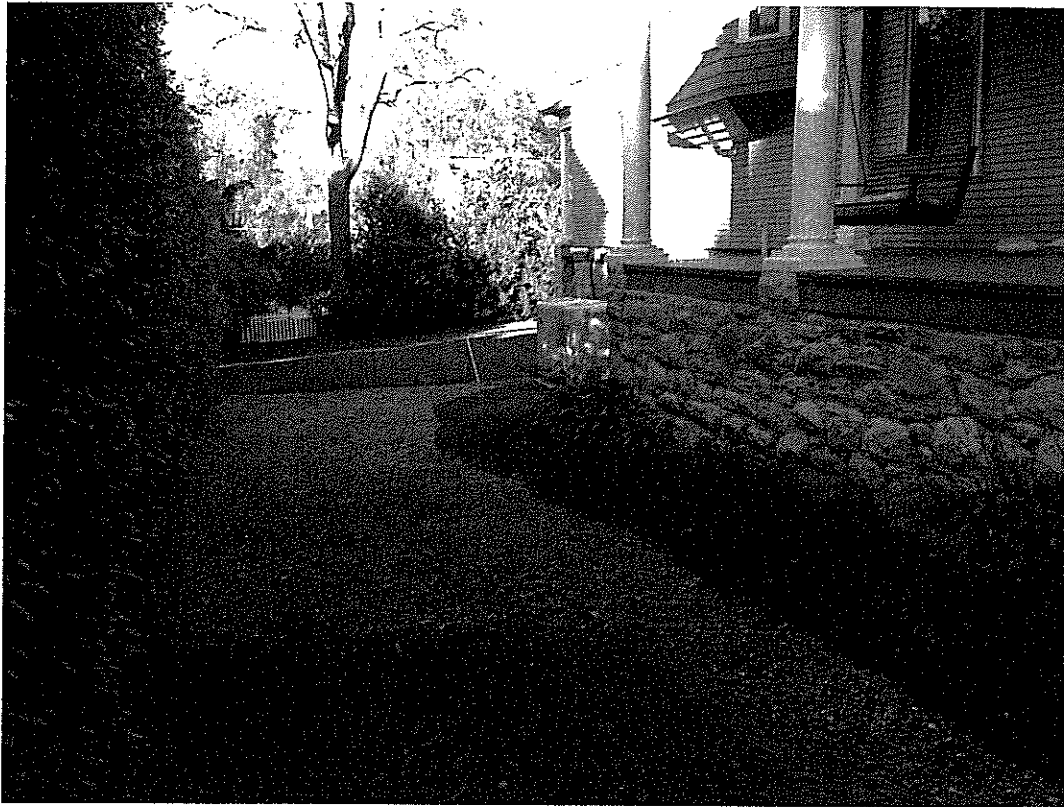
Front of house looking Northwest



Front of house looking Northeast



Existing asphalt and gravel driveway (soon to be concrete)



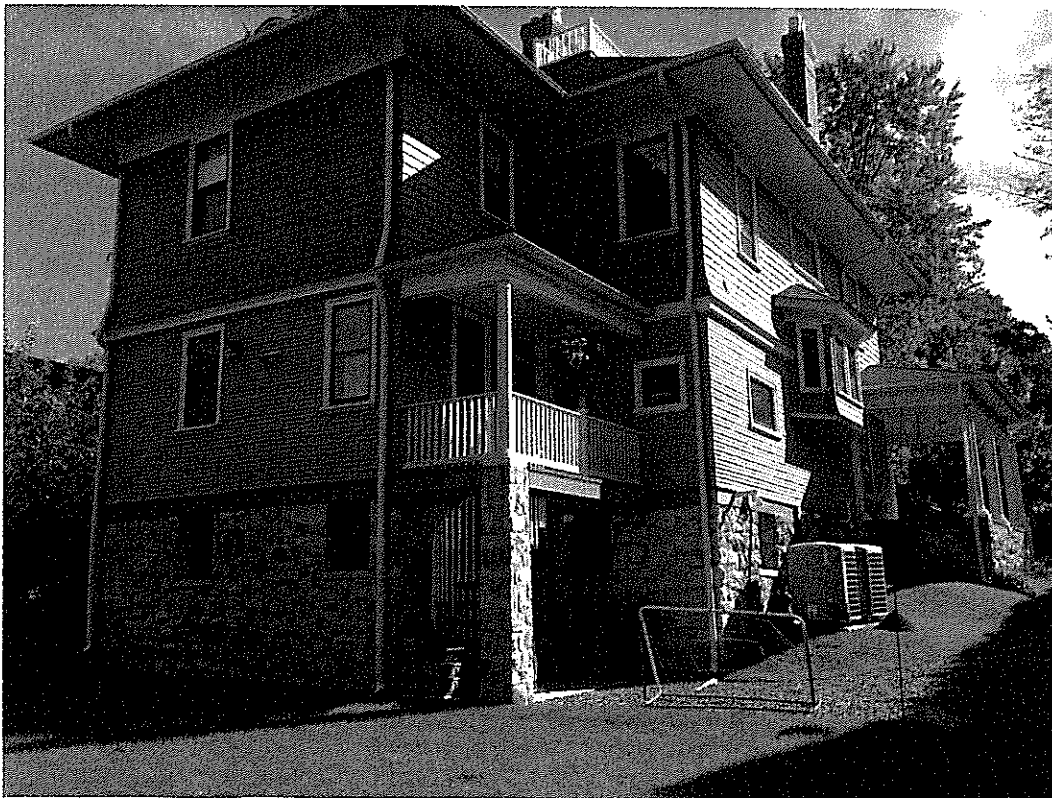
Existing asphalt and gravel driveway (soon to be concrete)



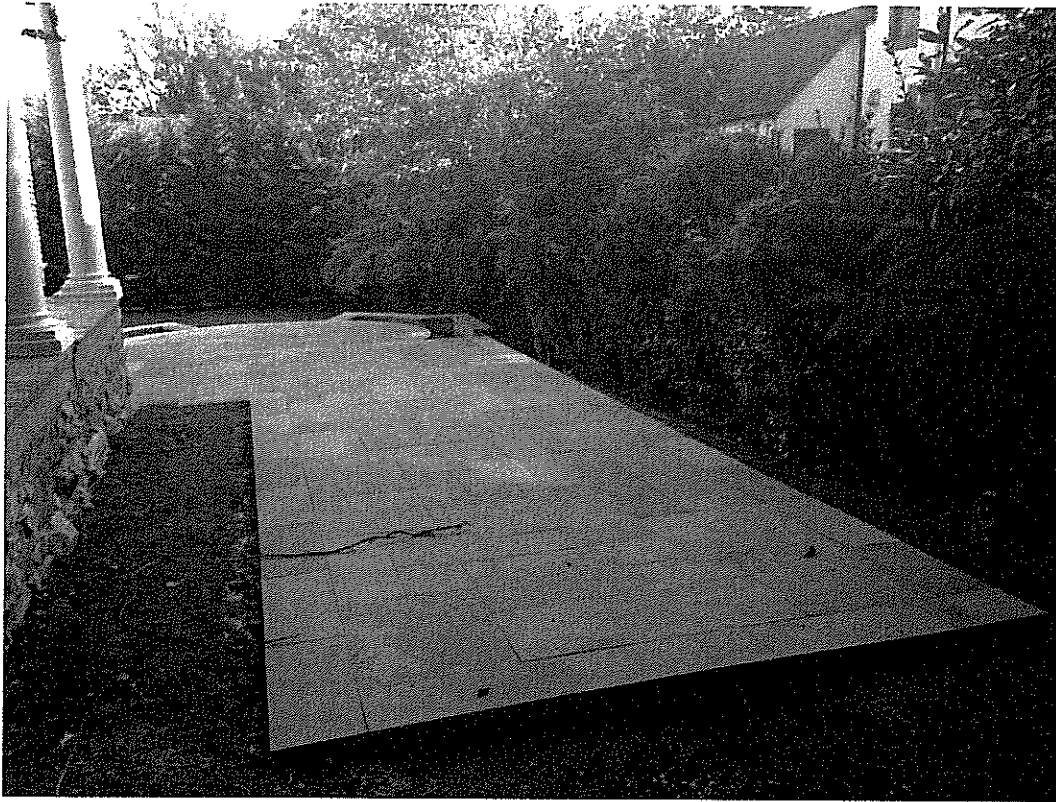
Existing asphalt and gravel driveway (soon to be concrete)



Back of existing house



Back of existing house



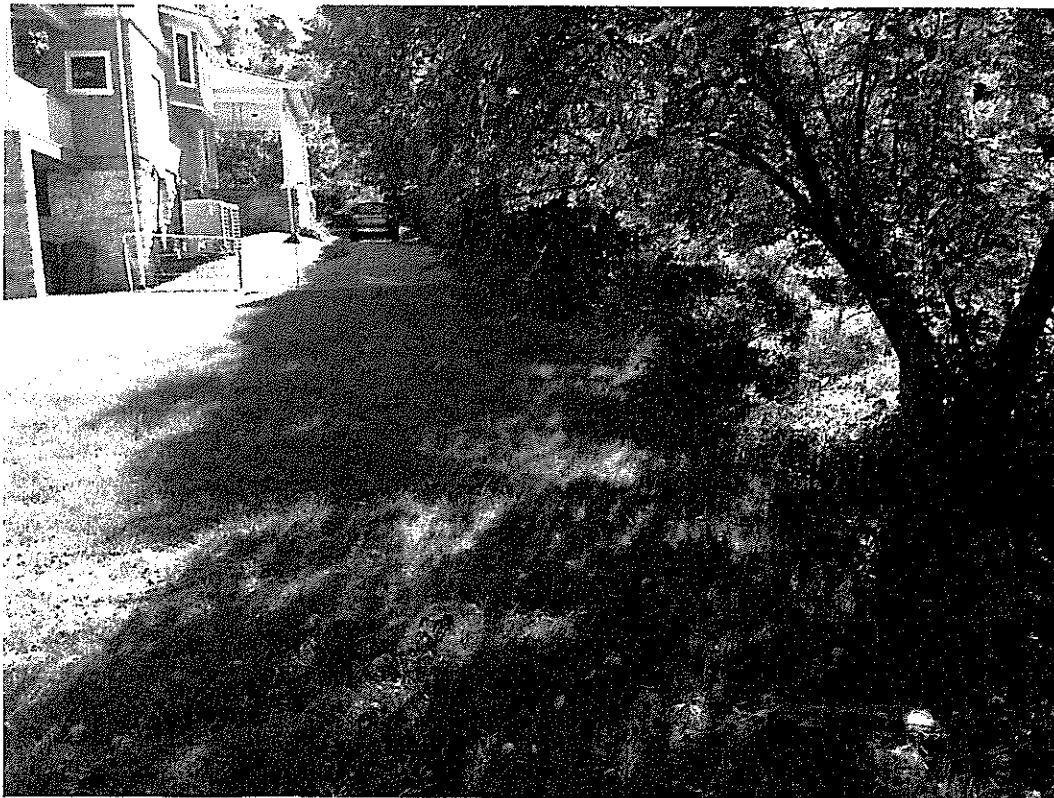
East side of property



East side of property



West side of property



West side along property line



Back of West side of property



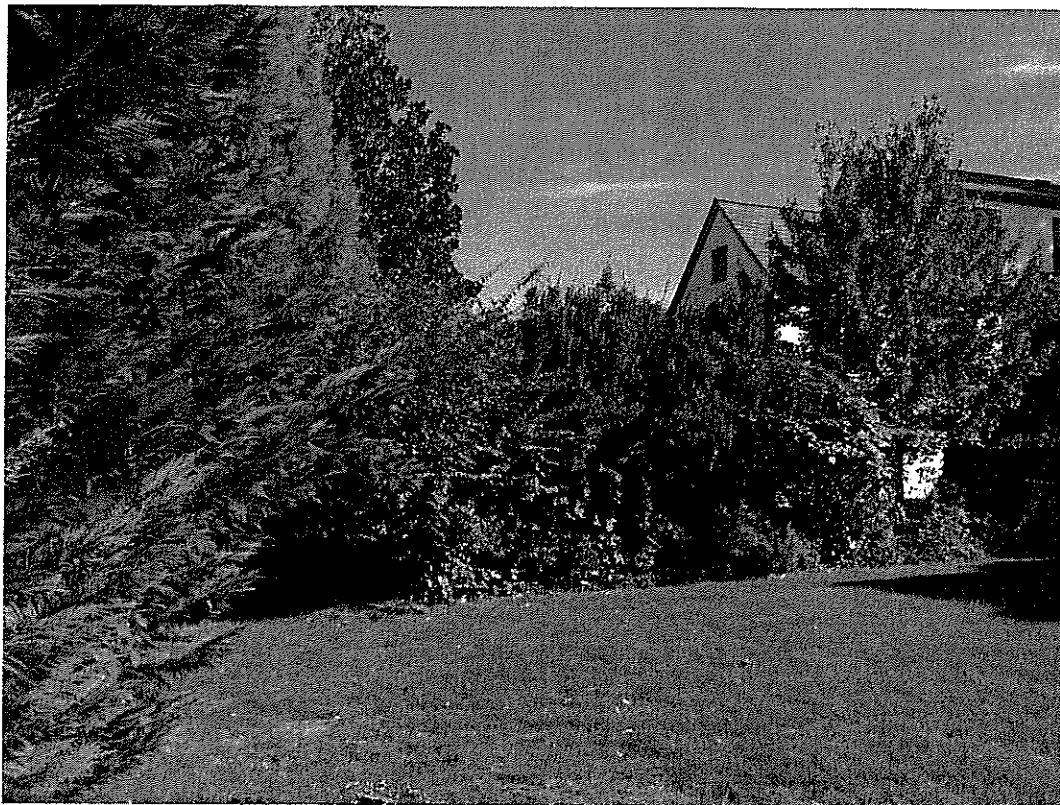
West side of proptery



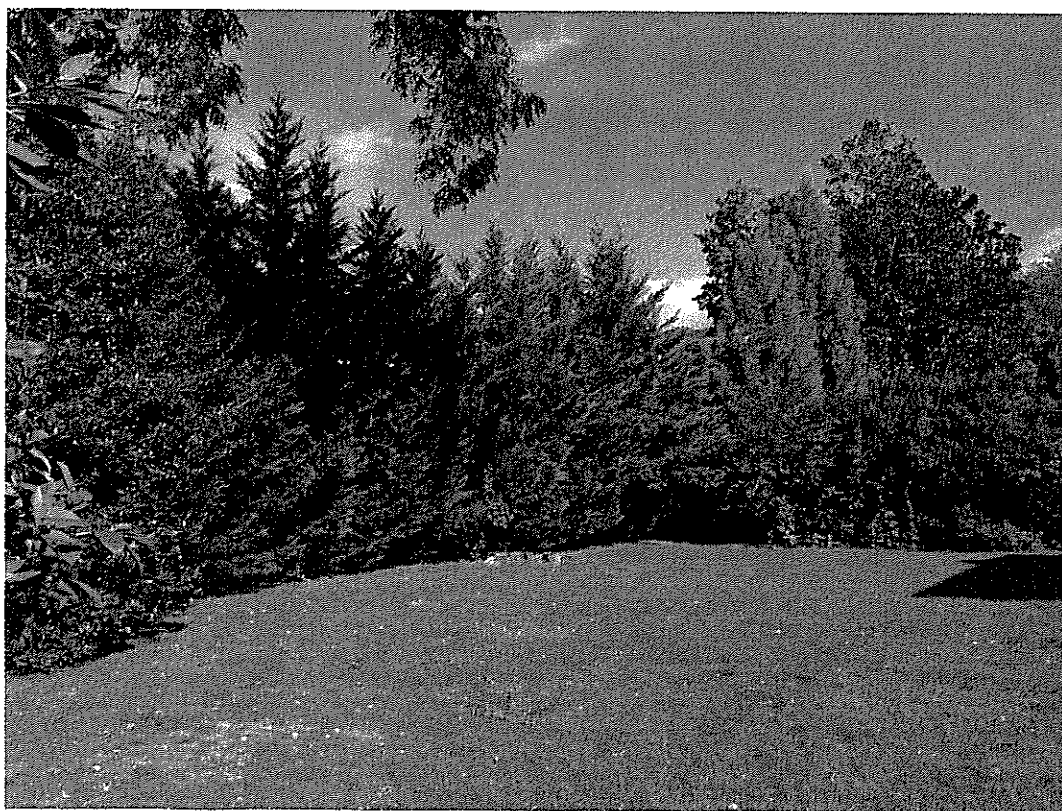
North side of property (back property line)



North-West corner of property (back corner)



Back corner of east side of property



North-East corner of property (back corner)

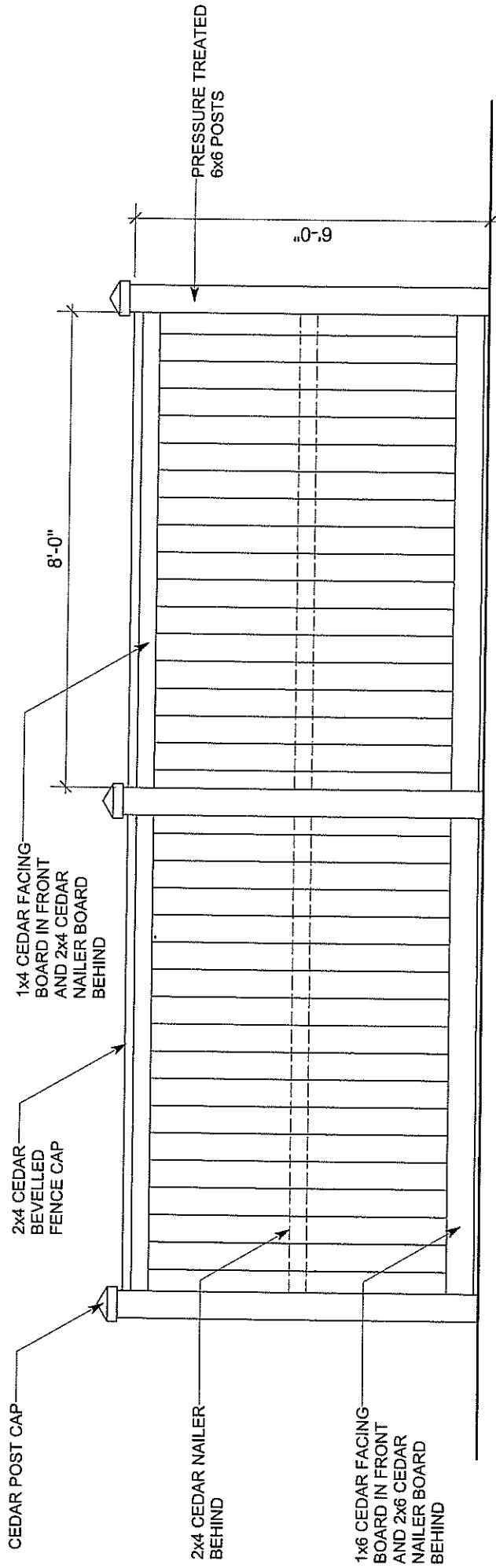
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East side of property



East side of property



1 6 Ft. Flatboard Fence Elevation
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"



