

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

July 01, 2020

HDRC CASE NO: 2020-273
ADDRESS: 504 KING WILLIAM
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 749 BLK 8 LOT 9,10, NW IRR 28.2FT OF 1 & NW 61.2 FT OF 2
ZONING: RM-4,H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: King William Historic District
APPLICANT: Daniel Cruz/Design Coop
OWNER: Topher Guerra/LAUREL HEIGHTS FAMILY IRREVOCABLE TRUST
TYPE OF WORK: Installation of front and side yard fencing
APPLICATION RECEIVED: June 02, 2020
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Stephanie Phillips

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install a 6-foot tall masonry and steel fence in the front and side yard.

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.

FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure located at 504 King William is a 2-story single family home constructed in 1883 and is designed in an eclectic style with Queen Anne influences. The home was designed by prolific architect Alfred Giles. The home underwent a major renovation in 1915, which added the turret, the carved stone decorative band, and the existing square porch columns. The structure is contributing to the King William Historic District.
- b. FENCING: LOCATION – The applicant has proposed to install new masonry and steel fencing in the front and side yards of the property. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, installing a fence or wall in a location where one did not historically exist should be avoided, 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. This property currently features a very low front yard fence of similar materials. Front yard fencing is an established historic pattern of fencing along King William St. Based on a historic photo, a front yard fence historically existed on this property. Staff finds new fencing appropriate based on the specific context of this property and street.
- c. FENCING: HEIGHT – The applicant has proposed a six foot tall front and side yard fence comprised of a masonry base and capped columns with steel fencing. According to the Guidelines, the height of new fences and walls within the front yard should be limited to a maximum of four feet. The appropriateness of a front yard fence is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. If a taller fence or wall existed historically, additional height may be considered. As noted in finding b, based on a historic photo of the structure, a front yard fence used to exist on the property that is similar in scale and design as the fencing across the street at the Steves Homestead. The fencing does not appear to eclipse four feet. Staff does not find a six foot fence to be appropriate. Staff finds that the applicant should reduce the height to a maximum of four feet to adhere to the Historic Design Guidelines.
- d. FENCING: DESIGN – The applicant has proposed a fence design comprised of a masonry base and capped columns with steel fencing. The applicant has proposed to include growing vines on the entirety of the fence. According to the Guidelines, new fences and walls should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, transparency, and character. The design of fence should respond to the design and materials of the house or main structure. While staff generally finds the masonry and steel materiality and configuration to be characteristic of the district and, in particular, King William St, staff does not find the concealment of the fencing with vines and plantings to be consistent in terms of transparency and character. In addition to the Historic Design Guidelines, the UDC Section 35-614 for fencing requires that front yard fences be predominantly open. Staff finds that the proposed vegetation should be removed from the fence design.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of front yard fencing based on findings a through d with the following stipulations:

- i. That the steel fencing be reduced in height to a maximum of 4 feet noted in finding c. The applicant is required to submit updated drawings to staff for review and approval that reflects this change.
- ii. That the applicant removes the proposed greenery from the fencing to adhere to predominantly open front yard fencing requirements outlined in UDC Section 35-614 as noted in finding d.

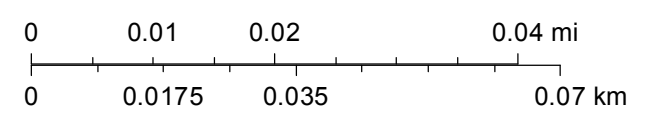
City of San Antonio One Stop



April 23, 2019

— User drawn lines

1:1,000





504 KING WILLIAM	
JUNE 1, 2020	
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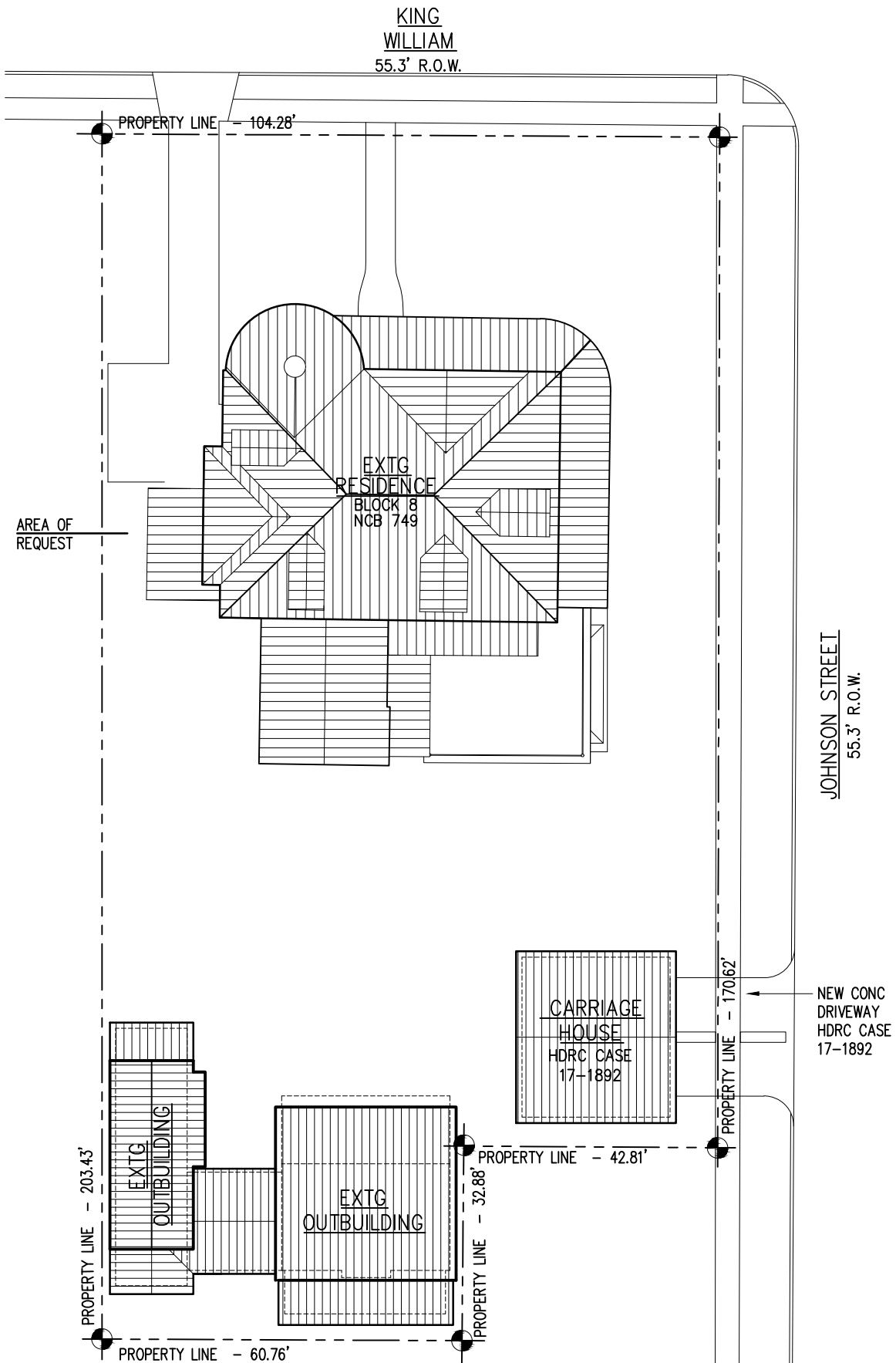
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SITE PLAN: EXISTING

SCALE: 1" = 25'-0"

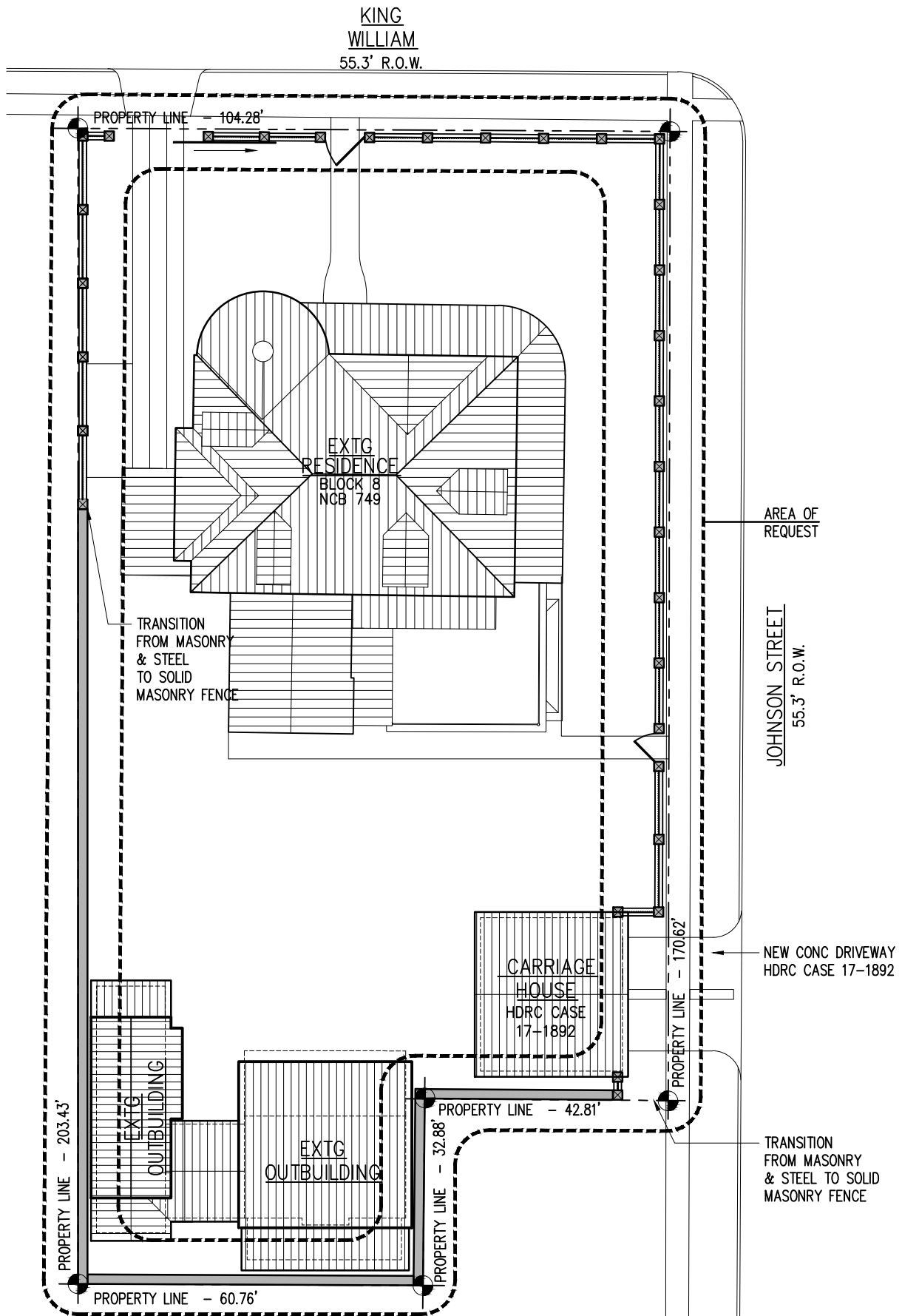


504 KING WILLIAM

DATE: JUNE 1, 2020

DESIGN COOP

SHEET 1 OF 5



SITE PLAN: PROPOSED

SCALE: 1" = 25'-0"



504 KING WILLIAM

DATE: JUNE 1, 2020

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SHEET 2 OF 5



ELEVATION: KING WILLIAM STREET SIDE, PROPOSED FENCE
 SCALE: $1/16'' = 1'-0''$



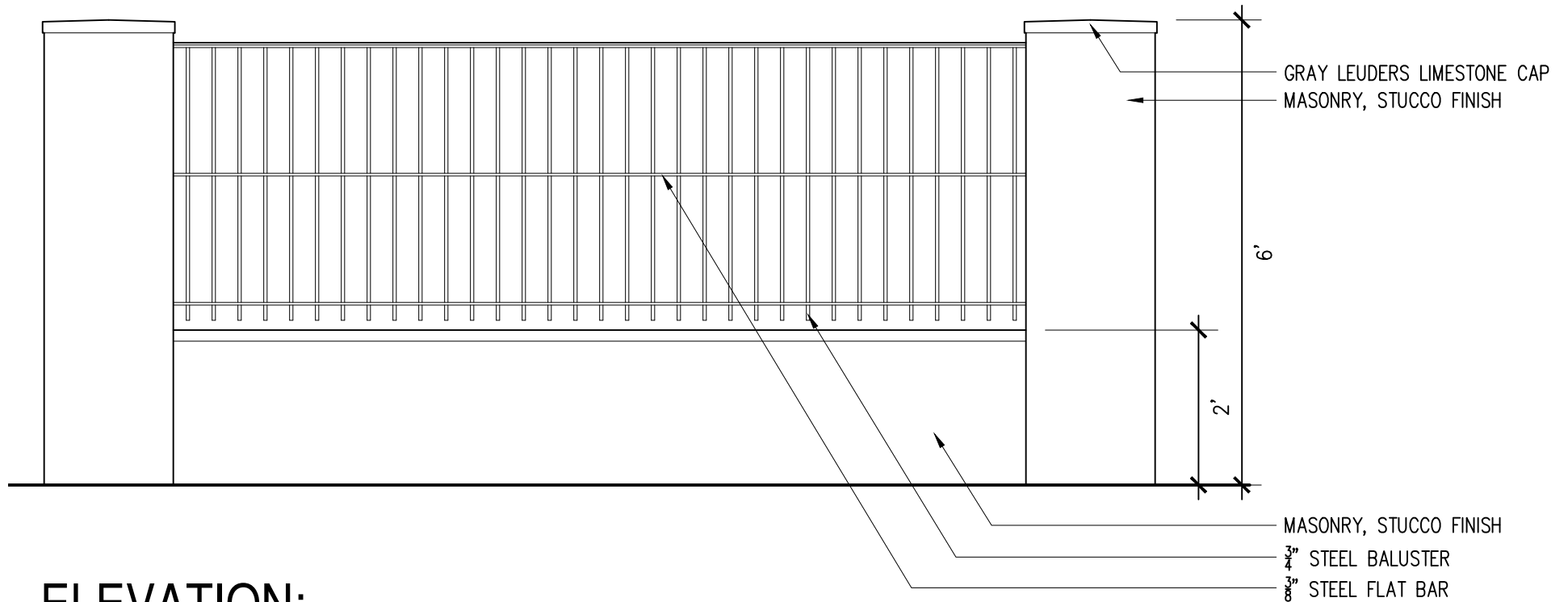
ELEVATION: JOHNSON STREET SIDE, PROPOSED FENCE
 SCALE: $1/16'' = 1'-0''$

504 KING WILLIAM

DATE: JUNE 1, 2020

DESIGN COOP

SHEET 3 OF 5



ELEVATION: JOHNSON STREET SIDE, PROPOSED FENCE

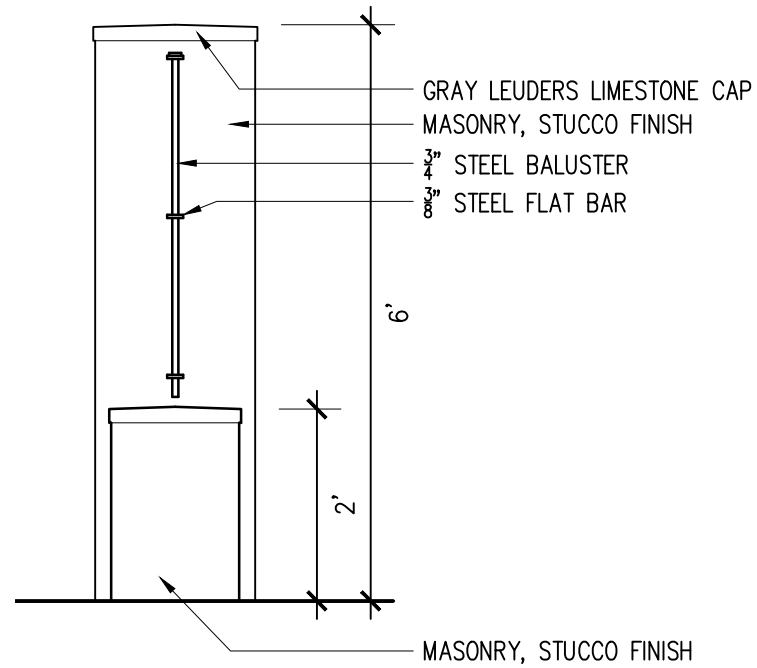
SCALE: $\frac{1}{2}$ " = 1'-0"

504 KING WILLIAM

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SHEET 4 OF 5



ELEVATION: JOHNSON STREET SIDE, PROPOSED FENCE

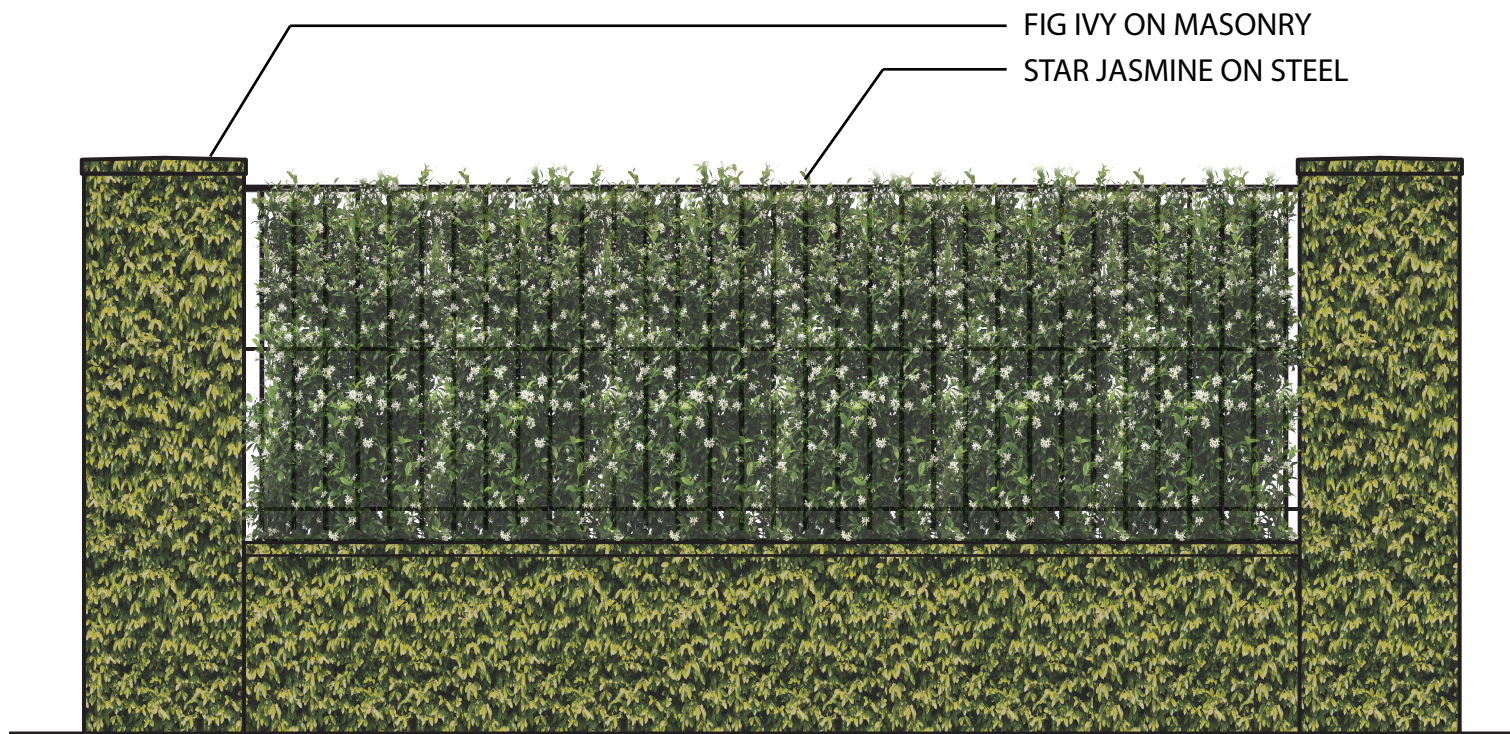
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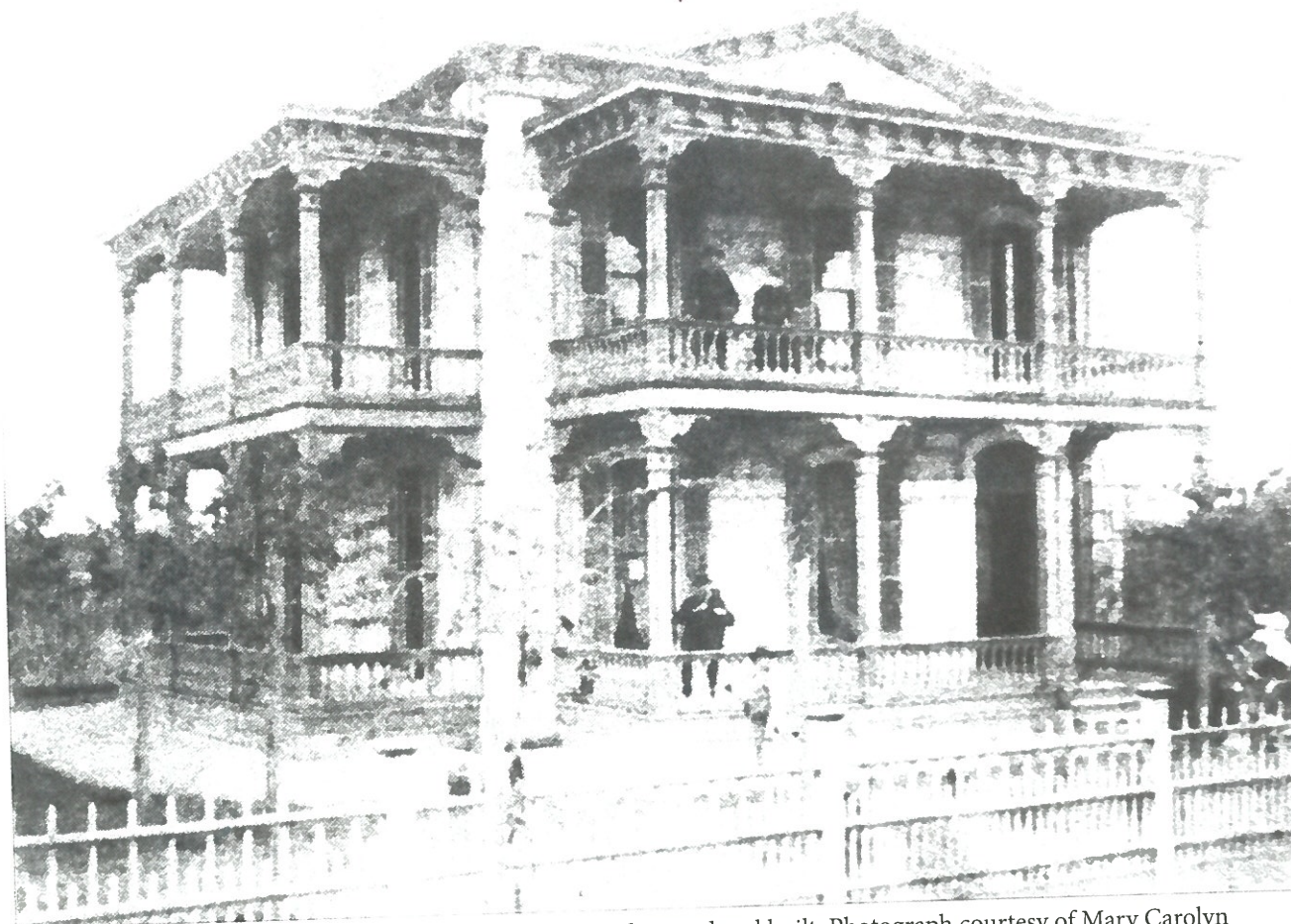
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SHEET 5 OF 5



FENCE RENDERING

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Albert Steves Home ≈ 504 King William as originally designed and built. Photograph courtesy of Mary Carolyn George.



Albert Steves Home ≈ 504 King William as it appeared in 1915 after a major renovation.