

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

February 17, 2021

HDRC CASE NO: 2021-051
ADDRESS: 315 W HUISACHE AVE
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 3001 BLK 3 LOT E 47 OF 19
ZONING: R-4
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Monte Vista Historic District
APPLICANT: Larry Curtis/CURTIS LARRY G & JOSEPHINE F
OWNER: Larry Curtis/CURTIS LARRY G & JOSEPHINE F
TYPE OF WORK: Front yard fence installation, irrigation installation, walkway modifications
APPLICATION RECEIVED: January 25, 2021
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Rachel Rettaliata

REQUEST:

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

1. Install a 4-foot-high wrought iron front yard fence and driveway gate
2. Replace the existing concrete front walkway with brick pavers
3. Complete landscaping modifications

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

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.

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.

FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure located at 315 W Huisache is a 1-story, single-family structure constructed circa 1930 in the Tudor Revival style. The structure features a composition shingle roof with two high-pitch front gables with gable vent details, an arched entry opening, an asymmetrical wrap-around front porch, and divided lite windows. The property is contributing to the Monte Vista Historic District.
- b. FENCE DESIGN AND HEIGHT – The applicant has proposed to install a 4-foot-high wrought iron front yard fence with a driveway gate and pedestrian gate. Guideline 2.B.i for Site Elements states that 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. According to Guideline 2.B.iii for Site Elements 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. New front yard fences should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them. While the design and height of the proposed front yard fence is appropriate for the Monte Vista Historic District, the streetscape along W Huisache features predominantly open yards or yards landscaped with box hedges or short retaining walls. The applicant has provided evidence of existing wrought iron fences at nearby properties; however, these two existing fences are installed on properties in proximity to a non-residential property. Staff finds the proposal inconsistent with the Guidelines.
- c. FENCE LOCATION – The applicant has proposed to install the 4-foot-high wrought iron fence around the perimeter of the front yard, 4 feet from the sidewalk. The proposed front yard fence will turn in at the driveway and terminate in a driveway gate at the front façade wall plane. Guideline 2.B.ii for Site Elements states that fence or wall installation should be avoided 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. If a front yard fence is installed on the property, staff finds the location and placement of the driveway gate appropriate due to the unique site conditions of the property.
- d. FRONT WALKWAY REPLACEMENT – The applicant has proposed to replace the existing concrete front walkway with patterned brick pavers. Guideline 5.A.i for Site Elements states that historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—should be retained and repaired in place. According to Guideline 5.A.ii for Site Element, when replacing those portions of sidewalks or walkways that are deteriorated beyond repair, every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material. Staff finds the proposal inconsistent with the Guidelines.
- e. LANDSCAPING MODIFICATIONS – The applicant has proposed to relocate existing bushes, remove old yard growth, and install drought tolerant plants inside the front yard fence and on the outside of the front yard fence. The applicant has submitted a list of proposed drought tolerant plants, but has not submitted a landscaping plan at this time. Staff finds that the applicant should submit a landscaping plan to staff for review and approval. The landscaping plan should retain at least 50 percent of green space.
- f. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL – The applicant has proposed to install an irrigation system. This scope of work is eligible for administrative approval and does not require review by the HDRC.

RECOMMENDATION:

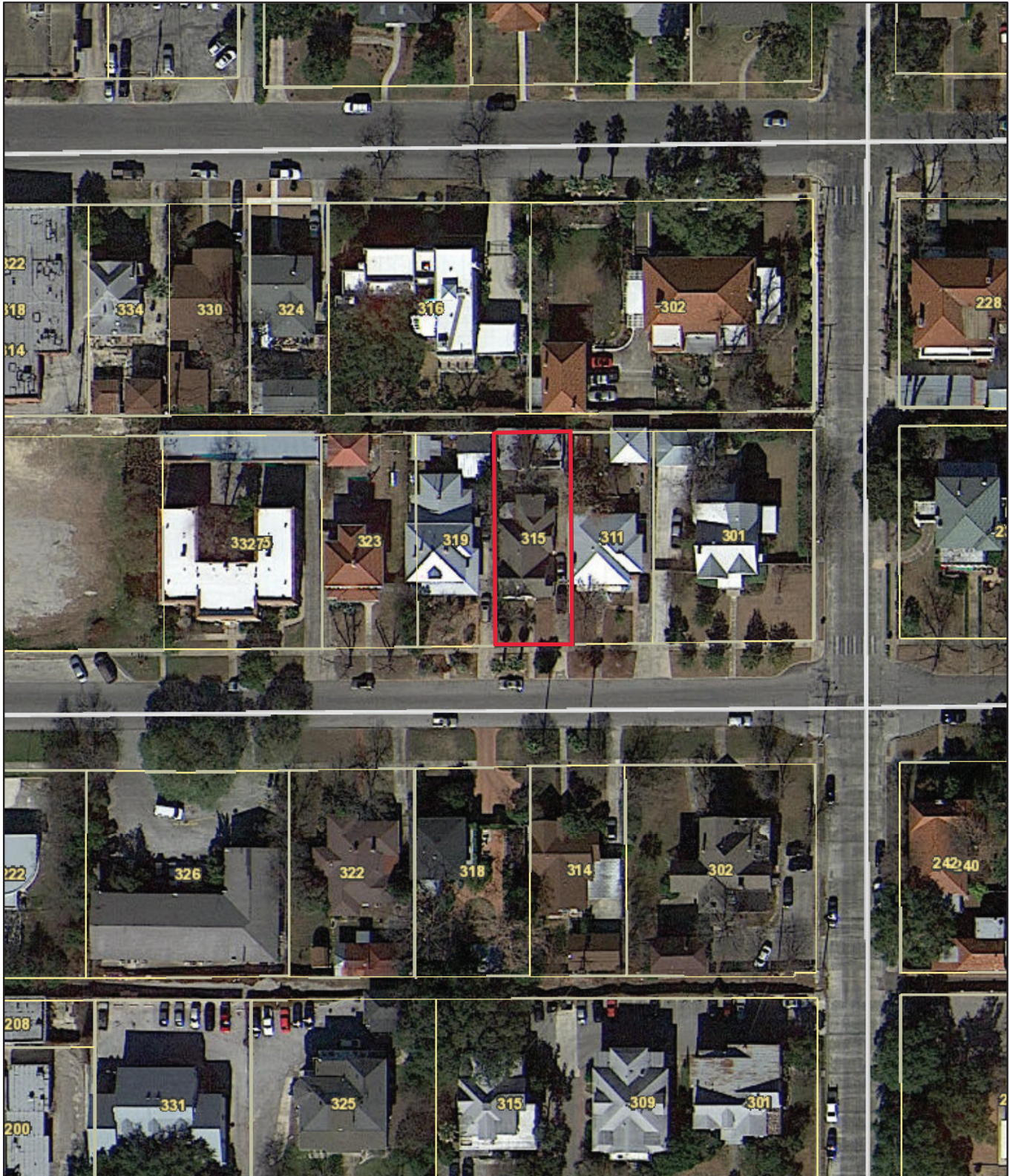
Item 1, staff does not recommend approval of the front yard fence installation based on findings a through c. If the HDRC is compelled to approve the front yard fence installation, staff recommends the following stipulations:

- i. That the proposed driveway gate is located behind the front façade wall plane. The applicant is required to submit an updated site plan showing the relocation of the driveway gate behind the front façade wall plane to staff for review and approval.
- ii. That the final construction height of the approved gate and fencing may not exceed the maximum height of 4 feet as approved by the HDRC at any portion of the fence. Additionally, the gate and fencing must be permitted and meet the development standards outlined in UDC Section 35-514.

Item 2, staff does not recommend approval of the brick walkway installation based on finding d. Staff recommends that the applicant repairs and replaces the existing concrete walkway with in-kind material and matches the existing footprint and design.

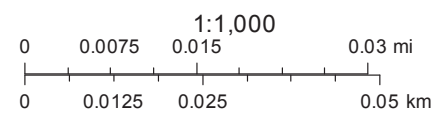
Item 3, staff does not recommend approval of landscaping modifications based on finding e. The applicant is required to submit a landscaping plan to staff for review and approval. A landscaping plan that retains at least 50 percent of green space is eligible for administrative approval.

City of San Antonio One Stop

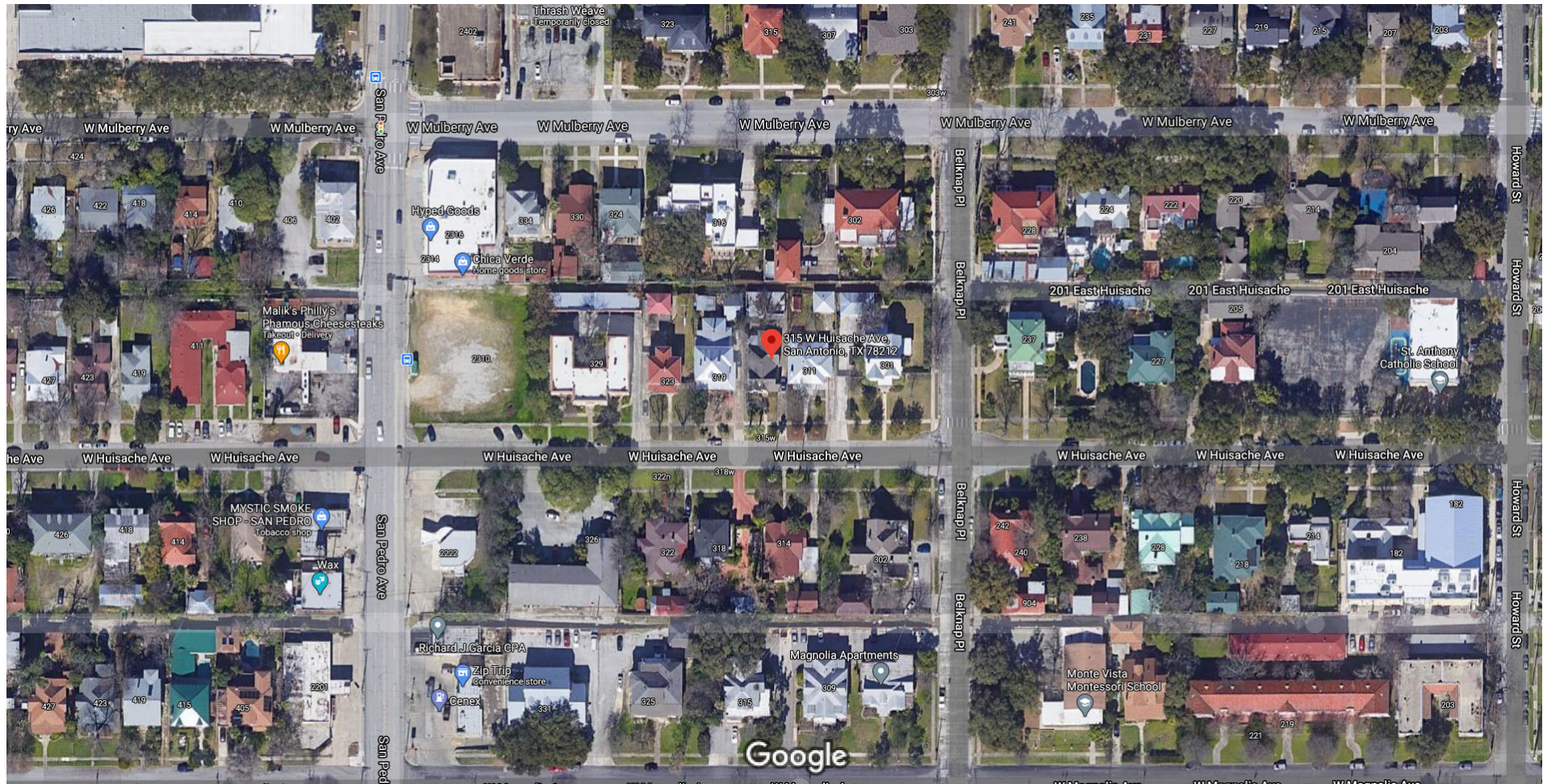


February 12, 2021

— User drawn lines

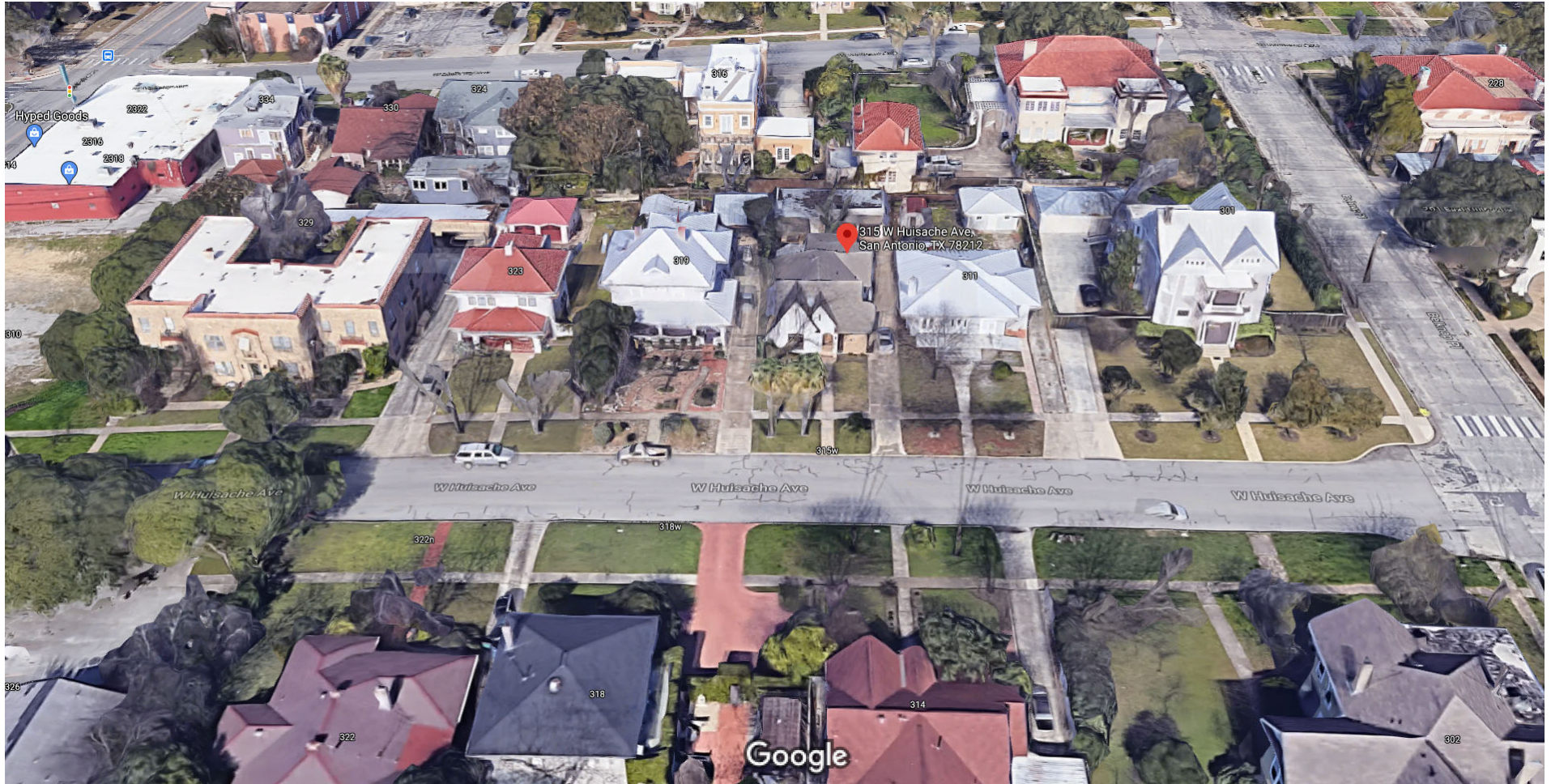


Google Maps 315 W Huisache Ave



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Proposed front yard fence, landscaping changes and walkway changes

- Address:
 - 315 West Huisache Avenue, San Antonio, Tx



The requested improvements pertain to the front yard of 315 W. Huisache Ave.

1. Front yard fence

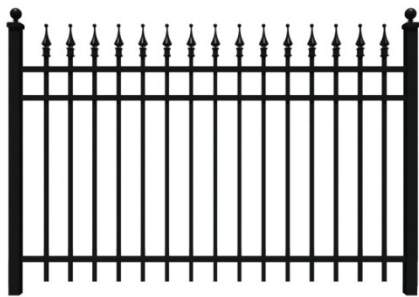
At one time there was a fence along both sides and the front of the front yard. The remains of this fence are evident by remaining footings:



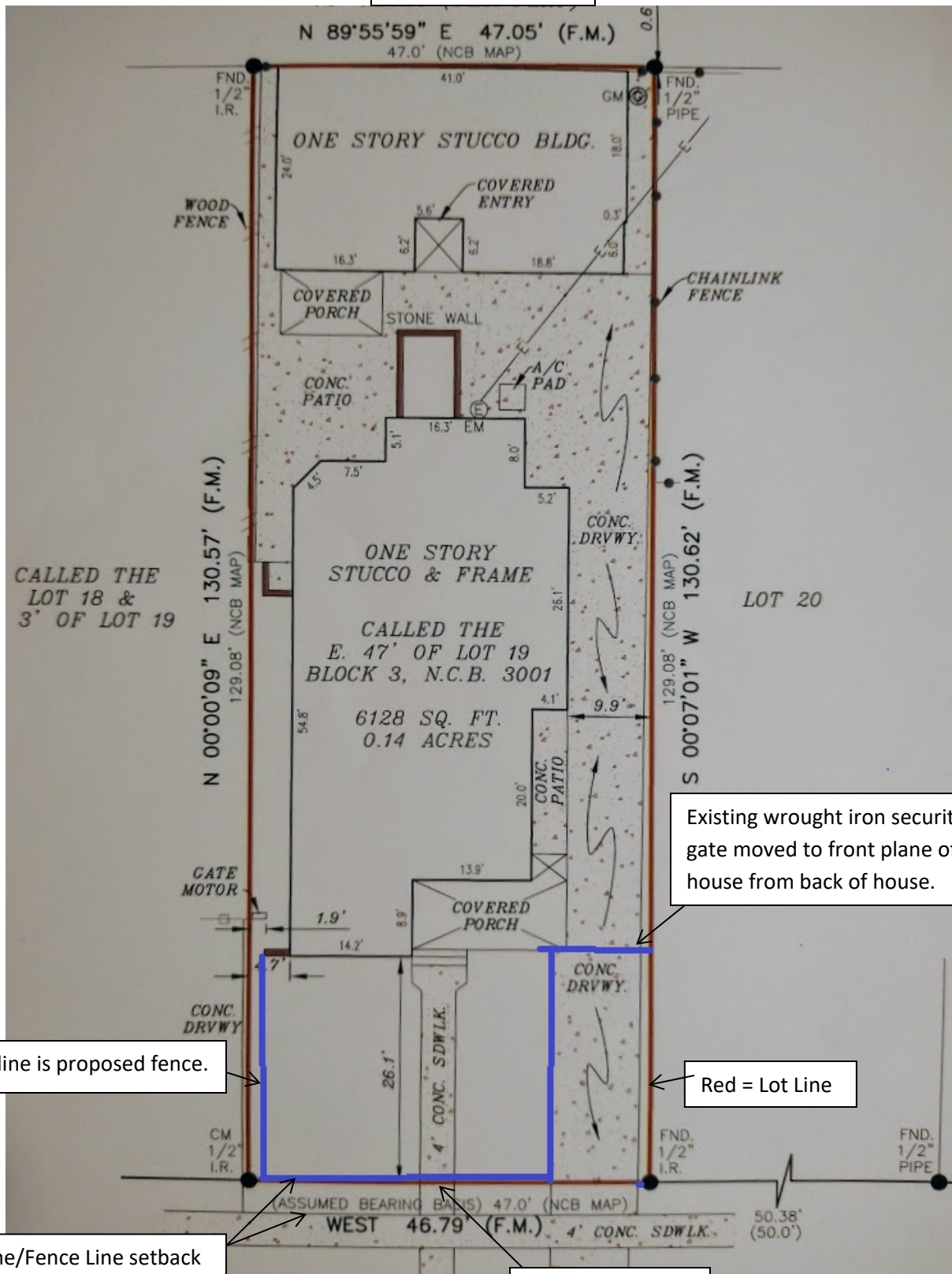
Proposed Fence

The proposed fence will be an ornamental, wrought iron fence, four feet height and open in character. The fence will be built on both sides of the front lawn and extend along the front. The front gate will be ornamental. The front of the fence will be setback from the front sidewalk approximately four feet. Drought tolerant plants will be planted on both sides of the fence.

The proposed fence components are manufactured by the Iron Fence Company of Ohio. The fence material is high grade aluminum, painted black with sand cast finials welded to the top of each picket. The same company makes the matching gate and posts.



Fence Location



The proposed fence is similar to fences in the surrounding neighborhood and will provide security and, along with changes in landscaping, and improvement in the front yard appearance.

Similar Fences in Neighborhood



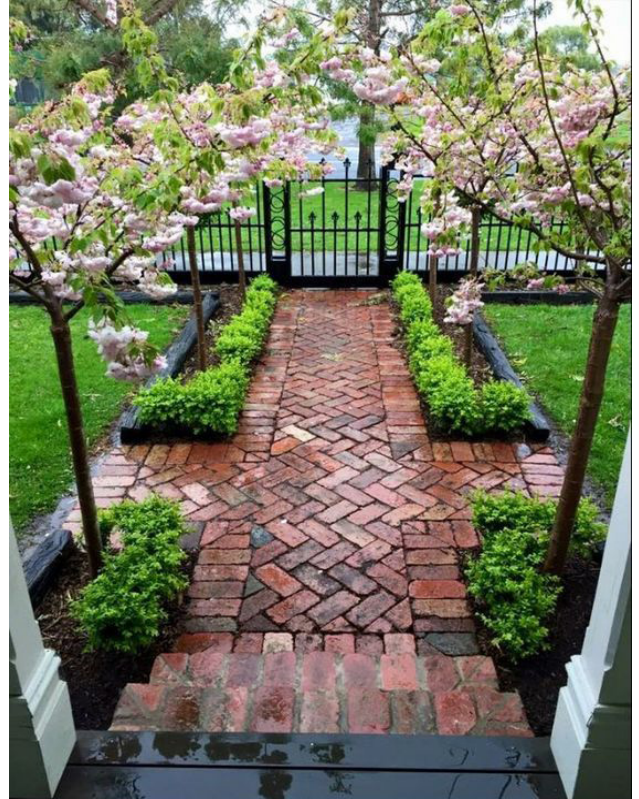
St. Anthony

2. Changes to Walkway and Landscaping

The existing front yard is in need of new landscaping. The front walkway from the porch to the sidewalk has sunk and allows water to pool near the porch and along the walkway.



Existing



Proposed

Proposed walkway change consists of concrete replaces with brick, relocation of hedge and small Crape Myrtle along the walkway in six places (three per side). Front and sides of the front yard will have a four foot high wrought iron fence with gate, setback from sidewalk four feet. Both sides of the fence will be planted with drought tolerant plants.

Renovation of landscaping 315 W Huisache Ave

Plant List of Drought-Tolerant/Beneficals

1. Replacement for majority of lawn

- *Trachelospermum asiaticum*
- 6 *Lagerstroemia* (single trunk) 3 each side of pathway

2. Perennial beds

Ground cover

- *Cerastium tomentosum*
- *Santolina chamaecyparissus*
- *Sedum*
- *Festuca glauca*
- *Salvia sylvestris*

Medium height (2 -3 feet)

- *Lavandula angustifolia*
- *Salvia rosmarinus*
- *Achillea millefolium*
- *Verbena bonariensis*
- *Gaillardia*
- *Agastache*
- *Echinacea*
- *Monarda*

Tall – (3 to 4 feet)

- *Salvia Leucantha*
- *Pennisetum setaceum*
- *Muhlenbergia capillaris*