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## Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

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### Report to the Committee

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To: Old Louisville Architectural Review Committee  
Thru: Savannah Darr, Historic Preservation Officer  
From: Drake Watson, Planner I – Urban Design  
Date: June 5, 2026

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**Case No:** 26-COA-0012  
**Classification:** Committee Review

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Property Address:** 227 E Ormsby Ave

**Applicant:** Laura Lane and Charles Lovejoy  
227 E Ormsby Ave  
Louisville, KY 40208

**Owner:** Same as applicant

**Estimated Project Cost:** NA

#### Description of proposed exterior alteration:

The applicant seeks after-the-fact approval for construction of a 52" tall black aluminum picketed fence around the front of the property, located just behind the approximately 12" tall retaining wall that abuts the public sidewalk. It has a combined height of 64" with the retaining wall, when measured from grade.

#### Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application

The application was received on January 7, 2026 and assigned to Staff on January 12, 2026, at which point the application was considered complete and requiring a committee level review.

The case is scheduled to be heard by the Old Louisville Architectural Review Committee (ARC) on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. in Room 101 of the Metro Development Center located at 444 S 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Louisville KY.

#### FINDINGS

##### Guidelines

The following design review guidelines, approved for the Old Louisville Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed exterior alteration: **Site**. The report of the

Commission Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is attached to this report.

The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

### **Site Context/ Background**

The property is zoned TNZD Traditional Neighborhood Zoning District and is in the Traditional Neighborhood form district. It is located on the north side of E Ormsby Ave, three lots west of S Floyd St, just west of the alley. The site contains a Victorian-era, 2.5-story residential structure with a front gable roof. It features a distinctive Palladian-form gable window and traditional lap siding.

Previous COA's include:

- Case # 21-COA-0139 for a front door replacement and non-historic transom window replacement approved by staff.
- Case # 23-COA-0193 for rear privacy fencing 7' in height or less, and a 36" front yard fence when measured from grade by the Old Louisville ARC. The ARC determined that the fence did not meet the design guidelines as proposed. The COA was approved on the condition that "The front yard fence shall be removed and replaced with a new metal fence that does not exceed 3-ft in height." In their deliberation, the ARC also told the applicant that if they could get a fence height variance from the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BOZA) that they may review the request again. The variance was approved by BOZA with the understanding that the ARC has the ultimate approval.

The current fence is in violation of the conditions of approval for 23-COA-0193.

### **Conclusions**

The after-the-fact front yard fencing generally does not meet the applicable standard design guidelines for **Site**. Guideline **ST.7** states "Install a metal fence under 3' in the front yard where there is historic precedent. Wood may be used where there is historic precedent in the District." The fence currently measures at a total combined height of 64" when measured from grade, as it includes the 12" height of the retaining wall and the 54" height of the fence itself.

The Old Louisville ARC previously approved COA case # 23-COA-0193 for front yard fencing with a condition that required removal of the current 64" tall metal fencing, and for it to be replaced with metal fencing that does not exceed 36" in height. The ARC also included in their deliberation that if the applicant were to obtain a fence height variance from BOZA, they could reapply to have the existing 64" tall fencing reviewed by the ARC again. The variance was approved by BOZA with the understanding that the ARC has the ultimate approval and that the current fence is still in violation.

While the applicant did receive a fence height variance, the current fence height still does not meet **Site** guideline **ST.7**, which requires front yard fencing to be 3' in height or less. For these reasons, staff recommends that this request be denied and the applicants adhere to the conditions of approval of 23-COA-0193.

**RECOMMENDATION**

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant, staff recommends the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness be **denied**.

Drake Watson  
 Drake Watson  
 Planner I – Urban Design

6/5/2026  
 Date

**Site**

Standard Design Guideline Checklist

- + Meets Guidelines NA Not Applicable
- Does Not Meet Guidelines NSI Not Sufficient Information
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions

	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>ST.1</b>	Preserve established property line patterns as well as street and alley widths in a preservation district. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If re-platting is considered, draw boundaries based on historic development patterns.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.2</b>	Maintain a walkway that connects the street and building when this is a character defining feature in the surrounding context.	NA	
<b>ST.3</b>	Install a new sidewalk to be compatible with the historic ones in the area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the existing width of neighboring sidewalks.</li> <li>• Use a traditional sidewalk material as seen in the surrounding context, such as historic concrete mix or pavers. Match the pattern of the historic sidewalks where that is character defining.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.4</b>	Minimize the visual impact of parking and delivery areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide access to structures from an alley wherever one exists.</li> <li>• If alley access is unfeasible, locate driveways, parking areas, and loading docks to the side and rear of properties.</li> <li>• Use landscaping to screen a parking area.</li> <li>• Plant and landscape a large parking lot to soften the impact of paving.</li> <li>• Do not use paving in the front yard for a parking area unless necessary due to site specific conditions or historically appropriate to the surrounding context.</li> <li>• Do not create a new driveway or garage that opens onto a primary street unless necessary due to site specific conditions or historically appropriate to the surrounding context.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.5</b>	Maintain a historically significant fence or site wall.	NA	There is not historic front yard fencing on this site.
<b>ST.6</b>	Repair a historic fence with materials that match existing sections of historic fencing in height and detail. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If an exact match of materials cannot be made, a simplified design that is subordinate to the historic is appropriate.</li> </ul>	NA	

	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>ST.7</b>	<p>Design a new fence to be compatible with the architectural style of the house and existing fences in the surrounding context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install a metal fence under 3' in the front yard where there is historic precedent. Wood may be used where there is historic precedent in the District.</li> <li>• Install a rear- or side-yard privacy fence to be set back from the side wall by at least 2'.</li> <li>• Install a rear- or side-yard privacy fence so the finished side is presented out.</li> <li>• Use stained or painted wood for a wood privacy fence.</li> <li>• Any privacy fencing shall be 7' feet in height or less, as measured from grade, including any retaining walls.</li> <li>• Do not install a masonry wall in a street-visible location unless it is used to retain earth at changes in grade, screen service areas, or unless a historic precedent exists.</li> <li>• Do not install chain-link, split-rail, or woven-wood fencing or concrete block walls in areas visible from the public view unless historically appropriate to the surrounding context.</li> </ul>	-	The existing 64" tall front yard fence does not comply with this guideline as it exceeds the required 36" or less height by an additional 28" ..
<b>ST.8</b>	<p>Preserve a large tree in the front yard unless it is diseased, dying, and/or damaging the historic building. A report from an arborist can determine this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select and place trees or landscaping that minimize the likelihood of damage to structures once mature.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.9</b>	<p>Maintain original front yard topography, including grades, slopes, elevations, and berms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not recontour front-yard berms into stepped terraces.</li> <li>• Do not use railroad ties, landscape timbers, or other historically inappropriate materials for retaining walls.</li> <li>• Do not carry out excavations or regrading within or adjacent to a historic building, which could cause the foundation to shift or destroy significant archaeological resources.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.10</b>	<p>Use low-water and non-evasive species when considering a new planting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the use of plantings and placement that will assist in managing rainfall at the site. These Low Impact Design (LID) strategies help to control rainfall and storm water runoff at the source. It also helps distribute storm water across the site to replenish groundwater supplies and contribute to overall water efficiency.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.11</b>	Match the grade of adjacent properties with new construction.	NA	
<b>ST.12</b>	<p>Preserve and maintain a historic site wall or retaining wall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair only the portion of a historic retaining wall or site wall that is deteriorated.</li> <li>• Preserve the character of a historic mortar joint when repointing a historic wall or retaining wall.</li> <li>• If an exact match cannot be made, a simplified design is appropriate.</li> </ul>	NA	No changes to the retaining wall have been made or are proposed at this time.
<b>ST.13</b>	Explore alternatives before proposing significant site and topographical changes to a historic site. Alternatives include:	NA	

	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Comment</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct a subterranean retaining wall to stabilize the slope, but that sits below the landscaped surface, and so remains invisible.</li> <li>Use a stabilizing plant material or other ground cover that does not require mowing or a high degree of maintenance, rather than constructing a new retaining wall.</li> <li>Construct a low, transparent fence at the top of the slope to provide an enclosed front yard area for children or pets, rather than replacing the slope with a new retaining wall.</li> <li>Where low curbing (approximately 6") is prevalent, replicate this rather than constructing a wall.</li> </ul>		
<b>ST.14</b>	<p>Avoid adding a new retaining wall until all alternatives have been explored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only add a new retaining wall that will alter the slope of a historic front yard area where at least one of the following conditions is present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The slope is not a character defining feature of the preservation district or individual landmark.</li> <li>There is a high level of variety in the treatment of front yard areas among adjacent properties, including retaining walls.</li> <li>The front yard slope is unstable, threatens the foundation of a historic structure, and other strategies have been tested and been unsuccessful.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.15</b>	<p>If all other strategies have failed, locate and design a new retaining wall to minimize impacts on the preservation district or historic property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a low-kick wall, up to 2' in height, to help stabilize the yard while maintaining most of the historic slope.</li> <li>Design a new retaining wall to minimize visual impacts on the character defining features of the historic property, block, and district.</li> <li>Use a material that is historically significant to the preservation district or that relates to the historic property.</li> <li>Avoid using terraced retaining walls.</li> <li>Do not completely replace the slope with a tall retaining wall.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.16</b>	<p>Preserve a historic site material when possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a brick, stone, or poured concrete step or pathway wherever present.</li> <li>Maintain historic curbing whenever possible.</li> <li>Any replacement should use historic materials. If replacement with historic materials is not technically or economically feasible, a substitute material may be used if it duplicates the color, texture, pattern, and visual appearance of the original.</li> <li>Use paving materials that are compatible with adjacent sites and architectural character.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.17</b>	<p>Preserve and maintain a historic lighting fixture if it is character defining, when possible.</p>	NA	
<b>ST.18</b>	<p>Design new or replacement lighting that is in character with the setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a fixture that is compatible with architectural and site design elements.</li> <li>When adding a new fixture, use an understated fixture that is subordinate to the historic building.</li> </ul>	NA	

	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Comment</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When installing a new fixture, attach it in a way that does not damage the historic fabric.</li> <li>• Design lighting to be contained within a site and to not spill over to a neighboring property.</li> <li>• Softly illuminate an architectural feature if desired.</li> <li>• Direct light down and away from a neighboring property.</li> <li>• For a commercial property, minimize free standing lighting. Instead, use ambient light from a storefront as a light source.</li> <li>• Do not use an imitation historic fixture that may convey a false sense of history.</li> <li>• Do not use a light source that creates a harsh glare or color.</li> <li>• Do not light parking lots in a harsh manner.</li> <li>• Do not use a blinking or animated light.</li> </ul>		
<b>ST19</b>	<p>Minimize the visual impact of a service area and its related fixtures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position an air conditioning unit, satellite dish, greenhouse addition, overhead wiring, or other fixture type on a secondary elevation where they do not detract from the character of the site.</li> <li>• Screen a cellular tower and associated fixture from view.</li> <li>• Install a utility line underground wherever possible.</li> <li>• Do not harm historic resources through road widening, driveway construction, or underground utility repair.</li> </ul>	NA	
<b>ST.20</b>	Locate pools in the rear yard. Do not harm historic resources during the construction of a pool.	NA	