

**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES
April 6, 2016**

Members Present: Jeff Bendis, Don Olson, Beverly Humpstone
Members Absent: Nancy Sevchenko, Jack Rossi
Others Present: Jennifer Falvey, Michael Brands

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Bendis called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. V-3221-16 Jennifer Falvey

The application is for Design Review Approval to remove fence. The property is located at 31 Elm Street and is zoned Residential Low Density / Design Review.

Ms. Falvey presented the application.

The Board reviewed numerous photographs and renderings.

In 2006, Ms. Falvey received a permit to build a fence. There had not been a fence on the property for the previous 50 years before that.

She assumed that since she had received a permit to built the fence, she did not need a permit to remove it. The fence was removed two years ago. Last fall, a privet hedge was placed where the fence had been. The Board viewed photographs of the hedge.

The fence was removed as it was constantly damaged by passers-by, a victim of late-night vandalism. One morning after a third of the fence was found lying on the ground, she had the whole fence removed and sent to the landfill.

If the Board insists, she would replace the fence. However, her preference is not to have a fence.

Photographs of the privet hedge were shown to the Board. She feels the privet hedge will create a boundary and also will add to the aesthetics of the property once it matures.

The Board noted this is the only residential property on the east side of Elm Street that does not have a front fence. The lack of a fence makes the property stand out, as the continuity of the streetscape is interrupted.

On the west side of Elm Street, only the Noble house (neighboring the Historic Society), is the sole residential property without a fence.

The Town Planner confirmed a review of the Noble zoning file and a list of 2009 photographs taken of all Design Review properties shows there has not been a fence on the property.

Ms. Falvey noted the Congregationalist Church does not have a fence.

Mr. Olson stated it is common for churches not to have fences as they prefer an open front yard that offers a more welcoming presence.

Mr. Olson then showed a map noting the placement of fences throughout the Village center. Fences are an important component of the village streetscape and help tie Woodstock's unique architecture together.

Ms. Falvey noted she has to sell the house in three years due to a divorce settlement and at the moment a fence would be a financial hardship.

Mr. Olson showed a photograph of a fence and hedge combination noting the privet hedge could be maintained as is with a fence constructed between it and the sidewalk.

As a suggestion, Mr. Olson noted a picket fence could be placed at a lower cost than the fence that had been removed. The picket fence would allow continuance of the streetscape.

After discussion, the Board unanimously recommended that the fence be replaced where it had been located via the 2006 permit.

Ms. Falvey asked if a permit would be required to place a different style fence.

The Town Planner noted yes, a Design Review permit would be required to assure the style selected is compliant. However, if the same style and placement of the previous fence noted in the 2006 permit is accomplished, no permit is necessary.

In further discussion of the vandalism issue, the Board recommended additional or enhanced lighting in the front yard area. This would help deter undesired activity. A permit would be necessary for additional light fixtures.

III. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2016.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

The Board adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Brands, AICP
Town/Village Planner