

# Memorandum

To: Historic Review Board  
From: Kelly Reid, Planner  
Re: HRB Fence Policy  
Date: November 20, 2018

## Fence Policy Draft

Staff has provided a framework of a fence policy (See Draft Policy Framework) based on architectural styles. Property types are categorized into three residential style groups (Group A, B, and C), along with Commercial, and Noncontributing. A Table is provided that indicates the review process for each fence type based on the property type. For example, a wood picket fence can be approved by staff for all property types, so "STAFF" is shown in those cells of the Table. I have filled in the table to get the conversation started about what fence materials are appropriate for various property types and styles, and I fully expect that table will change based on Board and community input. I also recommend that the Board categorizes other architectural styles into one of the three style groups, or creates a fourth group if needed.

Staff has also provided a draft document for review with fence definitions and photo examples. Please review the definitions; I also expect these to change based on Board and community input.

The Board may also still want to craft a purpose statement to go along with the policy. It could include the following information:

- Discussion about fences in front yards being more decorative and in back yards more utilitarian
- Discussion about fences being more ornate for certain architectural styles or periods
- Discussion about compatibility and how the Board determined which fence materials were compatible

## Other Jurisdictions

In October, the HRB asked for examples in other jurisdictions. Staff did some research and found that some jurisdictions exempt fences from historic review, while others have fence guidelines. I plan to do additional research as we move forward.

- Albany: Fences reviewed by HLC
- Cottage Grove: Fences under 6 feet exempt from review
- Corvallis: Wood fences are exempt from review
- Newberg: Allows wood fences with staff review, solid wood on side and rear yards only. Other fences reviewed by Commission
- Springfield: Uses Albany's Guidelines

## Fence Height

Current City code restricts front yard fencing to 3.5 feet in height and side and rear yard fencing to 6 feet in height. Current HRB policy applies the 3.5 feet height restriction to the front yard plus the corner

side yard. The front, corner side, and rear yard are all defined in Chapter 17.04 of the City code per the graphic below. The HRB may choose to keep the height policy as is or modify it.



### **Not in Scope of Fence Policy**

I would like to clarify that hand rails on stairs within a yard, along with planter boxes and raised garden beds, do not fall under the fence policy.