

## REPORT TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

**DATE:** May 28, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Case #260904 – 242 North Rowlett Street – Request approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for fencing

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- Applicant and property owner, Dennis Etnier, is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA) for a six-foot tall vinyl fencing in the rear yard at 242 North Rowlett Street (see Exhibits 3 and 4).
- The subject property is located on the north side of North Rowlett Street, west of the Town Square, and includes an existing single-family residence (see Exhibit 1). Portions of the fence will be visible from North Rowlett Street in the fall/winter months as deciduous plantings shed their leaves.
- The subject property is approximately 1.27 acres and is zoned R-1: Low Density Residential.

### **BACKGROUND:**

- In December 2025, a permit for a swimming pool was issued for the subject property.
- On April 14, 2026, the applicant submitted a fence permit application to the Town. The proposed fence will serve as swimming pool barrier and will be installed behind the main house and detached storage shed.
- There is no existing fence surrounding the subject property, except for a neighbor's wooden fence on the west side.
- Since the property is within the Historic District, the fence permit was referred to the Planning Division. During review, staff determined the use vinyl as fence material cannot be approved administratively so a Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA) is required before the fence can be installed.

### **KEY POINTS:**

#### **1. The existing home is over 120 years old and is listed on the National Register of Historic Structures (see Exhibit 8).**

- The one and a half story, single-family home was constructed circa 1905.
- The structure features minimal Colonial Revival influence with two gable roof dormers on the roofline of the façade, each containing 1/1 double hung wooden sash windows.
- In 2008, a detached storage shed was built behind the principal structure.
- The 2004 and 2020 surveys both indicate the property is a Contributing Structure for the National Register District.

#### **2. The Historic District Design Guidelines states new fences should blend with materials and designs found in the Historic District (see Exhibits 5, 6 and 7).**

- In the local Historic District, commonly used materials are iron, wood, and plantings and often the materials relate to the materials used elsewhere on the property and on the structure.
- According to the Historic District Design Guidelines, appropriate fence materials are iron, wood, plantings, brick, and stone, and the design of new fences should blend with materials and designs

found in the district.

- Vinyl fencing may be appropriate in certain circumstances in the Historic District.
- Vinyl fences are not commonly used in the historic district as their design and appearance do not align with the architectural style finishes, and character of historic homes; however, alternative fence materials have been approved by the HDC. In October 2024, the HDC approved the use of cellular PVC with traditional wood appearance as fencing for a single-family home at 250 W. Poplar Avenue (see Exhibit 5). Exhibit 7 was provided by staff to demonstrate alternative synthetic materials to vinyl are available the HDC has approved previously.

**3. The applicant proposes a 6-foot-tall white vinyl fence for the rear yard (see Exhibits 3 and 4).**

- The applicant states his neighbor’s wooden fence bordering his property to the west has been grayed out, describing it as “shoddy” while another neighbor’s wooden fencing around a pool has the same “shabby look”.
- The applicant claims white vinyl fence will look “fresher” and more durable and would require less maintenance than wood.
- He also states the trees and plantings around his property will provide adequate screening so the fence is not visible from the street and any exposed area will be covered with additional shrubs, if necessary.

**4. Existing fences of neighboring lots east and west of the subject property are made of wood.**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff cannot recommend approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as proposed by the applicant unless the applicant agrees with the example conditions of approval (Exhibit 2), the fence materials will be consistent with the Historic District Guidelines concerning the use of appropriate alternative materials for fencing. A six-foot decorative solid fence in the rear yard is appropriate at this location.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Exhibit 1 - Vicinity map and Contact Information 5-4-26.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Sample Conditions of Approval 5-22-26.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3 - Applicant Cover Letter with photos 5-4-26.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4 - Proposed Fence Layout, Color & Materials 5-4-26.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 5 - 10-24-2024 HDC Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 6 - Excerpt from Historic Design Guidelines for Fences.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 7 - Example Cellular Vinyl Fence Brochure 5-15-26.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 8 - 2004 Historic Survey for 242 N Rowlett Street.pdf](#)

**PROPOSED MOTION:**

To approve the applicant’s request (Exhibit 3) for a Certificate of Appropriateness for fencing at 242 North Rowlett Street, subject to the conditions in Exhibit 2.