



MCKENNA

February 13, 2026

City Council
City of Grosse Pointe Woods
20025 Mack Plaza Drive
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI, 48236

Subject: 809 Fairford Road – Fence Exception, Review #1
Parcel ID: 013-04-0268-000
Zoning: R-1B, One-Family Residential District

Dear Council Members:

A Fence Exception is requested at 809 Fairford Road; the petitioner is seeking to install and repair some portions of a 4-foot tall ornamental aluminum fence within the front and side yards of their home (to replace the existing fence along William Court). Fences located in this area violate Article IX. – Fences of Grosse Pointe Woods City Code.

As a fence exception request, Council must consider the application following a public hearing, which has been noticed for the February 23, 2026, meeting.

We have reviewed the proposal in conformance to the City’s Ordinances and offer the following comments. Items that do not comply with these standards or require additional information are underlined.



Street and aerial views of 809 Fairford Road (Google).

HEADQUARTERS
235 East Main Street
Suite 105
Northville, Michigan 48167

☎ 248.596.0920
☎ 248.596.0930
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Recommendation

Subject to any additional information presented and discussed by the applicant, Council, and/or the public during the public hearing, we recommend that the City **approve** the requested exception to Article IX. - Fences, to allow the existing fence to be reconstructed at 809 Fairford Road, within the front and side yards at 4-feet in height, based on the following findings of fact:

1. A perimeter fence is an established common and permitted accessory use in the R-1B, One-Family Residential District; it is reasonable that the subject property owner installs and enjoys such a use.
2. Reconstruction of the fence does not impair the intent and purpose of the Ordinance. As designed, the fence complies with all the other required standards of *Section-279: General Requirements and Maintenance*.
3. Reconstruction of the fence will not negatively impact the public health, safety, and welfare of the community or neighboring property values.
4. Reconstruction of the fence will not impair the rights-of-way or existing infrastructure.
5. Reconstruction of the fence will present a uniform fence design.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully submitted,

McKENNA

Paige Smith, NCI
Assistant Planner



Fence Exception Review

OVERVIEW OF REQUEST

The applicant seeks to repair an existing fence adjacent to William Court and construct a new aluminum fence parallel to Fairford Road in line with the front building wall of their home. The proposed fencing is 4 feet in height, and decorative in nature. The existing fence along the home's William Court frontage has been in place for many years.

Reconstruction of the fence violates Article IX. – Fences, and as such, the fence permit application was denied by the Building Department.

If the fence were removed and rebuilt to the strict provisions of the Code, the fence would be located 10 feet behind the front building wall of the home. Alternatively, the fence could be reconstructed in its current location, but only at 2.5 feet in height.

The applicant is petitioning for variance to enclose the entire yard for safety of their young family and pets. We do not anticipate this request to generate hardships for surrounding property owners as the proposed fence would be aligned with the neighbor's existing fence line and improve overall visual continuity.

APPLICABLE CITY CODES

Section 8-274 of the City Code of Ordinances defines the following terms, as related to this application:

“Fence”

Fence means any structure erected or placed along or within four feet of the property line to act as a boundary marker or erected for the purpose of restricting access to or from a lot or parcel of land, whether enclosing all or a part of said lot or parcel in all zoning districts.

“Front Yard”

Front yard means that portion of the front yard established between the sidewalk and ten feet behind the front most main building line. If a sidewalk does not exist, the front yard shall mean that portion of the front yard established between the end of the city right-of-way and ten feet behind the front most main building line.

“Side Yard”

Side yard means that portion of the yard between the residential home and side property line, beginning at ten feet back from the front most main building line to the rearmost corner of the main building line.

A portion of the proposed fence is a “**Front Yard Fence**”, which is regulated by Section 8-280:

Front yard fences shall have a minimum height of 24 inches and a maximum height of 30 inches from the property grade line. Front yard fences shall be placed a minimum of 18 inches from the sidewalk. If a sidewalk does not exist, front yard fences shall be placed a minimum of 18 inches from the edge of the established public right-of-way.

The remaining portion of the proposed fence is a “**Side Yard Fence**”, which is regulated by Section 8-282:



Side yard fences shall be constructed to a maximum height of four feet from the property grade line. Side yard fences on the street side of corner lots may be constructed to a maximum height of six feet from the property grade line. Side yard fences on corner lots shall be placed a minimum of 18 inches from the sidewalk. If a sidewalk does not exist, side yard fences shall be placed a minimum 18 inches from the edge of the established public right-of-way.

ANALYSIS OF REQUEST

Per Section 8-284 – Exceptions to this Article: *All other exceptions from the provisions of this article require a public hearing and approval from the city council. The council may consider any or all of the following, along with other information:*

- a. Balancing the relative hardships between the property owner and adjacent property owners;*
- b. Whether special circumstances or conditions exist;*
- c. Whether pedestrian or vehicular vision will be affected; and*
- d. The general health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood.*

The findings based on our review of the requested exception are provided in our recommendation (see page 2).



*****THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED*****
CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS
 20025 MACK PLAZA – GROSSE POINTE WOODS, MI 48236
 CITY CLERK - (313) 343-2440 - FAX (313) 343-2785
 BUILDING DEPARTMENT - 313-343-2426 - FAX (313) 343-2439

RECEIVED
JAN 26 2026
 CITY OF GROSSE PTE WOODS
 BUILDING DEPARTMENT

APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC HEARING - FENCE APPROVAL

1. Address of the Property 809 Fairford Road
 (Number and Street)

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

I (We) Cleveland Thurber IV 
 Name (Please Print) Phone No. (Daytime)

809 Fairford Rd Grosse Pointe Woods MI 48236
 Address City State Zip

Hereby appeal to the CITY COUNCIL for an exception to the fence ordinance, particularly the following sections/regulations:

Sec. 8-280

Sec. 8-282

2. DESCRIPTION OF CASE (Fill out only items that apply)

- a. Present zoning classification of the property R-1b
- b. Description of property
 - (1) Size and Area of Lot 91' x 135'
 - (2) Is the lot a corner or interior lot? Corner

Payment Validation

3. TYPE OF EXCEPTIONS REQUESTED – Common regulations subject to exceptions requests: setbacks, non-consent of adjacent property owner(s), landscaping, odd shape lots, wetland, creek, natural features, big trees or slopes.

*****THIS FORM MUST BE TYPED*****

The applicant must present evidence to show that an exception is warranted by addressing the following factors: (please answer all four)

a) The balance of the applicant's hardship to the interests of the adjacent property owner(s).

(1) Lack of safety for two young children (children aged four years and seven months), and for applicants pet dog.

(2) hardship to the interests of the adjacent property owners; none. Fence would not border any of their property.

New fence would line up perfectly with the neighbor's existing fence line making the entire fence line much more esthetically pleasing.

b) What special circumstances exist that support the request.

(1) Size of backyard would be affected. More fenced in area allows for more room for children and dogs to safely play.

(2) Applicants four year son is autistic. More fenced area allows for more safe space for him to be outside. This helps with his development and deters eloping.

(3) Safety of family/pets would be jeopardized, since without the fence, they could wander unimpeded onto Fairford, a very busy street.

c) Whether pedestrian or vehicular vision will be affected. If so, how?

No. Pedestrian or vehicular vision would not be affected.

d) How the exception would not impact the general health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood.

No impact. Aesthetically attractive, black, anodized aluminum picket style fence, 4 feet high on applicants property only.

Health, safety, and welfare of the neighborhood, as well as applicants family, would be enhanced.

***NOTE:** When answering questions pertaining to the exception(s), additional paper may be used if necessary.

I hereby depose and say that all the above statements and the statements contained in the papers submitted herewith are true and correct.



Signature of Applicant



CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS
 20025 Mack Plaza Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236
 313.343.2426 / building@gpwmi.us

Residential Fence Permit Fee - \$103
 Commercial Fence Applications- \$206
 Re-inspection Fee (when applicable) - \$75

Application for Fence (Zoning Compliance Permit) - In Compliance With Article IX – Fences

PROVIDE: 1) Mortgage survey/site plan with highlighted area where fence is to be placed.
 2) Brochure/picture of proposed fence to be installed.

Fence Placement Address: 809 Fairford Dr Grosse Pointe Woods, MI
 Owner's Name: Cleveland Thurber 48236
 Owner's Address: 809 Fairford Dr Grosse Pointe, MI
 Owner's Phone # [REDACTED] Owner's e-mail: [REDACTED]
 Contractor (if applicant): Daniel Karpinski DK General Contracting LLC Phone: (810) 689-8003
 Address: 46423 Fox Run Dr Macomb, MI 48044
 Driver's License: [REDACTED] DOB: [REDACTED]
 E-mail: dkgeneralcontractingllc@gmail.com

Work Description:

Height of Fence: 4' Length of Fence: 55'
 Style of Fence: Ornamental aluminum
 Material of Fence: Wood _____ Metal X Vinyl _____
 Location of Fence Back of house replace existing + approx 40' off fairford dr backhouse to property line

HOMEOWNER AFFIDAVIT (IF pulling permit as a Homeowner)

I hereby certify the fence installation described on this permit application shall **be installed by myself in my own home** in which I am living or about to occupy. All work shall be installed in accordance with the Michigan Building Code and **shall not be enclosed, covered up or put into operation** until it has been **inspected and approved** by the Building Inspector. I will cooperate with the Building Inspector and assume the responsibility to arrange for necessary inspections.

* Homeowner Initials: _____

Neighbor's Consent:

N/A

1) (left side of property) Neighbor's name and signature

Address

Date

N/A

2) (right side of property) Neighbor's name and signature

Address

Date

3) (rear of property) Neighbor's name and signature

Address

Date

By affixing my signature hereto, I certify that I am the owner or acting, as the owner's agent, and I understand the regulations pertaining to the erection of a fence as described in Ordinance Sections #8-274 thru 8-284. The City of Grosse Pointe Woods does not guarantee the accuracy of the property lines as described herein, the accurate location of all property lines is the responsibility of the owner or owner agent.

[Signature]
Applicant Signature

1/8/26
Date

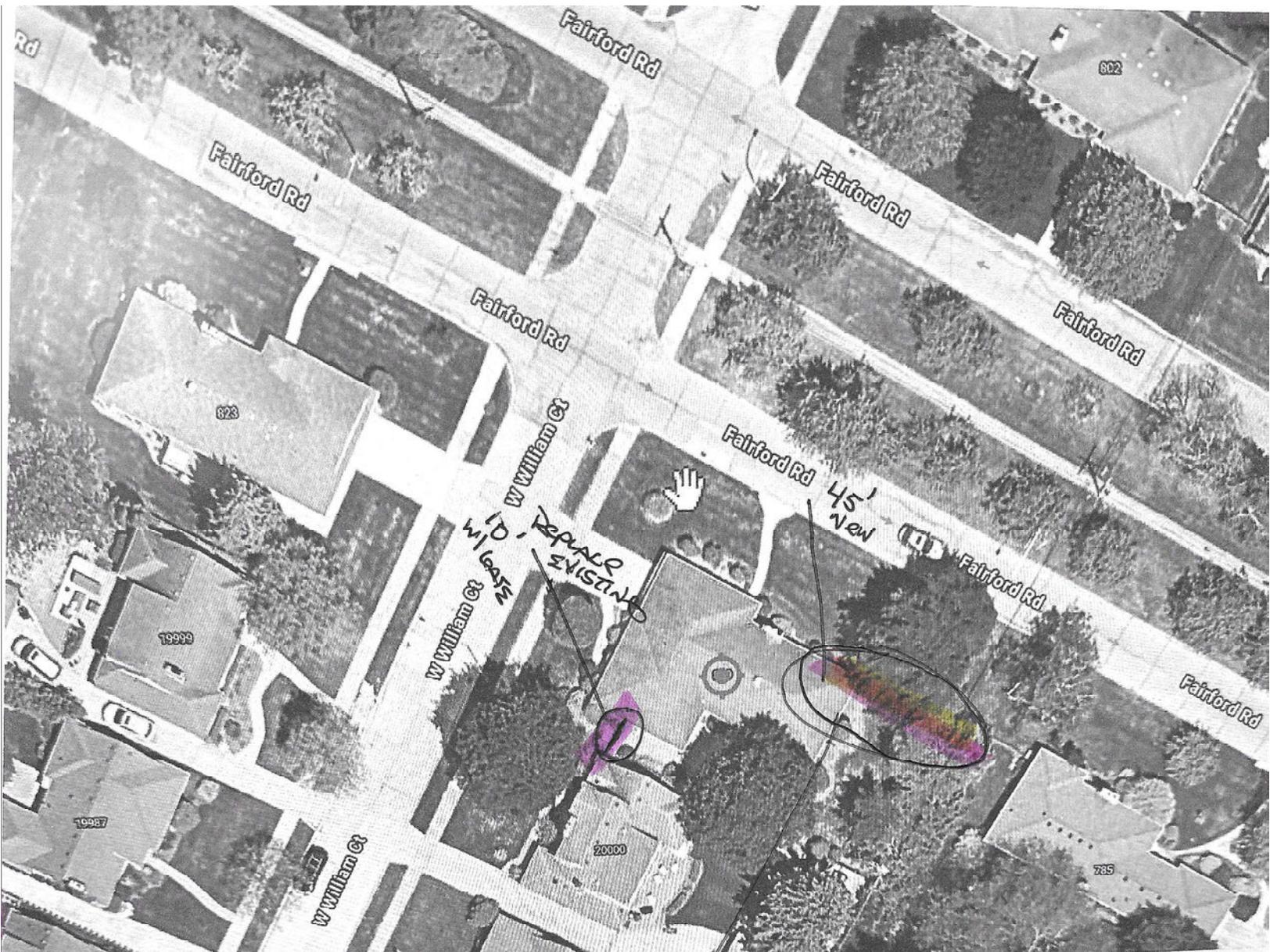
Office Use Only

Approved

Denied -

Building Inspector's Signature

____/____/____
Date



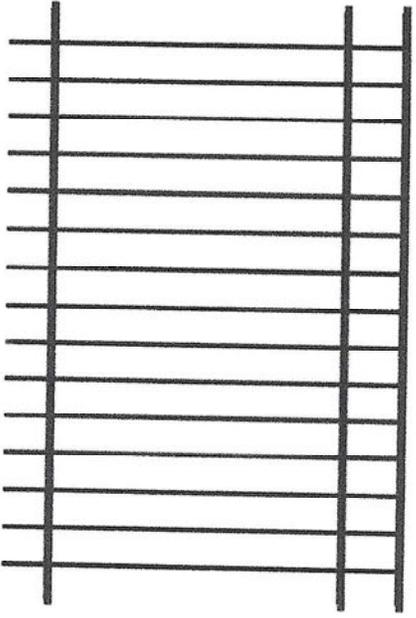
Draw your dig site accurately on the map using the  polygon or  circle tool. THE ENTIRE DIG SITE MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE POLYGON. **CALL FOR PERMIT REQ. AND COST.**

 Blue Target displayed shows the search results and is for reference only. Verify the location is correct before making the polygon.
If the polygon is overdrawn (covers more than the precise dig site) a written description of the dig site must be provided in the Remarks field.
If your project exceeds the maximum area allowed, submit the maximum area for one ticket, then use "CONTINUE TICKET" Action to start a linked ticket. Start the new mapped.

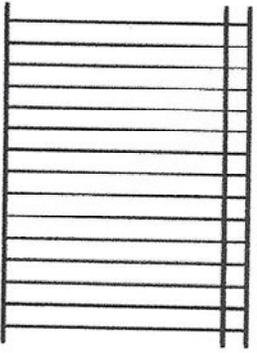
Map Basics

45' ALUMINUM FENCE INSTALLED 24" DEPT AREA 40' OFF FAIRFORD RD BACKHOUSE TO PROP LINE

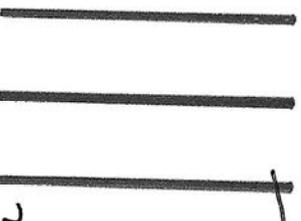




4ft Berkshire Fence Collection



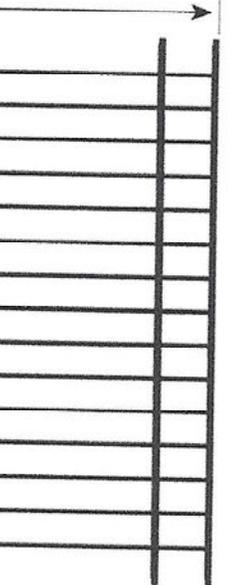
833025
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



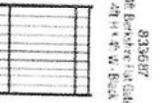
833029
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



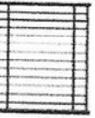
833031
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



833033
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



833087
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



833089
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



833091
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



833097
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black



833099
4ft Berkshire Fence Panel
4ft H x 8ft W - Black

