



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: October 5, 2026

REQUESTER: Julie Blacksten

PRESENTER: Anais Starr, Planner II/Historic Preservation Officer

ITEM TITLE: (HD 26-16) CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REQUEST FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 725 JUNIPER LANE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SIX-FOOT WOOD STOCKADE FENCE IN THE SIDE YARD. (This request was postponed from the July 6, 2026 meeting).

Background

Historical Information

2004 Chautauqua Historic District Nomination Survey Information:

725 Juniper Lane. Ca. 1953. Ranch. This non-contributing, one-story, brick single dwelling has an asphalt-covered, hipped roof and a brick foundation. The wood windows are two-over-two hung with metal storms. The wood door is a slab door with a metal storm. The entry porch has a hipped roof supported by narrow, square, wood columns. Other exterior features include an integral garage that has been converted to living space, with a wood-paneled door, a metal sliding door, and a two-pane window. The house is noncontributing due to insufficient age.

Sanborn Insurance Map Information

This parcel is shown as vacant on the 1925 and the 1944 Sanborn Insurance Maps, indicating the present structure was built after 1944.

Previous Actions

April 2, 2012 – A Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) was approved for the replacement of exterior doors on the principal structure. The request for the side yard fences was postponed allowing the applicant time to measure and provide drawing or pictures illustrating placement and length of the fence facing Juniper Lane.

August 1, 2026 – A COA by Administrative Bypass was approved for the widening of the driveway off of Lahoma Avenue to ten feet.

Overall Project Description:

The property owner requested at the July 6, 2026, Commission meeting the installation of six-foot wood stockade fence in the side yard for security and privacy reasons. At that meeting Commissioners indicated they need additional pictures or drawings with dimensions to indicate

the length and placement of the fence panels that would face Juniper Lane. The applicant has now provided several pictures along with a mock-up of the proposed side yard fence.

REQUEST

Installation of a six-foot wood stockade fence in the side yard.

Project Description:

The property owner, Julie Blacksten, wishes to secure the backyard by adding six foot wood stockade fences on the north and east sides of the structure as shown on the site plan. The proposed fence on the north side will enclose the rear yard, which contains the HVAC system, and can be approved through the Administrative Bypass process. The fence on the east side of the house will provide privacy for the two bedrooms on that side. The applicant's proposed fence section on the east side of the structure will face Juniper Lane. The applicant has submitted additional photos and illustrations to help illustrate the location and length of the proposed east side fence.

Reference

Historic District Ordinance

36-535.a.2.g: Purpose. To safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving and regulating historic district structures in such a way that maintains or restores their historic integrity while allowing modern-day uses and conveniences for their residents.

36.535.g.(9).c.3: Reviewing non-contributing structures. Non-contributing structures should be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of any district with regard to exterior alteration, additions, signs, site work, and related activities.

36.535.(3).c.: Changes to rear elevations do require a COA; however, the rear elevation of a historic structure is considered a secondary elevation and is, therefore, regulated to a lower standard to allow flexibility for additions or other modern-day appurtenances.

Preservation Guidelines

Fences and Masonry Walls

2.10 Standards for Administrative Bypass

The following items can receive a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) through the Administrative Bypass process if they meet the criteria listed. If they do not meet the criteria, the application will be forwarded to the Historic District Commission for a full review.

.1 Repair of Fences. If an existing fence or wall is replaced with a fence that is the same in material, height, location, and design; it will be considered ordinary maintenance and repair and will not require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

.2 Installation of Fences. Front and side yard fences of up to 4 feet in height and rear yard fences of up to 6 feet in height, may be approved by Administrative Bypass if they meet the following criteria:

- a.** Composed of the following materials: wood, cast iron, iron, twisted wire, painted aluminum that mimics the appearance of cast iron or iron fences or a combination of these materials. Chain link, stone, brick, or stucco walls will be forwarded to the Historic District Commission for review. Vinyl fences are prohibited.
- b.** Of traditional or historic design, contemporary designs/horizontal designs will be forwarded to the Commission for review.

- c. No footing required. Walls or fences that require a footing shall be forwarded to the Commission for review.

2.11 Guidelines for Fences and Walls

A review by the Historic District Commission will use the following criteria for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA):

.1 Replacing Conforming Fences. If an existing, conforming type of fence or wall is being replaced with one that is the same in material, height, placement, and style, a Certificate of Appropriateness is not required.

.2 Materials. Retain and preserve historic wall and fence materials that contribute to the overall historic character of a building. Acceptable materials for new fences and walls are wood, brick, stone, cast iron, iron, twisted wire, painted aluminum that mimics the appearance of cast iron or iron fences. Vinyl is prohibited. A 4-foot chain link in the side or rear yards will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

.4 Side Yard Fences. Side yard fences of up to 4 feet in height may be approved by Administrative Bypass. Side yard fences taller than 4 feet require a COA. Side yard fences taller than 6 feet are prohibited.

.5 Rear Yard Fences. Rear yard fences of contemporary design or of non-traditional materials or of height greater than 8 feet will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such fences will be reviewed for their impact to the historic structure and the District as a whole. The Norman Zoning Ordinance prohibits rear yard fences taller than 8 feet.

.7 Fence and Wall Materials. Fences or walls shall be constructed of wood, brick, stone, iron or cast or forged metal, stucco, or a combination of these materials. Stone or brick used in walls shall be compatible in size, scale, and style to those used elsewhere in the historic district, or typical of residential structures of this type, age, and location. No vinyl, cinder block, concrete block, or corrugated metal, may be used for fences or walls in historic districts. Chain link in the rear yard will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

.8 Colors and Finishes. Although paint color is not regulated by the Commission, it is strongly recommended that wood fences be stained or painted in colors and finishes appropriate to the style and period of the property and the district or left unfinished. No decorative murals shall be applied to fence or wall surfaces visible from the street.

.9 Finished Side Out. Fences or walls facing the street shall be constructed with the finished side out.

Considerations/Issues:

The Preservation Guidelines require the Historic District Commission to review six-foot side yard fence requests. The side yard is defined by the Zoning Ordinance as the area of the yard located between the front and rear edge of the house. In this case, the proposed east side fence is proposed in the side yard. The Guidelines permit wood as an acceptable material. The Preservation Guidelines indicate fences should not overwhelm a structure or impact the features of a historic house.

In the past, except under special circumstances, the Commission has not approved six-foot fences in side yards due to their impact on historic structures. In this case, it should be noted that this is not a historic structure. The Commission has approved fences that taper from six feet at the rear of the house to four feet at the front of the house. The Commission has approved 6' fences for unique conditions including the following: the placement of six-foot wood stockade between adjacent properties when front property lines did not align, creating privacy issues (as

seen between 410 Peters and 504 Miller), or in the case of a side yard being adjacent to an alleyway, creating security issues (as seen at 713 Cruce Street and 1320 Oklahoma Avenue).

In this case, the applicant's property has narrow side yards of less than 15' in depth and is lacking a typical backyard found in the Chautauqua Historic District. The applicant proposes installing a six-foot fence to secure the yards and provide privacy. In particular, the property owner wishes to protect the HVAC system on the north side of the structure and prevent access to windows located on the east side of the house. While the proposed fence will secure the narrow side yard, it will be visible from the front right-of-way. However, this house is non-contributing; therefore, the proposed fence will not be impacting a historic structure on the property.

The proposed six-foot wood stockade fence is typical of the Chautauqua Historic District and is an allowed material per the Preservation Guidelines for Walls and Fences. The proposed fence's finished side must face the street as required by the Guidelines. The Commission should consider whether this property's unique features warrant allowing a six-foot wood fence and whether the proposed fence is compatible with this house and the surrounding District.

Commission Action: (HD 26-16) Consideration of approval, rejection, amendment, and/or postponement of a Certificate of Appropriateness request for the property located at 725 Juniper Lane for the installation of a six-foot wood stockade fence in the side yards.