



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

LIVING WITH HISTORY

HPC meeting date	5/13/2024	CCF # 231888
Ald. Pratt	Staff reviewer: Tim Askin	
Property	4369 N. 26 th St	Garden Homes
Owner/Applicant	GARDEN HOMES HOMEOWNER INITIATIVE LLC Cinnaire Solutions	

Proposal

Developer proposes a vinyl fence around the property for circumstances unique to this particular parcel and to the Garden Homes historic district.

Staff comments

As we all know, Garden Homes faces unique challenges. This corner lot on Atkinson Avenue has some amplified challenges due to the triangular shape of the lot and placement along busy Atkinson. Vinyl offers advantages here of cost-effectiveness compared to the property value and easier graffiti management. On a wood fence, the only realistic treatment for graffiti is constant repainting. While vinyl is imperfect, graffiti remover products are effective for removal of graffiti with significantly lower expense than painting and the continuous change of color caused by repeated painting. The only other practical option is chain link. The Commission has consistently rejected chain link. Staff are unaware of vinyl fencing ever having a public hearing before the Commission. Staff have generally been able to steer applicants in other directions.

Guidelines for Garden Homes state the following: "Existing fencing may remain. If replacement is considered, new fencing will follow the examples in *Living with History* and *As Good As New*...However, the Commission reserves the right to make final decisions based upon particular design submissions." The books do not discuss vinyl fences, they may not yet have been a major option in the marketplace. Only wood and metal are discussed as being potentially appropriate. The design is historically appropriate, even if there are concerns about the material used.

To be consistent with zoning and our prior decisions on height, the proposed lattice must be removed from the 26th Street frontage as the zoning-defined front yard.

Recommendation

Approve with conditions. Approve as submitted along Atkinson.

Conditions

1. Comply with zoning requirements along 26th Street, i.e., 4-foot maximum height with no lattice.