

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPLICATION NUMBER..... COA-2025-10-2010
DATE..... November 19, 2025
PETITIONER..... Lloyd Brown
REQUEST..... Fencing and Hardscape/Retaining Wall Changes
LOCATION..... 125 Henderson Avenue
PROPERTY INFORMATION..... Tax Parcel # 171C1 E001, Henderson, RS-8
RECOMMENDATION..... Approval

REQUEST

Approval is requested for replacement of existing fence with fence of new material and height and retention of a retaining wall added without the benefit of review.

BACKGROUND

Parcel Status: The property is contributing to the Henderson Avenue Historic District. A construction date is known to be prior to 1918 and is estimated to be c.1890 as noted in the district designation report. By 1918 the house already included the rear gable extension and an open wrapped rear porch at the southeast rear corner of the house.

Parcel History: Previous Certificate of Appropriateness approvals include a 2004 approval of a deck and a 2011 approval to modify a roofline to extend over that deck for a screened porch. A Conceptual Preliminary Design Review was held for a partial demolition and addition project in April of 2019 and an application for a different plan for partial demolition and addition was denied in June of 2021. Staff approval for an asphalt driveway on the eastern side of the house off Church Street was granted in 2020. In August of 2023, there was an HPC-level approval for modifications to select openings and a dormer addition with the condition that work done without permitting be returned to its previous condition. This work relates to the returning of the exterior chimneys, return of the foundation level openings, and the side yard grade at Church Street. There was also a staff-level approval in May of 2023 for temporary removal of infill between basement piers under the porch to allow for maintenance access before returning to previous condition.

Lot Features: The property is located on the southwest corner of Henderson Avenue and Church Street. The property is approximately 0.49 acre or approximately 107' wide by 200' deep. The property has a significant drop in topography from the front toward the rear. There is about a 12' drop from the northwest to the southeast corners.

EVALUATION

Approval is sought for some site changes including a gravel pathway to a block retaining wall on the eastern side of the home by Church Street and a small portion of driveway from what was previously approved that connects to the retaining wall. These changes were made without review, then proposed as a part of the review submitted in 2023. However, in 2023, the retaining wall was set to be returned to its previous condition of timbers with a tiered placement as a part of the approval with conditions issued by the HPC to return the area to the previous condition.

The pathway is gravel and somewhat visible from the right-of-way at the corner of Henderson Street and Church Street. The retaining wall and steps are highly visible from the right-of-way on Church Street. Both were constructed with concrete and stone.

Approval is also sought for a wood privacy fence to be constructed in the place of the existing chain link fence. The chain link fence would be removed, and the wooden fence, which would be finished on both sides, would take its place. The application states that the fence would be 8' tall while the site plan shows the fence to be 6' tall. There is wooden privacy fencing along the rear property line, but it is unclear when that fencing was put in. It does not appear to be historic, and no applications to add privacy fencing to the rear yard are on file.

RECOMMENDATION

Review of a Certificate of Appropriateness would utilize the general set of Design Guidelines. More specifically Chapter 3: Building Materials and Features. Staff offers the following assessment of the project in regards to these guidelines.

Building Materials and Features: Chapter 3

Guideline	Met?	Comments
3A: Walkways	Yes	Gravel is a traditional material for walkways. This walkway is not in a highly visible area of the yard, though it is visible as this is a corner lot.
3B: Fencing & Walls	Yes	This retaining wall and steps were built with stone, which is a common material to be used. Side yard fencing is typically fine; however, it is not typical for fencing to be more than 6' tall.

Staff finds that the materials used for these site changes are in keeping with typical materials for the area and therefore, Staff recommends **approval**.

This recommendation is made to address the design guidelines noted above, as well as Section 8-5-5 D (1) of the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Ordinance regarding Acceptable Historic Preservation Commission Reaction to an Application for Certificate of Appropriateness.

REPORT FOR:	125 Henderson Avenue	
In evaluating the attached report, the following standards, which are checked, were considered in making a recommendation. Items that are not applicable are marked as such. More detailed descriptions of each item are included in the attached report.		
REVIEWED	NOT APPLICABLE	
X		1. HISTORIC USES OF PROPERTY
X		2. NECESSITY OF PROPOSED CHANGES
X		3. INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC RESOURCE
		4. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CHANGE WILL AFFECT:
X		A. INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING
X		B. INTEGRITY OF THE AREA
X		5. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT USES

Worksheet for 125 Henderson Avenue

Building Materials and Features: Chapter 3

Guideline	Met?	Comments
3A: Walkways		
3B: Fencing & Walls		