

**STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF HIDALGO  
CITY OF MCALLEN**

The Historic Preservation Council convened in a meeting on Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at 12:01 p.m. at the McAllen Development Center – 311 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street – Executive Conference

<b>Present:</b>	Dr. Jaclyn Miller	Chairperson
	Danny Boultinghouse	Vice-Chairperson
	Carolina Civarolo	Member
	Melissa S. Knerr	Member
	Marc Millis	Member
<b>Absent:</b>	Daniel Padilla	Member
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Martin Canales	Assistant City Attorney III
	Omar Sotelo	Planning Director
	Hilda Tovar	Planner II
	Carmen White	Administrative Assistant

**CALL TO ORDER – Dr. Jaclyn Miller - Chairperson**

**1. Minutes**

- a) Approval or Disapproval of Minutes held on February 19, 2025

Vice-Chairperson Danny Boultinghouse **moved** to approve the minutes with corrections as noted. Ms. Melissa Knerr **seconded** the motion. Motion approved with five board members present and voting.

**2. Public Hearing**

- a) Request of Mario Luis Guerra Jr. for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposed concrete block fence for an existing single-family residence within the Las Palmas Historic District at Lot 11, Block 12, North McAllen Subdivision, Hidalgo County, Texas; 604 North 15th Street. **(CLM2025-0002)**

Ms. Tovar stated a Certificate of Appropriateness was required for all proposed exterior alterations, new construction, and demolition within a local historic district. The goal of a Certificate of Appropriateness is to preserve historic, architectural, and cultural heritage by protecting character-defining features of the Las Palmas Historic District.

The property was located on the east side of North 15th Street, approximately 50 feet north of Fir Avenue. The lot has 50 feet of frontage along North 15th Street and a depth of 140 feet for a lot size of 7,000 square feet.

The applicant is proposing to construct a fence for an existing single-family residence within the Las Palmas Historic District at 604 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposed concrete block fence will be built around the property. The fence will be of stucco with paint that will match the house and it will include a decorative wrought iron design.

The design review process for the Certificate of Appropriateness is critical within a designated historic district to ensure that the unique and defining characteristics of the area are maintained according to McAllen's design standards.

One of the most recognizable features of the Las Palmas Historic District is the palm-lined center median that extends the length of the district. Palm trees also line the street along each side of North 15th Street along the front yard of most lots. Well-manicured lawns with native plantings are typical of residences within the neighborhood. It is important to maintain the character-defining features of the district when planning a new construction on vacant lots.

- *Fencing* – Historically, fence enclosures at the perimeter of the Las Palmas historic district, if they existed, were isolated to the rear yard. Low landscaping walls of stone or brick masonry construction can be seen along front patios or along the side property line in the district. The low walls maintained the visual continuity between each adjacent lot and did not obstruct sight lines from one point in the neighborhood to another. New construction should respect the visual continuity present between lots in the neighborhood and if designed, landscape walls should be low and unobtrusive. Low-lying walls should be limited in location – they can surround small patios along the front façade of the residence or define side property lines with adjacent residences. Walls shall not be located along the front yard, abutting the existing sidewalk. They shall not be located adjacent to the street at corner lots. Privacy fencing shall be isolated to the rear yard – fencing shall not be constructed at the front yard.

The applicant is proposing a wall of 2 ft. (18-24 inch) height and 4 ft. (36-48 inches) height of wrought iron. This height will be along the front and rear property, excluding the driveway entrance, which will have a wrought iron gate. The fence will extend along the side property lines as a privacy fence to enclose the side yards. The submitted site plan indicates the side yard wall will have a height of 6 ft. for a distance of 20 ft. from the front property line to the front of the house and will be of the same material. The proposed sidewall increases to a height of 7 ft. for a distance along the side of the house of approximately 120 ft. The submitted site plan complies with the design standards of a privacy fence for the side yards and decreases to allow for visibility at the front yard setback and view from the street.

Staff recommended approval of the proposed wall since it is representative of the character of the Historic District.

Mr. Scott Beard, 601 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street. He stated looking at the Ordinance fencing and low line walls were not recommended along the front yard. Not just in McAllen but all over other Historic Districts. He stated Historic District traditionally do not have fencing in the front. He stated he drove through Old Town that 98 percent of the houses do not have a tall fence in the front. It was wide open. Mr. Beard stated that once this is accepted anyone in the District could have the same thing done.

Mr. Mario Luis Guerra, 604 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street. He was the owner of that property. He stated it would not taking away from the aesthetic of the neighborhood.

Mr. Beard asked staff if there was another fence approved in the area. Ms. Tovar stated there were other fences besides the one at 604 North 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

Board member Millis asked staff what was the reason for approval on the Senator's house. Ms. Tovar stated it was a safety issue. It was low wall with rod iron.

The applicant, Mr. Guerra stated he wanted to have the fence built for their protection being that his parents were up in their years. He stated he could go 18 inches on the block and bottom so it could be more visible.

Chairperson Miller asked the applicant if the home was a rebuilt. He stated no.

Board member Millis asked how was the rear fence going to look, will it be the 2-foot wall. Mr. Guerra stated it would be the same. The only wall on the side on the north and south side. They were the keeping the same design as the front with no sliding gate.

Ms. Tovar brought up the Ordinance for the City of McAllen Design Standard for Las Palmas Local Landmark District for the fencing. They are not recommending fencing for the front of the property but should be low so not too obstruct the view of the front of the property.

Mr. Beard stated that fences should not be located adjacent streets on the corner lots of Fir Avenue and 15<sup>th</sup> Street; they had a side fence on the south side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

Board member Millis mentioned addressing landscaping. If the intent is visibility with rod iron not allowing landscaping to grow up and create that screen that a block wall would as well.

Board member Boultinghouse stated that what they are trying to achieve is to maintain the personality of the Historic District and does not think that this fence interrupts the personality of the District.

Board member Knerr requested to table the item in order for Legal time to look into it and give the Board a more informed decision. Assistant City Attorney Canales stated the Board could ask for a Legal to do an analysis of the ordinance.

Following discussion, Ms. Melissa Knerr **moved** to table the item until then next meeting. Vice-Chairperson Danny Boultinghouse seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously with five members present and voting.

### 3. Adjournment

Following discussion, Vice-Chairperson Danny Boultinghouse made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Melissa Knerr **seconded** the motion, which passed unanimously with five members present and voting. The meeting was adjourned at 12.40 p.m.

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Dr. Jaclyn Miller  
Chairperson

ATTEST \_\_\_\_\_  
Carmen White