

**STAFF REPORT: JUNE 14, 2023 REGULAR MEETING**  
**APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8401**  
**ADDRESS: 2984 IROQUOIS**  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT: INDIAN VILLAGE**  
**APPLICANT/OWNER: MARK REYNOLDS**  
**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: MAY 7, 2023**  
**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: MAY 25, 2023 AND JUNE 5, 2023**

**PREPARED BY: T. BOSCARINO**

**SCOPE: INSTALL DRIVEWAY GATE**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

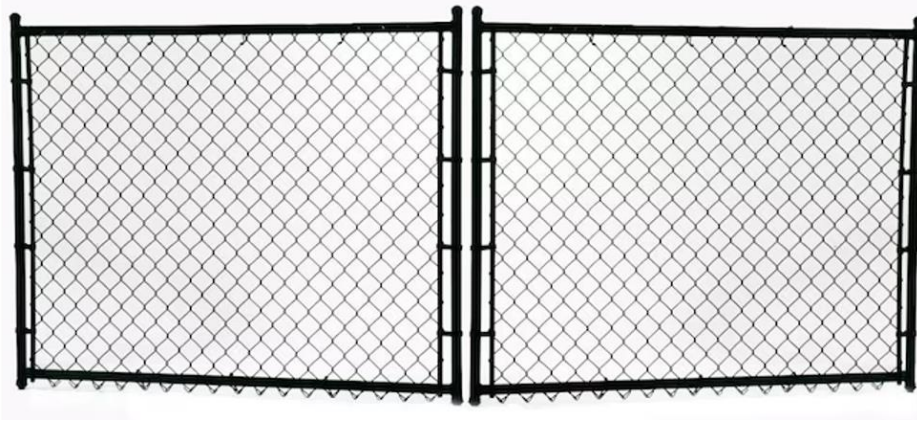
The subject property, historically known as the Robert T. Herdegan House and designed by Roland C. Gies, consists of a Tudor Revival house, behind which sits a smaller carriage house. The house was built in 1917. Both the buildings feature distinctive thatch-like wooden shingle roofs, stucco cladding, mullioned sash and casement windows, rowlock brick sills, and brick foundations. The rear yard is partially surrounded by a parged masonry wall (subject of this application), its perimeter completed with expanses of chain link fence.



*May 2023 photo by staff.*

**PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes to alter the masonry wall by installing a chain-link driveway gate where no gate is currently present. The proposed gate is a Lowes Model #58090322, black powder-coated gate measuring 5' high and 9.5' wide.



*Proposed gate. Image from application.*



*Existing wall opening. Image from application, cropped by staff.*



*North and west faces of existing wall viewed from Iroquois. May 2023 photo by staff.*

## **STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- The Indian Village Historic District was established by resolution of the City Council in 1971 and codified November 5, 1976. A Final Report was not prepared for the district.
- Historic District Commission Resolution 20-03 allows staff to approve new fences, including chain-link fences, “if there is no historic fence present.” In this case, a historic masonry wall exists; therefore, the proposed addition of a gate requires Historic District Commission review. The proposed gate must be



evaluated for compatibility with the existing masonry wall.

- The existing wall is largely parged with concrete or stucco, though some of this material has detached. Staff suggests that the street-facing plane of the wall, now showing exposed brick, was once similarly parged. The use of common brick, combined with the rough nature of the mortar joints, implies that the brick was intended to be concealed, consistent with the other elevation of the wall.



*Interior view of southernmost pier. Image from applicant.*

- The Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-103) for Indian Village note that architectural details “generally relate to style” and that “fencing ranges widely in type; fencing in public view was generally designed to complement the style, design material, and date of the residence.” The proposed gate, thus, is evaluated with respect to the architectural character of the house and carriage house, in addition to being evaluated for compatibility with the existing wall.
- *A Field Guide to American Houses* (Virginia and Lee McAlester, 2003) identifies the false-thatched-roof house type as a “rare but very distinctive subtype” of Tudor architecture which “attempts to mimic, with modern materials, the picturesque thatched roofs of rural England.” As a whole, the house and property appear to reference precedents in folk Welsh or English Cottage architecture, a style in which local artisans built and maintained houses using rustic, readily available materials including fieldstone, thatch, and wood. The stucco cladding and parging on both buildings and wall emulates the appearance of traditional cob construction.

### **Additional Neighborhood Context**

- Staff surveyed the entire length of Iroquois, Burns, and Seminole streets in the Indian Village Historic District and identified a total of twenty-nine instances where a gate is set within a masonry wall or abutting one or more masonry piers. (East-west streets were excluded from the survey, as they are less representative of the subject property.) Of these gates, twenty-five are wrought-iron-style or cast-iron-style metal gates. One is a composite of metal and wood. Staff observed only three instances of chain-link gates; of these, one is a pedestrian-sized gate concealed from view by vegetation, one appears to be part of a temporary construction enclosure, and only one appears to be both prominent and permanent.



Left: a chain-link gate abutting the masonry wall of an adjacent property. Right: A chain-link gate abutting a masonry pier. A third gate could not be clearly photographed. June 2023 photos by staff.



Photos of wrought-iron-style gates abutting masonry walls or piers. June 2023 photos by staff.

- Staff also observed two instances, including the subject property, where an opening in a masonry pier or wall lacks a gate.
- When chain link gates are employed, it is almost always as part of a complete chain-link fence or abutting the wall of a building (including spanning the gap between two buildings or used within a porte-cochere). This situation is common, as observed by staff and noted in photos provided by the applicant. As noted above, however, chain-link gates are seldom employed within masonry walls.



Example Indian Village chain-link gate images provided by the applicant.



## ISSUES

- The proposed chain-link gate is a clearly mass-produced, machine-made product that is visually incongruous with the rustic and picturesque subtype of Tudor Revival described above, and is not appropriate for the style. A simple, wood gate would likely be the most appropriate option for this particular property.
- A chain-link gate is not appropriate for a masonry wall, in general. A wrought-iron-style aluminum or steel gate, commonly found in connection with masonry walls or piers within Indian Village, would likely be minimally appropriate.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Section 21-2-78: Determinations of Historic District Commission

Staff concludes that the proposed gate does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reason:

- The proposed modern chain-link gate is not compatible with the parged masonry stucco wall at this property with rustic and picturesque features.

Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission issue a Denial as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular:

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*