



City of Smyrna

Legislation Text

City of Smyrna
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Council Chambers
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File #: ORD2021-11, Version: 2

WARD / COUNCILMEMBER: Citywide

\$ IMPACT: N/A

Public Hearing - Approval of a code amendment to Section 503-A of the City's Zoning Ordinance to address front yard fencing.

ISSUE AND BACKGROUND:

Community Development Department recently received a request from a resident for an interpretation of the fencing ordinance with respect to fencing in the front yard. The resident was concerned about wire backing on split rail fencing and thought it was prohibited per the city code. The Community Development Department reviewed the fencing ordinance and found it to be silent on this specific issue.

Section 503-A.3 of the Zoning Ordinance reads as follows: "Within any front yard (front yard shall also include a lot in which both yards abutting a street shall be deemed a front yard), in all zoning districts, no chain link or woven wire fence shall be permitted. However, within a front yard in the aforementioned districts, a decorative or ornamental rail, split rail, picket, opaque, basket weave or similar fence constructed of wooden or metal materials may be permitted provided that said fence does not exceed four feet in height. Columns comprised of brick, stone or similar material may be placed between fence sections in the front yard but still cannot exceed four feet in height. Decorative wrought iron or black aluminum fencing shall also be permitted provided that said fence does not exceed four feet in height."

The current fencing ordinance is silent on the use of wire backing that is not chain-link or woven-wire. Community Development has witnessed a new fencing trend where homeowners use welded-wire backing on split rail fencing in the front yard to keep kids and pets within the fence. The fence ordinance does not address this specific issue, which forces staff to make interpretations of the code. Community Development staff is proposing a code amendment to clarify this specific issue and to ensure the construction of high-quality fencing in the front yard.

The proposed text amendment would allow for the use of welded-wire backing on a split-rail fence provided the backing is coated in black vinyl. The black vinyl coating will extend the life of the wire backing, while hiding rust or degradation of the fencing and maintaining a high level of aesthetic.

RECOMMENDATION / REQUESTED ACTION: Community Development has reviewed the City's Zoning Ordinance with respect to fencing and is proposing code amendments to address wire backing on split rail fences in the front yard. The proposed amendments include:

- 1) Provide clarification on the use of wire backing on split rail fencing in the front yard; and
- 2) Remove vinyl as acceptable material for fencing in the front yard.

Community Development recommends **approval** of the proposed code amendments.