

Guidelines at a Glance...Fences by Christina Hall, Central Gardens Landmarks Committee Fences in Central Gardens require a Certificate of Approval (COA) from The Memphis Landmarks Commission. <http://www.memphislandmarks.com/forms>

Front-yard fences in Central Gardens are not the norm; in fact most of the fences you see today are recent additions to our neighborhood. Many were built with little thought to the history or architectural style of the home or the neighborhood. There are several reasons people may contemplate a fence—animals, children and security. Having a safe and secure area for your children and animals is important. However, numerous fences along a street will send a message that the neighborhood isn't safe. By fencing your front entrance you may be providing a safe haven for intruders and over time may cause potential blight in our neighborhood. Research shows that creating a family-friendly environment with good lighting, well-groomed lawns and alleys along with neighbors that look out for each other will prevent crime more than fences.

Still, a simple yet small decorative fence can be a landscape feature that may help secure the area while simultaneously enhancing the home's architectural style. Thorny bushes with stickers may be more cost-effective at deterring a criminal than a fence. A potential intruder might think twice about trying a door or window surrounded by sticker bushes. Before considering a fence, please think about other alternatives. Fear and pride are contagious elements of a neighborhood's culture. Let's try to focus on the pride and friendly atmosphere we want to maintain in our community. Instead of sending a negative message to the newcomers in our city, let's put out a welcome mat and tell them how great our neighborhood is and promote interaction among each other.

Rear yard fencing is common place in Central Gardens and the Central Gardens Design Guidelines state that a rear yard fence should be made of traditional materials – solid wood boards, brick, parged concrete block, stone, twisted wire or wrought iron. Chain link, vinyl/plastic, precast concrete panels and plain concrete block are among the other materials that are not appropriate. Side yard fences maybe no more than 6' tall and must be set back from the façade (not including the porch) of the house by at least 6'. Rear yard fence or wall should be no more than 8' in height and constructed of traditional materials. On corner lots the side yard fencing should be no more than 6' and setback 3' from the sidewalk. The side façade of the house should not be obscured from public view.

For additional information please review the Architectural Design Guidelines and Users Guide at <http://www.centralgardens.org/propertyguidelines>.

The Landmarks Committee is looking for a few new members. Meetings are the third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Please contact Mike Simpson at soccershak1@gmail.com if you are interested or if you have any questions about above.