ALLEY·POYNER
MACCHIETTO
ARCHITECTURE

9 May 2018

City Council, Council Bluffs, Iowa

RE: 3rd Street at 9th Avenue Streetscape Improvements

Dear Council Members,

Based on my firm's experience completing over 80 Certified Rehabilitation Projects of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places over the past 30 years, I was asked to offer my thoughts on the proposed streetscape improvements along 3rd Street and 9th Avenue in Council Bluffs. I have a unique interest and investment in this specific neighborhood, having served as the Architect for the historic restoration and adaptive reuse of the Harvester Lofts at 1000 Main Street, and my current work on the historic restoration and adaptive reuse of the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company Building at 1001 South 6th Street into the new PACE Arts Center. Both are Certified Rehabilitation Projects by the National Park Service.

This area of Council Bluffs has included close adjacency of industrial and residential neighborhoods dating back to the 1890s when rail lines served industrial facilities such as the Pioneer Implement Company and the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. When these neighborhoods developed little consideration was given to buffering between land-uses. However, today more consideration is given to the mitigation and integration of dissimilar uses proximate to one another.

Treatments in historic neighborhoods can include landscape buffers created from plant materials, or structures such as fences, gates and piers which can be used as transitional elements between dissimilar land uses. In developing an appropriate treatment, the solution should be contextual in design, scale and material usage, however, the solution should not attempt to replicate historic-looking components.

The National Park Service Preservation Brief 36 addresses appropriate strategies for landscapes in historic neighborhoods. When a treatment plan is proposed, care should be taken to avoid false historicism.

> *"The greatest danger in reconstruction is creating a false picture of history. False historicism in every treatment should be avoided. This applies to individual features as well as the entire landscape. Examples of inappropriate work include the introduction of historic-looking benches that are actually a new design, a fanciful gazebo placed in what was once an open meadow, executing an unrealized historic design, or designing a historic-looking landscape for a relocated historic structure within "restoration."*

In my opinion, the proposed treatment is appropriate for this neighborhood, meeting the spirit of the National Park Service guidelines for historic preservation. It is comprised of two components; a planted landscape buffer, and a fence constructed of brick masonry piers with capstones and metal picket fencing material infilling between each pier. The proposed planted landscape borrows from design principals found in historic residential neighborhoods in this region, including:

- An overstory of trees between the sidewalk and curb
- A shrub hedgerow serving as a frontage at the fence line appropriate for human scale
- A diverse buffer zone of tall, dense plantings inside the fence line which screens the uses beyond.

These are all time-tested strategies used in walkable, historic, human-scaled neighborhoods throughout our region. The design, while referencing the historic fabric in materials, composition and scale, the design is appropriately "of its' time" and successfully avoids "false historicism" as described in the Preservation Brief referenced above.

Sincerely,

ALLEY POYNER MACCHIETTO ARCHITECTURE,

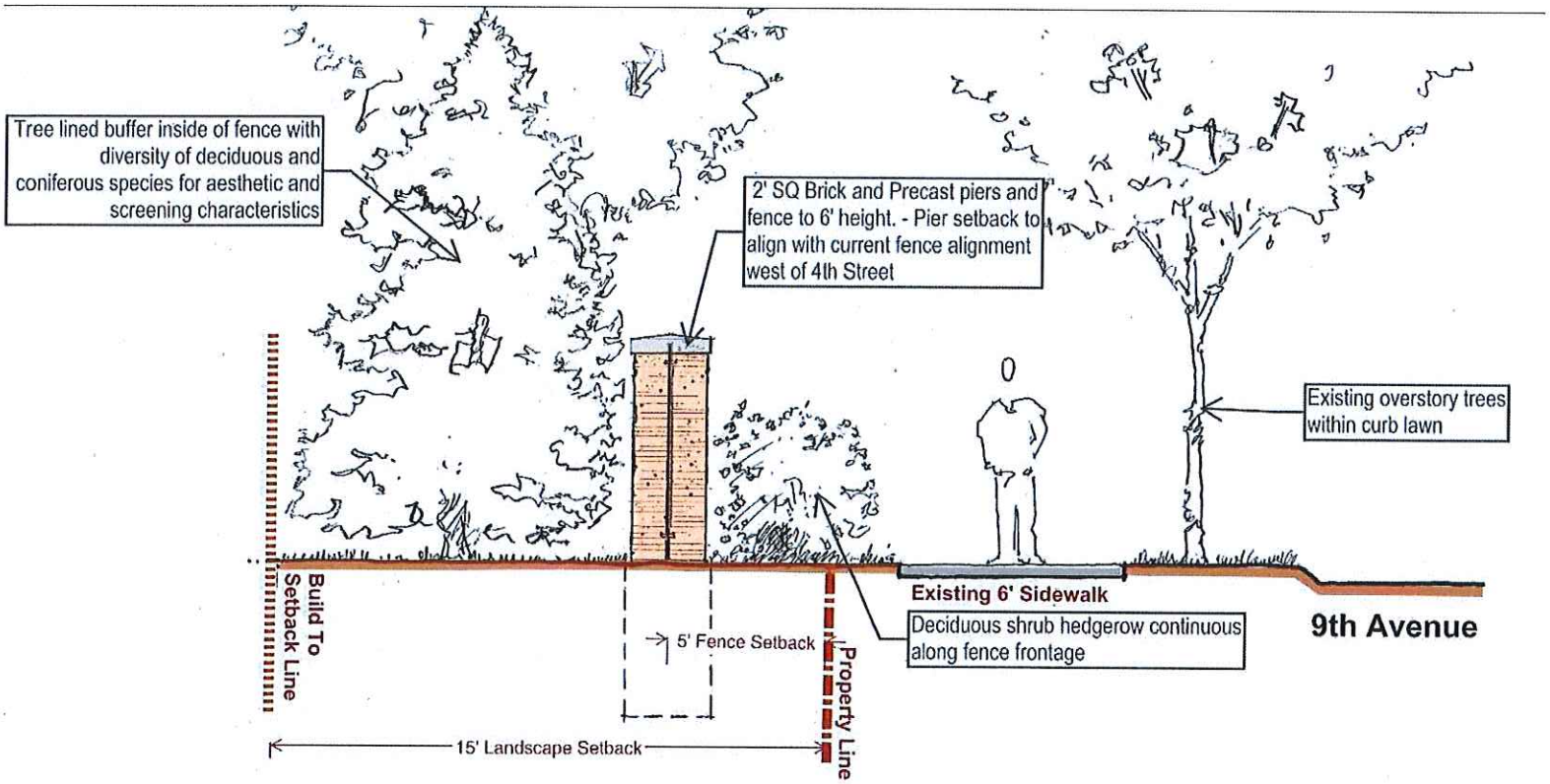


Michael Alley, AIA, NCARB
Principal



Precedent Image: Modern Brick & Steel Fence in Historic Neighborhood

ATTACHMENT H



PROPOSED STREETSCAPE along 9th Avenue

ATTACHMENT H



PROPOSED STREETSCAPE along 9th Avenue

ATTACHMENT H