



REPORT to the LA MESA PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: April 16, 2025

SUBJECT: PROJECT 2024-2101 (Madison)

DESCRIPTION: A REQUEST FOR A SPECIAL PERMIT TO ALLOW A FENCE TO EXCEED THE 4 FOOT MAXIMUM HEIGHT ALLOWED WITHIN THE FRONT YARD SETBACK BY 2 FEET AT 8811 MADISON AVENUE, APN 494-333-01-00 IN THE URBAN RESIDENTIAL (R1) ZONE.

ISSUING DEPARTMENT: Community Development

SUMMARY:

Issue(s):

Should the Planning Commission approve a special permit for a fence that exceeds the 4-foot height limit in the front yard setback by 2 feet (for a total maximum height of 6 feet)

Recommendation:

Adopt a resolution (**Attachment 1**) approving the special permit subject to conditions of approval.

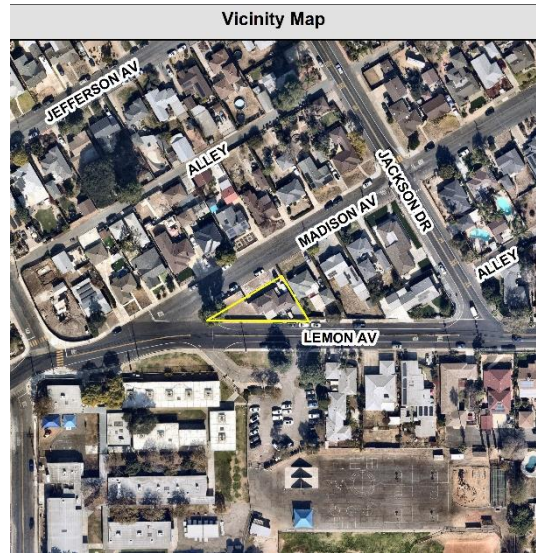
Environmental Review: The project is exempt from environmental review in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, which allows for the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small accessory structures such as fences. The project meets all conditions necessary to qualify for the exemption and none of the exceptions listed in Section 15300.2 apply.

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is a triangular shaped lot located on the south side of Madison Avenue at the intersection of Madison Avenue and Lemon Avenue. The approximately

5,563 square-foot site is developed with a single-story, single-family residence constructed in 1942. A vicinity map is provided showing the location of the site within the City.

In July of 2024, the City received a code compliance complaint about a new fence at 8811 Madison Avenue, that appeared to exceed the maximum height limitations and that was potentially impeding sight distance requirements. Upon investigation, it was determined that the fence was 6 feet high, in excess of the allowable height limit of 4 feet within the front yard set back but no line of sight issues were found. The fence was constructed without benefit of permit.



DISCUSSION:

As mentioned, in July 2024, the City received a complaint regarding an unpermitted over height fence located at 8811 Madison Avenue. The triangular shaped lot is currently zoned Urban Residential (R1), a single-family residential zone with a front setback requirement of 20 feet. Fence and wall height limits in residential zones are set forth in LMMC Section 24.05.030I. Included in those standards is a provision to allow for an exception to exceed height limits by special permit approved by the Planning Commission.

The triangular shape and the location of this parcel at the intersection of two different streets, the property is across from the Lemon Avenue elementary school and fronts two different streets: Lemon Avenue and Madison Avenue, the applicant elected to install fencing to maximize the privacy and personal use of their yard and to limit public access, as many times folks would loiter on the property not realizing that it was private property not public open space.

The subject parcel is situated with two front setbacks and one side setback. LMMC 24.01.100, states that front setbacks are measured from each boundary abutting a public street, Fence heights in the front setbacks are limited to 4 feet, and 6 feet when within the side yard setback. With the irregular shape and limitation from the two front yards, the property has been limited to fully utilizing their yard and little to no privacy.

The fence consists of vertical white vinyl planks, set between posts approximately 6 feet apart. A site plan, site section, and elevation view is provided as **Attachment 2**. The current conditions on the southern portion of Madison Avenue does not currently have sidewalk improvements but Madison Avenue between Jackson Drive and Lemon Avenue

Report to Planning Commission

Date: April 16, 2025

Page: 3 of 4

and along with the northern portion of Lemon Avenue between Madison Avenue and Jackson Drive, have been identified for potential future sidewalk improvements. The fence, shown in green, has been located outside the public right of way and would not preclude future improvements. The applicant has taken these future easements, shown in yellow, into consideration and built the fence on the property line as shown in **Attachment 2**.

The findings to approve a special permit appear to be supported as discussed below.

The location and characteristics of the proposed buildings and/or structures, and the allowed use of them, will not impact unfavorably upon adjacent properties.

The fence does not impact unfavorably upon adjacent properties. The fence on this parcel is consistent and typical modern fencing utilized in residential neighborhoods. . Section 24.05.030.N of the Municipal code requires that no structure or facility shall be located as to interfere with sight distance necessary for the safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians; sight triangles are required to demonstrate no interference in sight distance and no interference has been shown on the plan set (**Attachment 2**). The fence location also meets the required Caltrans Highway Design Manual and American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials guidelines which requires for a minimum sight distance of 280 feet from the driver's eye at the Madison Avenue and Lemon Avenue intersection. The Caltrans Highway Design Manual provides instruction on street and highway design within California and is the industry standard for roadway design. Therefore, the location and characteristics of the fence would not impact unfavorably on adjacent properties.

The project is consistent with the design objectives established as policy of the City Council.

The scale, placement, and materials of the fencing fits within the surrounding area and serves to promote the character of the neighborhood as a unique place to live (General Plan Land Use & Urban Design Element Objective LU-2.2). The fence exhibits high quality design using durable and decorative materials that complement the subject property and neighborhood. The fence was built using standard construction techniques and is located away from adjacent driveways where vehicular site distance is a safety concern, consistent with General Plan Land Use & Urban Design Element Objective LU-1.2 promoting safety for residents while preserving community identity.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends adoption of a resolution (**Attachment 1**) approving Project 2024-2101, subject to conditions of approval.

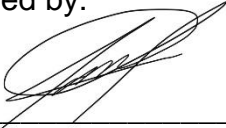
Report to Planning Commission
Date: April 16, 2025
Page: 4 of 4

Respectfully submitted by:



Patrick Macpherson
Assistant Planner

Reviewed by:



Jared Chavez
Assistant Director of Community Development



Lynnette Santos
Director of Community Development

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. Project Plans