



# CITY OF FORT PIERCE

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ♦ DEVELOPMENT REVIEW  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ♦ URBAN DESIGN ♦ URBAN FORESTRY ♦ ZONING

JUNE 23, 2014

Agenda Item 5A

### Owner

St Lucie County

### Applicant

David Delcamp  
EDB Architects

### Representative

Greg White, St. Lucie County

### Location

221 S. Indian River Drive

### Parcel

2410-803-0001-000-7

### Historic Status

Non-contributing Structure within the Downtown Historic District

### Requested Action

Construction of a 7' & 8' Aluminum Fence

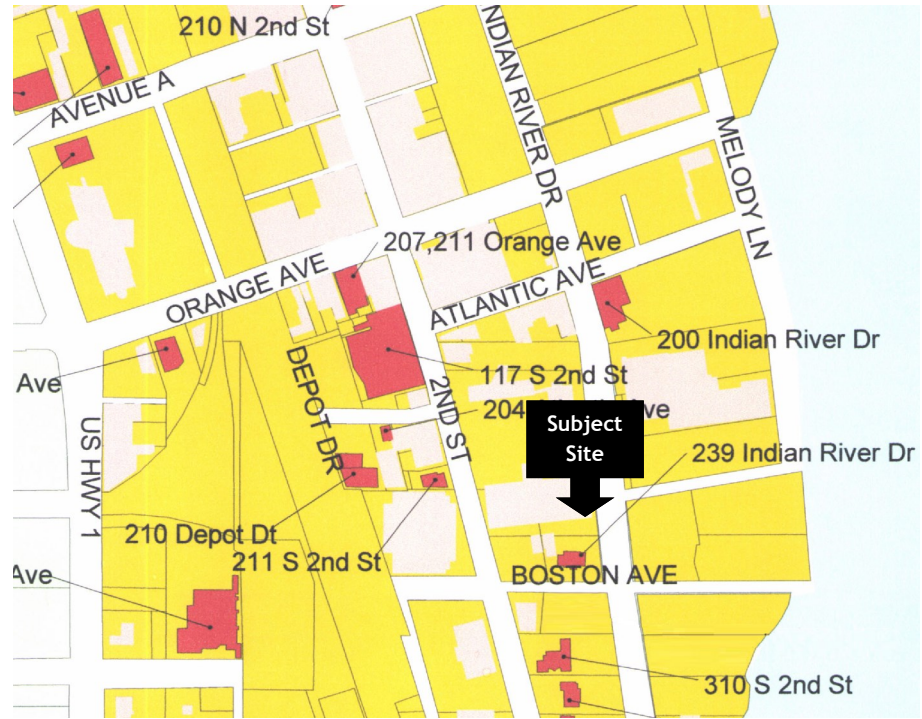
### Recommendation

Approval with Conditions

### Staff

Kori Benton  
Historic Preservation Officer

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD : PUBLIC HEARING



Location Map



Contributing



Non-Contributing



Subject Site

### HISTORY

- 1909 St. Lucie County's first courthouse built on site; an imposing brick , domed building. Architect H.I Klopp, who, incidentally, was the City's first town clerk in 1901. Source: Fort Pierce, A Town in Florida. 2001. Pg. 64
- 1928 Dome damaged by hurricane of 1928. Replaces with hip roof.
- 1962 Original structure demolished and replaced with structure fronting Indian River drive.
- 1989 Granite and glass structure added to the north of the 1962-era structure.
- 2007 Chiller Plant added along Second Street.
- 2007 Salley port added to granite structure to the south to facilitate secure prisoner transfer.
- 2012 HPB conditionally approved of 8' aluminum fence to reinforce security near salley port and outside emergency exit for courtroom.
- 2014 Previous request amended to provide variable height of 7' and 8' aluminum fence to reinforce security near salley port and outside emergency exit for courtroom.

### STAFF ANALYSIS

#### Findings

The existing structure is a non-contributing structure with a number of additions of various architectural styles.

The site is located directly adjacent to the Boston House, which is a locally designated historic structure; in addition to its listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Historic Preservation Board, in 2012, reviewed and approved a similar request to install an 8' tall aluminum fence, landscaping, and lighting. The approval was conditioned upon the applicant permitting and moving the adjacent Boston House monument sign to another appropriate location on the property, viewable to the southbound traffic on Indian River Drive. The applicant has coordinated with the owner of the Boston House and contractors to secure estimates to relocate the sign, and the cost of moving the sign has been deemed prohibitive by the applicant. St. Lucie County has not move forward with the construction of the fence, citing the costs associated with complying with the conditions of approval.

The applicant has amended the original proposal to reduce the height of a portion of the fence and gateway, closest to S. Indian River Drive, in the line of sight for the noted sign.

The application notes that due to site constraints and the holding requirement for fire evacuation for the courthouse, the location of the proposed fence is approximately 6' from the Indian River Drive sidewalk. Additionally, these same constraints have made a rolling gate a feasible option, rather than a swing gate. A rolling gate requires vertical poles to be placed in front of the front façade of the Courthouse Annex on Indian River Drive.

### **Staff Analysis**

The significant impacts of the proposed 7' and 8' tall fence to the historic district include the pedestrian experience on the sidewalk, nighttime safety for pedestrians, and sightline impacts of the high fence on the adjacent National Register structure: the Boston House (Cresthaven).

Impacts to the Boston House context include an obstructed view of the structure from southbound pedestrians and traffic on Indian River Drive.

Pedestrian impacts include:

- 1) The fence overwhelms human scale and presents a forbidding face to pedestrians. The applicant has indicated that they are unable to reduce the height or set the fence further away from the sidewalk due to site constraints and security concerns.
- 2) In order to screen the rolling gate posts, a tall hedge is proposed (as previously advised by staff.) This landscape feature will screen the utility columns, however it has the capacity to create a safety hazard. The installation could create a dark pocket for an assailant to hide behind at night, directly adjacent to the sidewalk. Staff has requested the applicant to install lighting both in front of and behind the hedge to mitigate this danger. Bollard lighting has been proposed on either side of the gate, but it does not appear to fully illuminate the front and rear of hedge.

Staff has attempted to coordinate with the applicant to lower the height of the fence in order to minimize the negative impacts presented, however, a reduction in fence height to six-feet or less does not meet the standards sought by the applicant.

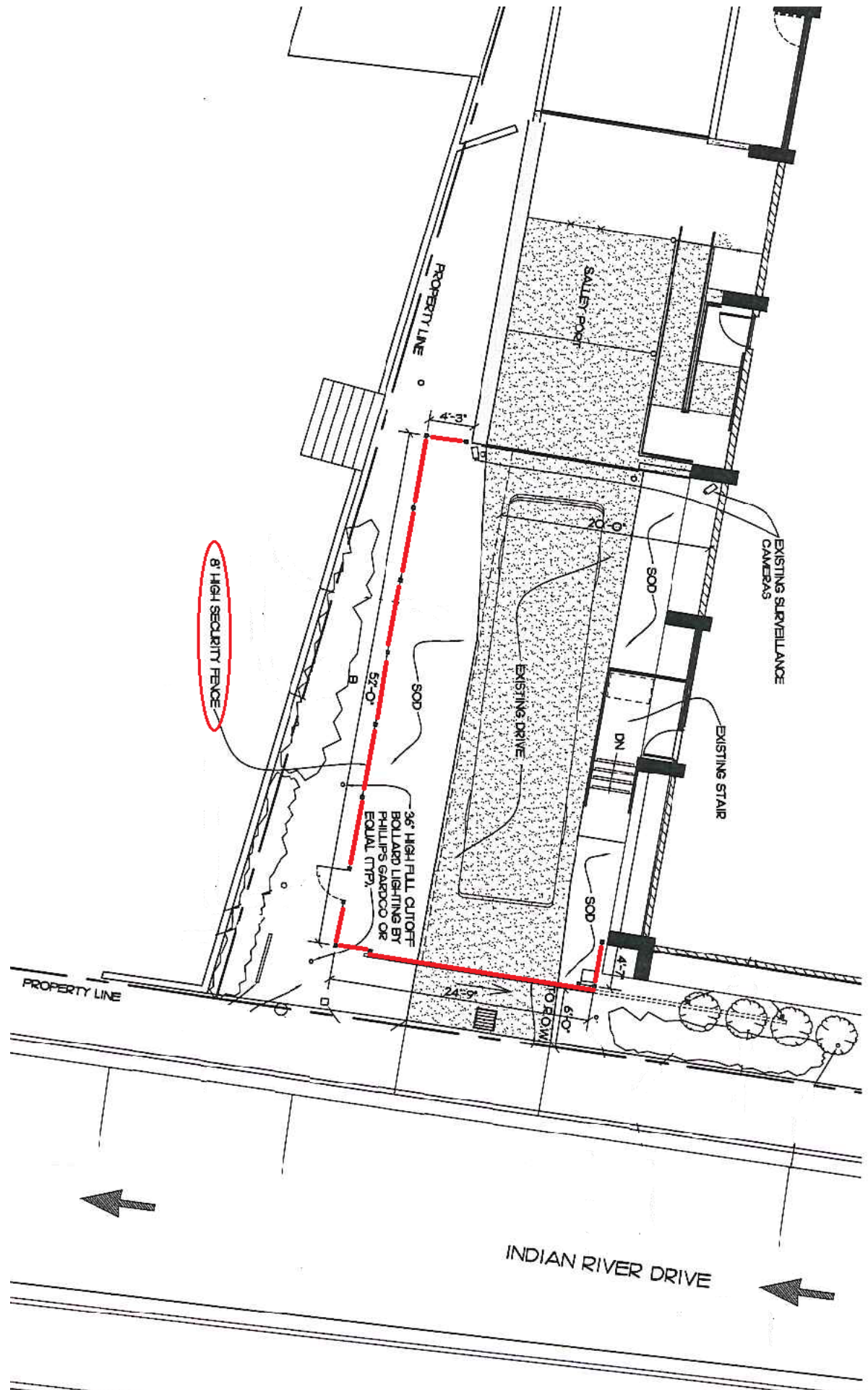
The Board must consider the desires of St. Lucie County to provide for a more secure courtroom environment with the presented impacts that the proposed changes will impose on the historic district and neighboring historic sites, due to the site constraints.

### **Staff Recommendation**

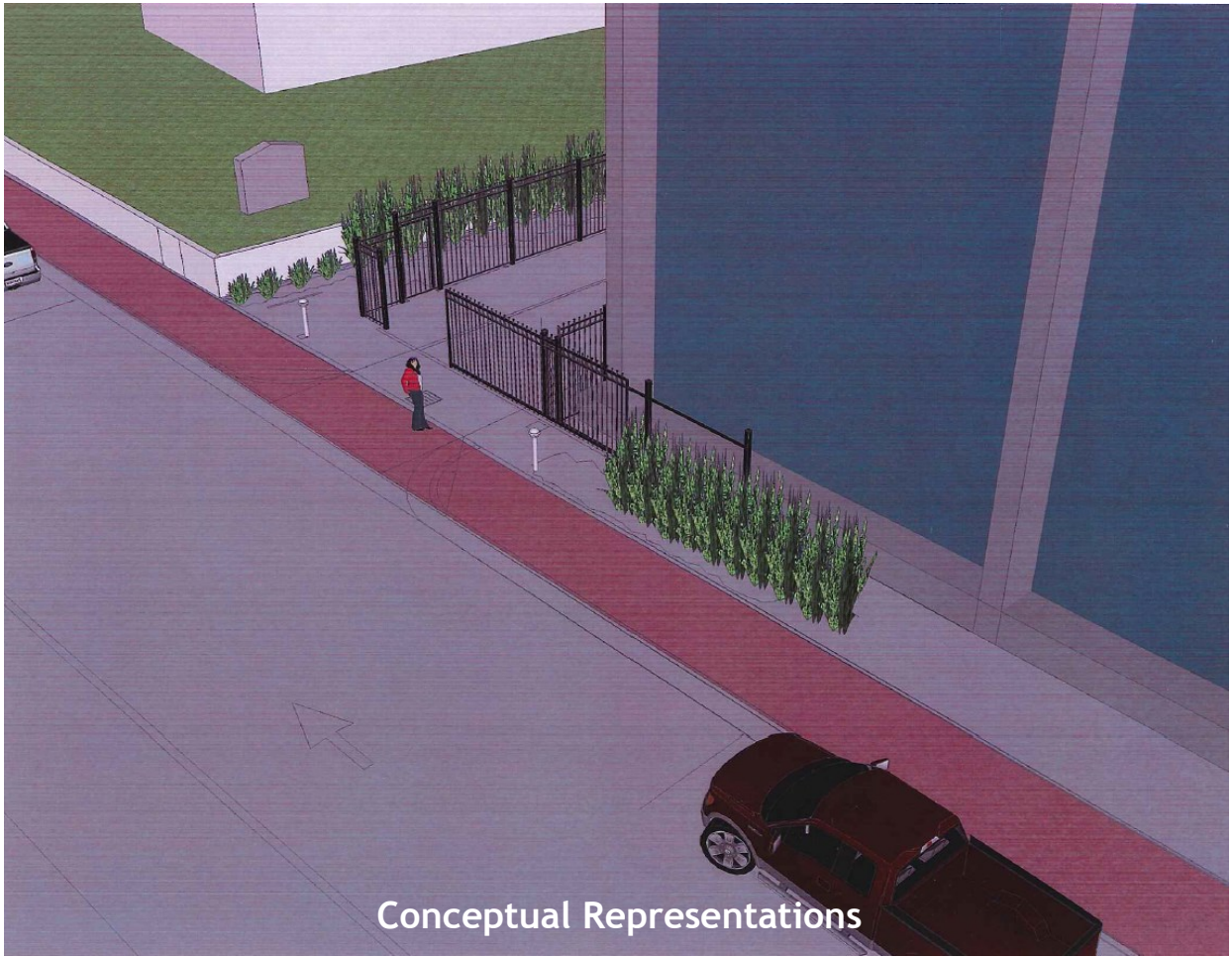
The request to install a security fence that is greater than 6', adjacent to the pedestrian right of way, is incompatible with human scale, therefore Staff recommends that the approval of the fence installation be conditioned upon the following:

- 1) The fence shall not exceed 6' in height; and
- 2) Lighting shall be installed both in front of and behind the newly planted hedges on Indian River Drive and Boston Avenue.

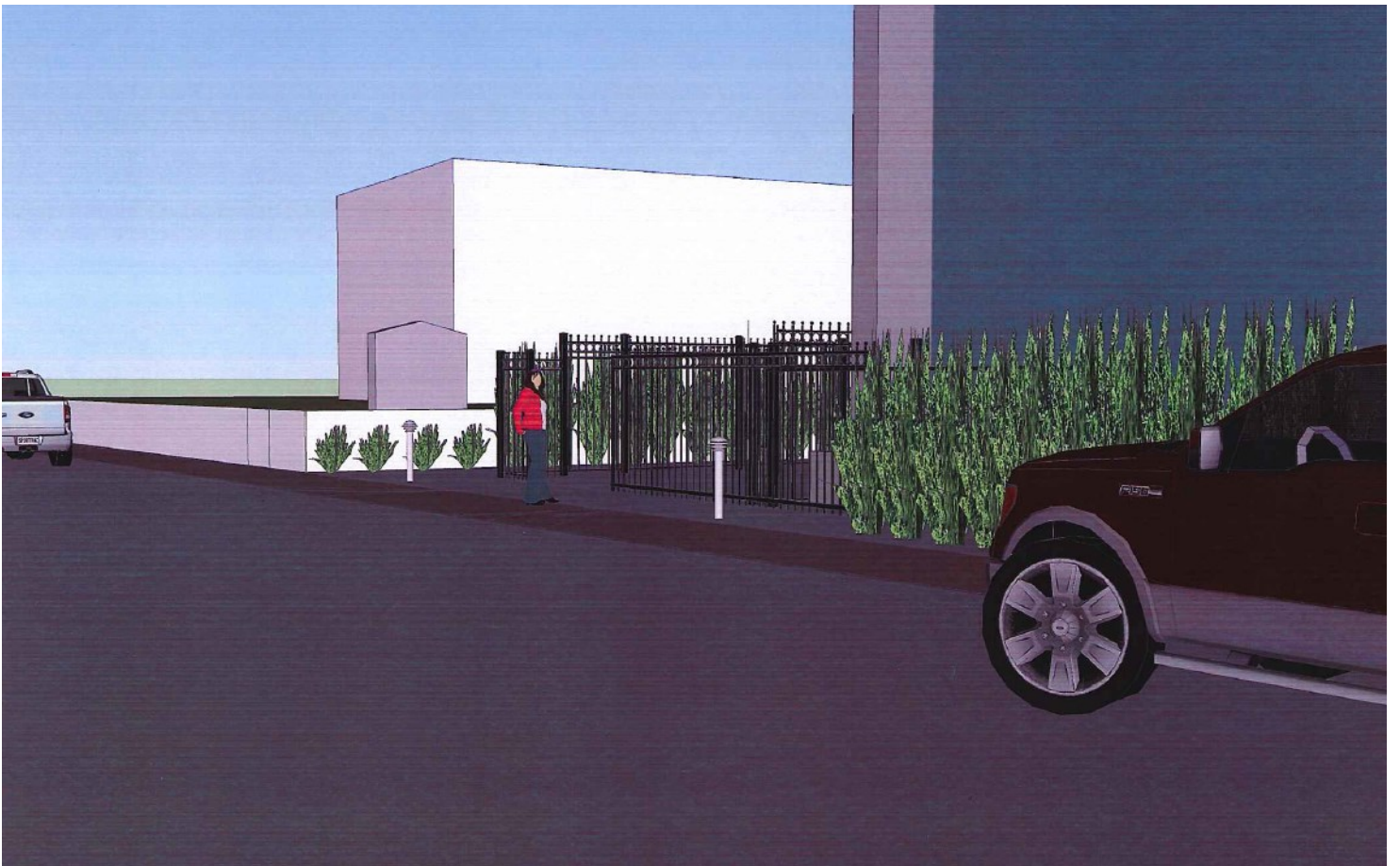
# Proposed Fence Plan







Conceptual Representations





Current Site Photos

