



## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**Title:** CONSIDER AND MAKE FINDINGS ON APPLICATION P19-02780 FOR FENCING AT ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL CATHOLIC CHURCH (HP #086) AND ST. JOHN'S RECTORY (HP #087) LOCATED AT 2814 MARIPOSA STREET PURSUANT TO FMC 12-1606(a)(2) and 12-1617.

**Sponsors:**

**Indexes:**

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**Attachments:** 1. St. John's Cathedral & Rectory App Attachments

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
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10/28/2019	1	Historic Preservation Commission	approved	
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October 28, 2019

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**SUBJECT:**  
CONSIDER AND MAKE FINDINGS ON APPLICATION P19-02780 FOR FENCING AT ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL CATHOLIC CHURCH (HP #086) AND ST. JOHN'S RECTORY (HP #087) LOCATED AT 2814 MARIPOSA STREET PURSUANT TO FMC 12-1606(a)(2) and 12-1617.

### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve Application P19-02780 for fencing at St. John's Cathedral (HP #086) and St. John's Rectory (HP #087) located at 2814 Mariposa Street pursuant to FMC 12-1606(a)(2) and 12-1617 with the following conditions:

- 1) Staff will be allowed to photograph before, during and upon completion of the project; and
- 2) Any changes to the approved project will be submitted to the Historic Preservation Specialist prior to the commencement of any related work.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The owner representative of St. John's Cathedral Catholic Church and Rectory has requested that Application P19-02780 for fencing be considered for Historic Review. Because this project proposal is a substantial alteration, it requires review by the Historic Preservation Commission. The applicant submitted a Pre-Application, consisting of conceptual fencing plans, in October 2018. The Commission provided review and comment on these conceptual plans at their regularly scheduled meeting on October 22, 2018. Primary concerns for Staff are the façade of the church and its main entry, as they are principal character-defining features of the historic resource that are especially visible from the public right-of-way due to the church's corner location. Pursuant to FMC 12-1606(a) (2) and 12-1618(h)(1), Staff requests that the Commission consider and make findings on Application P19-02780.

## BACKGROUND

The owner representative of St. John's Cathedral Catholic Church and Rectory has requested that Application P19-02780 for fencing be considered for Historic Review. This request entails exterior alterations visible from the public right-of-way which could affect the significance of a historic resource. Because this project proposal is a substantial alteration, it requires review by the Historic Preservation Commission. The applicant submitted a Pre-Application, consisting of conceptual fencing plans, in October 2018. The Commission provided review and comment on these conceptual plans at their regularly scheduled meeting on October 22, 2018.

The fencing plans envision a 7-foot tubular steel perimeter fence designed and built by Valley Wrought Iron that would surround the entire property. Pickets would curve outward toward the sidewalk, with pointed ends, to inhibit climbing along all portions of fencing except the sliding gates - which will have straight pickets. Simple steel posts would be spaced approximately 10 feet apart. Cantilevered sliding gates would be installed at points of entry, the largest of which would be placed in front of the façade on Mariposa Street. One new decorative brick column would be placed at the corner of Mariposa and R streets to match existing brick columns that currently surround the rear parking lot. These plans are being proposed by the applicant for security purposes when the facilities are closed, especially after dark, due to targeted vandalism that has periodically and is increasingly taking place.

Upon initial review of Application P19-02780 for St. John's Cathedral Catholic Church and Rectory, Staff finds that the fence as currently proposed does not conform to Downtown fencing standards as put forth in the Development Code. Approval of such a design would normally require a variance; however, the Director has the discretion to grant regulatory relief for proposed projects on designated historic properties. Staff also finds that the façade of the church and its main entry are the primary concerns as they are the principal character-defining features of the historic resource that are especially visible from the public right-of-way due to the church's corner location.

The proposed fencing design, consisting of tubular steel, would not yield privacy and is not the intent of the owner representative. The design and material of the proposed fencing would contribute to security measures in addition to minimal obscurity of view from the public right-of-way and minimal detraction from the historic character of the property. And as originally proposed, the sliding gate portions of the fence would remain open for at least a 12-hour period each day, which would provide unobstructed physical and visual access to the façade of the church.

The fencing as currently proposed appears to be a subtle but impactful improvement upon the conceptual plans submitted and commented upon by the Commission in October 2018. The

addition of one new decorative brick column placed at the corner of Mariposa and R streets will provide a visual anchor for the property and a connection for the turning point of the tubular steel fencing. As the new column will be constructed to match the existing brick columns that currently surround the rear parking lot, it will contribute to a compatible but differentiated design from the fencing that surrounds the rear parking lot - and most importantly, it will be compatible but differentiated from the design and materials of the church. Furthermore, if the fencing were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. The project as proposed would be in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Therefore, Staff recommends approval with conditions.

**St. John's Cathedral Catholic Church** (1902) located at 2814 Mariposa Street consists of a brick church with a double-height ceiling flanked by a tower on each of the façade, tapering to a point that doubles the height of the main building. It was designed by architect T. M. Birmingham and built by J. E. Birmingham and F. J. Williams, with elements of the Gothic Revival architectural style. This church is located in Downtown Fresno, and it is the oldest remaining Catholic Church in Fresno. St. John's was originally constructed outside of city limits but soon became incorporated as part of a residential development in Fresno. It still functions as a Roman Catholic Cathedral.

**St. John's Rectory** (1928) located at 2814 Mariposa Street consists of a three-story, brick building with porches extending forward on the first and second stories. It is part of the St. John's Cathedral complex in Downtown Fresno, and therefore contributes to the oldest remaining Catholic Church in Fresno. It also exhibits architectural elements worthy of special consideration.

The Resolutions designating St. John's Cathedral Catholic Church and Rectory to the Local Register of Historic Resources were adopted by Fresno City Council on July 1, 1980. The properties are greater than 50 years of age and possess integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association (FMC 12-1607). Additionally, they are significant for their architecture and for their association with the Catholic Church and its role in early development in Fresno.

#### **Duties and Powers of the Commission:**

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance is located at Chapter 12, Article 16 of the Fresno Municipal Code.

Section 1606 outlines the duties and powers of the Commission. Section 1606(a)(2) specifically refers to the duties entailing review of alterations to historic resources:

*(a)(2) The regulation of exterior alterations visible from a public right-of-way including demolition, relocation and new construction, and interior alterations which would affect the significance of Historic Resources or Historic Districts.*

Section 1617 outlines the Historic Resource Permit Review Process.

#### **Historic Review Application Submittal Check List**

The Submittal Check List for the Historic Review Application includes the following:

- ☐ Current photographs

- At least one overall view of the property
- A detailed view of each historic feature that involves the proposed work

☐ Construction Documents

- An existing site plan (and a proposed site plan if different from existing), drawn to scale, which clearly indicates all structures located on the parcel; and, the parcel's North, South, East, and West property lines
- Detailed drawings, visuals, and descriptions for the proposed work

## Attachments

Exhibit A: State of California Survey Forms for St. John's Cathedral Catholic Church 2814 Mariposa Street Prepared June 24, 1978 by William E. Patnaude for the City of Fresno.

Exhibit B: State of California Survey Forms for St. John's Rectory 2814 Mariposa Street Prepared June, 1978 by William E. Patnaude for the City of Fresno.

Exhibit C: Historic Review Application Submittal from the owner representative of St. John's Cathedral Catholic Church (Historic Property #086) and St. John's Rectory (Historic Property #087) located at 2814 Mariposa Street, October 2019.