

# ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES HANDBOOK 2014 Edition

(Amended 3-11-2014 by adoption of Ord. 2014-06)



Historic and Theme Districts  
City of Venice  
Florida

## **PURPOSE**

This handbook has been prepared to provide guidelines in evaluating new structures and additions, alterations, renovations and changes to existing structures for the protection and preservation of the historic architectural heritage of Venice.

These guidelines will serve as a set of basic standards to be used to regulate the appearance of new construction and the rehabilitation and maintenance of structures in designated districts. The function of the guidelines is to protect the city's visual public character.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The following goals and objectives have been established to help protect and enhance the architectural character of Venice.

### **Goals:**

- Promote an awareness of the Northern Italian Renaissance architectural style that is Venice.
- Improve, promote and maintain the architectural integrity that physically expresses Venice.
- Insure that new buildings are compatible with and reinforce the visual character of Venice.

### **Objectives:**

- Develop guidelines that encourage regular maintenance, accurate restoration, appropriate additions to or alterations of historic buildings that are compatible with the original character of the structure.
- Identify techniques for new construction, which promote a higher quality of design, that is compatible with adjacent structures, and which contributes to the overall harmony of the community.

## **Summary of when Architectural Review Board approval is required**

The purpose of this section is to provide preliminary guidance concerning work which requires advance approval of the City's Architectural Review Board. Certain work within the Historic and Venetian Theme architectural control districts requires a Certificate of Architectural Compliance (CAC) before a building permit can be issued. This section is only a general summary of the requirements in the City Code. You should refer to the City Code and the Architectural Guidelines Handbook for the exact language and requirements for a CAC.

### **Work that requires a CAC in the Historic District:**

1. All new structures, including accessory structures.
2. New carports and canopies.
3. Demolition of any structure.
4. Alterations to existing structures as follows:
  - a. Any exterior alteration to street or alley front elevation which is visible from the street or alley and which requires a building permit, unless exempted by this article or by a grant of a variance.
  - b. Windows and doors. No CAC shall be required when only windows and doors are being replaced provided there is no change in the size of openings. New windows and doors shall be required to comply with the regulations with regard to window type and proportion as much as practical as determined by the building official but no CAC shall be required.
  - c. Color. Any color change to a commercial or multifamily residential structure shall require a CAC. Color changes to other structures shall comply with the color guidelines but do not require a CAC. The color of a structure is an important element of the appearance. All colors, including base and trim colors, for new structures must be approved as part of the CAC process. The color requirements are set forth in the Architectural Guidelines Handbook. There are many shades of color which comply with the Architectural Guidelines Handbook. There are many shades of color which comply with the Architectural Guidelines Handbook. There is also a pre-approved list of colors which do not require board review for approval. The building official has the authority to determine if a proposed color is in compliance with the Architectural Guidelines Handbook.

### **Work that requires a CAC in the Venetian Theme District:**

1. All new structures, including accessory structures, except for new and existing detached single-family homes.
2. Demolition of a structure substantially constructed in the Northern Italian Renaissance style.
3. New and existing detached single-family homes are exempt from these regulations
4. New carports and canopies (except for single family homes).
5. Alterations to existing structures as follows:
  - a. Any exterior alteration to a street or alley front elevation which is visible from the street or alley and which requires a building permit, unless exempted by this article or by a

grant of a variance.

- b. Windows and doors. No CAC shall be required when only windows and/or doors being replaced provided there is no change in the size of the openings. New windows and doors shall be required to comply with the regulations with regard to window type and proportion as much as practical as determined by the building official but no CAC shall be required.
- c. Color. Any color to a commercial or multifamily residential structure shall require a CAC. Color changes to other structures shall comply with the color guidelines but do not require a CAC. The color regulations do not apply to single-family homes in the Venetian Theme district. The color of a structure is an important element of the appearance. All colors, including base and trim colors, for new structures must be approved as part of the CAC process. The color requirements are set forth in the Architectural Guidelines Handbook. There are many shades of color which comply with the Architectural Guidelines Handbook. There is also a pre-approved list of colors which do not require board review for approval. The building official has the authority to determine if a proposed color is in compliance with the Architectural Guidelines Handbook.

#### **Work which does not require a CAC in either the HV or VT District:**

- 1. Minor maintenance and repair work in either the HV or VT district.
- 2. Accessory structures not visible from the street or adjoining property in either the HV or VT district.
- 3. Screened enclosures not visible from the street in either the HV or VT district
- 4. No CAC shall be required to repair damage to a structure caused by natural forces, fire or other events beyond the control of the owner unless the total cost of the repairs (which include material and labor) exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure as it existed prior to the damage as determined by Sarasota County Property Appraiser.
- 5. Historic structures which are subject to review by the historic preservation board are exempt from these regulations.
- 6. Signs: New signs shall comply with the regulations. No CAC is required.
- 7. Replacement of doors or windows damaged by a storm or other casualty event (not including wear and tear or deterioration over time) do not require a CAC when there is no change in the size of the openings. Replacement doors and windows under this section in both the HV and VT districts shall comply with the design regulations to the extent practical under the circumstances. The building official shall have the authority to determine compliance.
- 8. Structures that are not constructed in the Northern Italian Renaissance Style but are historically significant or substantially constructed in a different architecturally significant style (such as, but not limited to, Sarasota School of Architecture) are exempt from these regulations. The building official shall make these determinations and may seek the opinion of the board
- 9. No CAC shall be required when only windows and doors are being replaced provided there is no change in size of openings.

### **Authority of the Building Official**

1. The building official shall determine when a CAC is required by these regulations, and his decision shall be final. The building official may request an advisory opinion from the board as to whether a CAC is required for a specific project. The building official shall have the authority to issue permit for construction when he has determined that no CAC is required.
2. The building official shall have the authority to issue a CAC for minor alterations in the HV or VT districts when the plans comply with these regulations.
3. The building official shall determine when an application for a CAC is complete. The building official shall not forward an incomplete application to the board for a hearing unless there are special circumstances.
4. In situations where no CAC is required but improvements are required to comply with the regulation, including, but not limited to, minor alterations, certain window and door changes, and color changes, the building official shall have the authority to determine compliance with the regulations. The building official may seek guidance from the chairman of the board or the full board at a public meeting.

# HISTORICAL NOTES AND GENERAL GUIDELINES

## Architectural Character

The Mediterranean Revival style of architecture was developed as an architectural theme in several Florida cities during the Florida "Land Boom" of the 1920s. This style had a tropical, foreign cachet that fascinated northern visitors.

The Northern Italian Renaissance style of architecture prevalent in the City of Venice during 1926 to 1929 was developed by City Planner John Nolen as his interpretation of the Mediterranean Revival style.



The major features of the Northern Italian Renaissance style were masonry finished with stucco, terra cotta tile roofs, cornices, balconies, (both genuine and imitation), arched openings, and niches.

Ornamental iron work for windows, grilles and balconies, applied concrete relief designs and embedded glazed tile patterns were decorative techniques widely used.



## Building Form

Residential structures in Venice were rarely regular in shape, having multiple facets in the form of one story projections, courtyards, projecting porticos, *porte cocheres* and walls.

Commercial buildings were usually two stories in height with balconies featured on the second floor.



## Roofs

Most buildings had a variety of roof shapes and multiple roof lines.

Hip roofs often connected with gables, shed or flat roofs projected from two story structures. Few examples had a single roof type.

Flat parapet roofs were generally limited to small wings or garages. Most roofs had little or no overhangs. Barrel tiles were used almost exclusively.



## **Walls**

Walls were characterized by the wide use of smooth or rough cast stucco surfaces. Rustication treatment on walls was unusual and the use of brick was rare. Fenestration was modest.



## **Doors and Windows**

Historically, residences had relatively small doors and windows. Main entries were often single leaf doors, with or without glazing.





French doors (in pairs) were often located above grade level and used in conjunction with balconies.

Doorways were often flanked by columns, pilasters supporting cornices and semi-circular or triangular pediments or were enclosed in rusticated blocks.

Residential windows were often divided by muntins and were either two or three panes in width. Arched openings were an important design element.

Windows were often flanked by columns or trim, sometimes supporting round arches either glazed or with carved spandrels. Windows had rectangular or square divided lites.





## Window Proportions

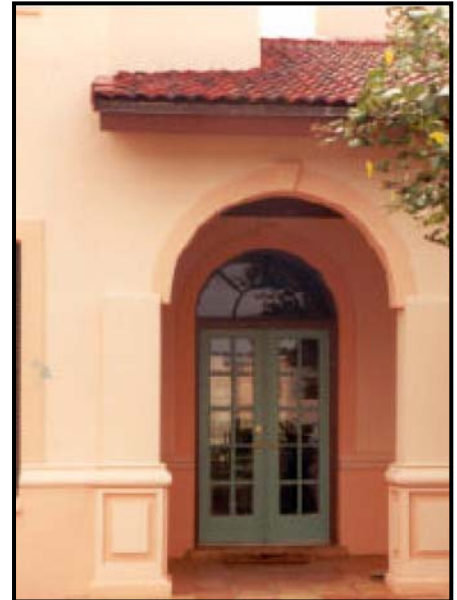
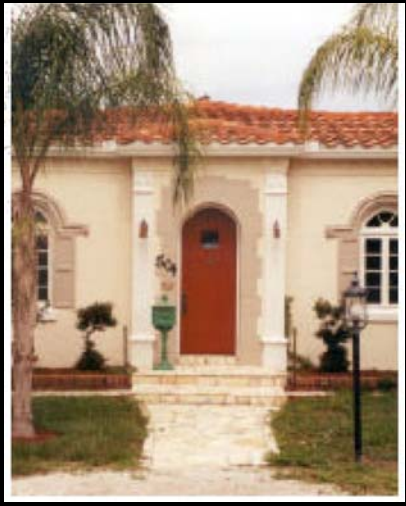
Window openings generally had a **vertical orientation**, whether grouped together, paired, or used as single units.

Large expanses of glass were **limited** to commercial storefronts

Double door entrances were usually found only on commercial properties.



## Doors





## Decoration and Trim

Each Property was embellished in its own unique manner. The design and applications of decoration and trim were individualized.

Stucco was often applied in a rough texture to provide a backdrop for other architectural elements.

Walls were decorated with plaster or concrete medallion: paterae, bas reliefs and pilaster, articulated by arched openings and niches or otherwise modified to transform an ordinary structural element into highly personalized architectural statement.

Doorways were often decorated with classical archivolt trim and keystone or flanked by wood or masonry decorative moldings.

Balconies were supported by carved brackets and usually had either wrought iron or turned wood railings.

Embedded glazed multi-color tiles were widely used as ornaments; for example, as the surface finish in the tympanum (the space enclosed between the lintel and the arch), and for decorating chimneys and other architectural elements.

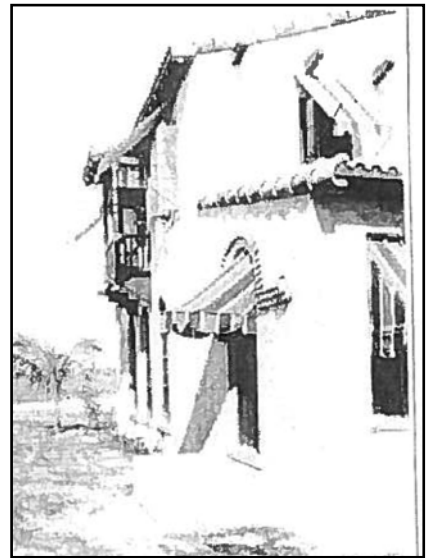
Glazed tile was also utilized as kick panels below storefronts and around door openings in commercial structures.



## Awnings, Fences and Screen Walls



**Awnings** were often employed in business, as well as residential properties to shade openings. No evidence exists that suspended canopies were ever used on commercial buildings, as was typical in other Florida communities.



**Fencing and screen walls** have traditionally been one of the most pleasing parts of a residential environment.

Used to mark property lines, to define outdoor spaces or add variety at the edge of a sidewalk, they were almost always appropriate.

Fences and screen walls related closely to the materials, finishes, and colors utilized on the main building.





# DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION REGULATIONS



These regulations apply to all building facades and elevations visible from a public street or alley.



## A. BUILDING FORM

### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

1. No building shall be over two stories in height unless the facade includes projecting or recessed portals, step-backs or other similar design elements.
2. Staggered, complex and picturesque dispositions should be adopted where sites permit. However, a straight front facing a major thoroughfare, as in the central business district, is acceptable with the use of recessed entry spaces. Balconies are an important and graceful feature.
3. Massing:
  - a. One story buildings with over 10,000 square feet of gross floor area and multi-story buildings with over 20,000 square feet of gross floor area shall be designed with wall plane projections or setbacks on each publicly visible facade having a depth of at least 5% of the length of the facade and extending at least 25% of the length of the facade.
  - b. One-story buildings with less than or equal to 10,000 square feet of gross floor area and multistory buildings with less than or equal to 20,000 square feet of gross floor area shall be designed with the primary facade having either (1) offsetting wall planes or upper story setbacks of at least two horizontal feet, or (2) a recessed entry space, projecting canopy or portal.
4. The garage shall be placed behind the residence where the site permits. Where the site does not permit rear placement, the next preferred choice is side placement so the garage door is not visible from the front facade. Where the lot is too narrow or other factors practically prohibit side placement, then the garage may be in the front provided the garage is set back from the plane of the front facade at least 10% of the lot width.



## B ROOFS

### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

The single most important design feature of a building is its roof. It not only keeps out the elements, but also, by forming the boundary between the building and the sky, determines the character of the building. The roof is the major determinant of architectural style.

**Definition:** A roof is any permanent horizontal or sloped structure covering or projecting from a building.

#### 1. Form:

- a. Uniformly sloping roofs, or any combination of flat and uniformly sloping roofs, having a height from eave to peak, that exceeds 80% of the average height of the supporting walls, are prohibited in both Districts. (An exception may be made for the use of a dome in a religious building).
- b. Flat roof surfaces entirely concealed from public view by parapets are permitted.
- c. Flat roof surfaces not entirely concealed from public view by parapets are prohibited in the Historic District but allowed in the Theme District.

#### 2. Material:

- a. Clay, terra-cotta or concrete barrel tiles or pan-tiles are required.
- b. All other roof materials are prohibited unless they appear substantially the same as the required materials or are concealed from public view.
- c. All roof materials in the same structure need to be similar.
- d. Different buildings on the same property shall have similar roof types.
- e. Metallic roofs are allowed only by variance and then only if substantially similar in appearance to tile roof and have a variety of colors.
- f. A nonconforming roof cannot be replaced with like kind if more than 50 percent of the roof is being replaced or repaired within a five year period.



Note: Please see additional photos on Page 3.

## C. WALLS

### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

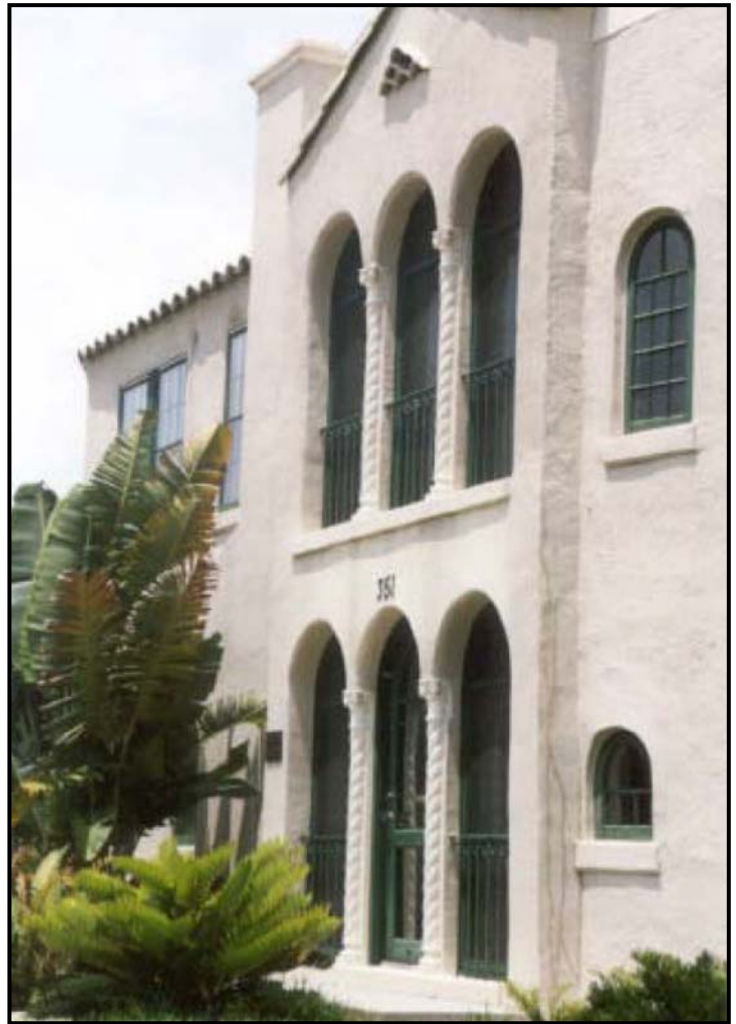
#### 1. Exterior Surface Material:

a. Stucco is required unless a similar appearing surface is approved by the Architectural Review Board.

b. Metal siding, brick, glass, curtain wall systems, glass block, painted unit masonry, concrete, wood siding and wood simulated materials are prohibited.

#### 2. Exterior Surface Treatment:

A minimum of at least seventy-five per- cent of the wall area of each facade shall be one material and one color. Applied trim, accent colors, and decorative bands, with the exception of stucco, masonry or concrete control joints, shall be used in such a way that they do not give a panelized or prefabricated appearance, produce striped or checkerboard patterns or exceed twenty-five percent of the surface of any facade.





## D. DOORS AND WINDOWS

### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

#### 1. Area:

- a. Residential: Not more than 50% of a residential wall surface shall consist of door, window and other openings.
- b. Commercial: A commercial wall surface may have greater than 50% door, window and other openings, provided the wall is composed of multiple panels.

#### Location:

All doors, windows and glazed surfaces, on structures having a gross floor area greater than 150 square feet, shall be located at least two feet from outside building corners.

#### Glazing:

- a. All glazing shall be clear or lightly tinted neutral gray.
- b. Mirror-like glazing is prohibited.

Treatment: At least fifty percent of the all doors and windows shall have at least one of the following elements:

- a. Frames recessed a minimum of 4 inches.
- b. Columns, pilasters, rusticated blocks, precast or stucco decorative trim.
- c. Cornices, spandrels or otherwise articulated lintels.
- d. Semi-circular or triangular pediments.

Residential: Windows shall have divided lites and a vertical aspect ratio of at least 2 to 1 (height to width).

Awning and hopper type windows are prohibited.

Sliding glass doors shall not be visible from a public street.



Note: Please see additional photos on Page 5.

## E. DECORATIONS AND TRIM

The decorative elements of a building facade that are more ornamental than functional are called trim.

These elements give a building its character and individuality and are particularly important to the maintenance of an historic district.

If an existing detail cannot be maintained or replaced in its original form, it should be modified without disturbing the character of the structure.

Brackets are among the most imaginative and distinctive architectural details. Located under the cornice, at the intersection of columns and beams or as supports for balconies, most brackets are protected from weather and should be the only trim fabricated from wood.

## I. HISTORIC DISTRICT

1. Treatment: All facades shall be characterized by the significant use of decorative elements, including, but not limited to, balustrades, columns, arches, pilasters, brackets, spandrels, articulated lintels, niches, *quoins*, *patera*, and embedded glazed tile patterns.

2. Material: Cut stone, intermixed or accent natural stone, pre-cast concrete, plaster and formed stucco are permitted. Weather protected brackets can be made of wood. Other materials can be used provided the appearance is similar to the permitted materials.

## II. VENETIAN THEME DISTRICT

1. Use of decoration and trim is encouraged. Any decoration or trim used shall comply with the Historic District standards.









## F. COLOR

### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

1. Roofs: Dark red, browns and earth tone colors are required.
2. Walls: Creams, ivories or earth tone hues are required.
3. High intensity, fluorescent, metal flake, iridescent, gild, chrome and high gloss metallic are prohibited unless approved by the Architectural Review Board as trim or detail.

There are many shades of color which comply with the ARB regulations. In order to assist applicants, the ARB has pre-approved the attached palette of colors which meet the requirements for exterior wall colors. Applicants are encouraged to use other colors which meet the guidelines. The applicants are not required to use the approved proprietary colors. Any substantially similar color will be acceptable. ARB approval will be required for any color not substantially similar to the pre-approved palette.

This book has a collection of approved wall trim and door colors. There are also examples of approved color combinations for walls, trim and doors.

## G. EQUIPMENT CONCEALMENT

### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

- a. All wall mounted mechanical, communications and service equipment, including satellite dishes shall be screened or concealed in such manner as to not be visible from the primary facade. Roof mounted equipment shall be screened from public view by parapets or other means.
- b. Ground mounted equipment, swimming pools and spas shall be located to the rear of a building and be appropriately screened from public view.



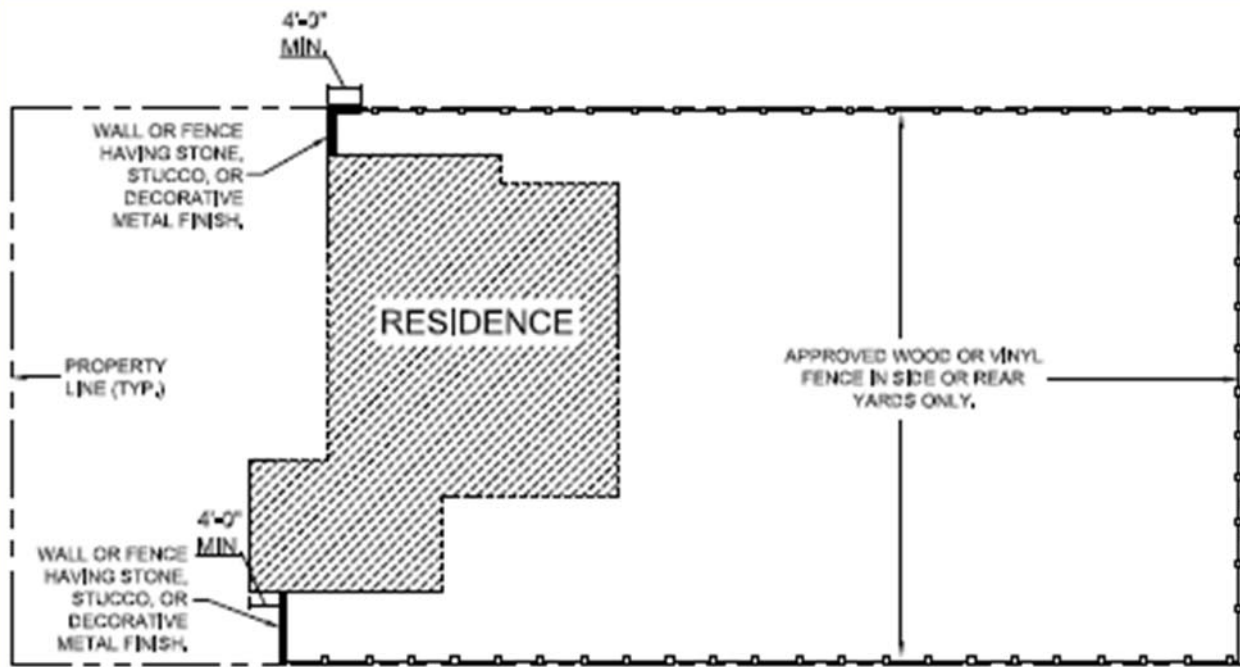
## H. FENCES AND SCREEN WALLS

### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

1. The finish of the walls and fences shall be constructed of stone, stucco, decorative metal or other materials having a similar appearance and durability.
2. Wood and vinyl fences are permitted in the Historic and Venetian Theme Districts In side and rear yards only and shall meet the following standards:

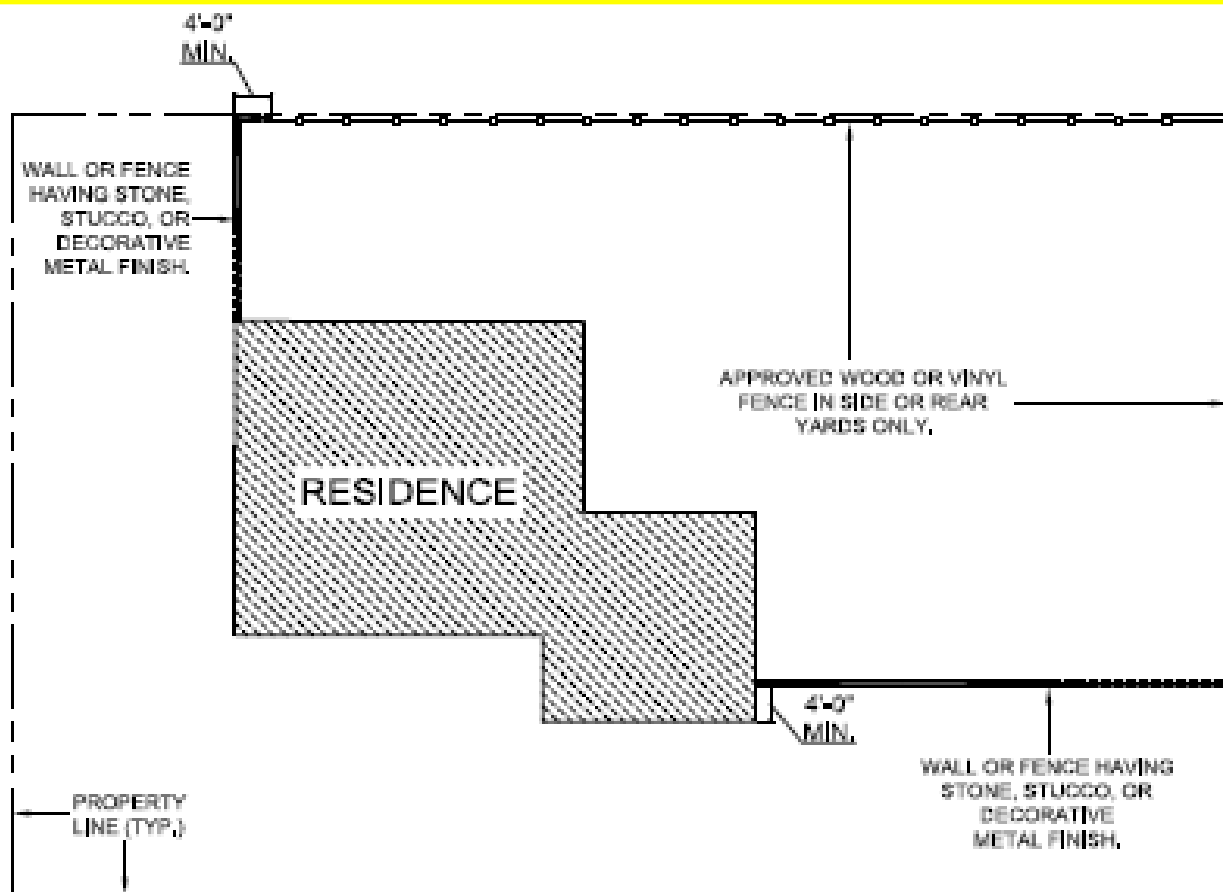


- a) The fence shall be setback a minimum of four (4) feet from the intersection of the front wall facing the street and the side wall of the principle structure.
  - b) The finished side of the fence shall face the abutting property.
  - c) Wood fences shall only be shadow box or similar and shall be designed to create a continuous straight edge across the top.
  - d) White vinyl fences may only be permitted with approval of a variance from the Architectural Review Board. Non-white vinyl fences are permitted by right subject to compliance with the standards contained in this part.
3. Chain-link and cyclone fences are prohibited.
4. The orientation of the fence shall be finish outside.



NOTE: WOOD OR VINYL FENCES SHALL BE CONCEALED FROM STREET VIEW.

① SIDE & REAR YARD FENCE & SCREEN WALL EXAMPLES • TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL LOT



NOTE: WOOD OR VINYL FENCES SHALL BE CONCEALED FROM STREET VIEW.

② SIDE & REAR YARD FENCE & SCREEN WALL EXAMPLES • RESIDENTIAL CORNER LOT

## Awnings, Shutters and Canopies, Lighting

### I. AWNINGS, SHUTTERS AND CANOPIES

#### Both Historic and Venetian Theme Districts

1. All awnings and canopies are subjected to be reviewed.
2. Awnings are permitted if the size, shape and number of awnings are in proportion to the size and shape of the building openings and do not obscure the building details.
3. Awnings shall not be internally illuminated or lighted from behind. Awnings shall be opaque and made of heavyweight vinyl, acrylic or canvas fabrics.
4. Shutters are permitted. The total width of the shutters shall not be less than the width of the opening they adjoin.
5. A canopy is defined as an awning with vertical support members separate from the structure to which the canopy is attached. Canopies shall not be internally illuminated or lighted from behind. Canopies shall be opaque and shall be covered with heavyweight vinyl, acrylic or canvas fabrics.
6. Roll-up type hurricane and security shutters shall be concealed from public view.
7. Bahama-type shutters are prohibited in the Historic District and permitted in the Venetian Theme District.



## J. LIGHTING



Mandatory in the Historic District. Encouraged in the Venetian Theme District.

1. Visible light fixtures shall be compatible with the Northern Italian Renaissance style.
2. Lights used to illuminate a building facade or landscaping shall be screened so that the source of the light is not directly visible from the street or the adjoining property.

