

February 1, 2021

Fruit Street Historic District Commission
60 Pleasant Street
PO Box 550
Newburyport, MA 01905
Via email

Dear Commission Members,

My name is Tara Cederholm and with my husband, KC Cederholm, we reside at 20 Fruit Street. We are writing today to oppose the application from Mr. James Lagoulis to remove the trellis¹ in front of 14 Fruit Street. As stated in the Design Guidelines for the Fruit Street Historic District Commission “the goal of the Local Historic District (LHD) is to preserve the historic qualities of the Fruit Street neighborhood.” Further in **Section 17, Steps, stairways, railings, and fencing** these guidelines elaborate on the nature of the historic streetscape still found on Fruit Street thus: “Traditionally, open and low fences were located along the sidewalk in front of historic structures.” Historic images of Fruit Street support this statement convincingly as you will see from the images included at the end of this letter as Figures 1-3, all of which show both sides of Fruit Street lined with fences, including the walkway between 16 and 14 Fruit Street.

Fruit Street is one of the wider streets in Newburyport and the houses are set back from the sidewalk allowing for these front fences - like High Street, Federal Street and only a handful of other similarly broad streets within the city. It is one of the defining characters of the street and forms a significant part of its retained historical fabric. The removal of fencing along the street would be a loss to this historic streetscape fabric and in fact the Guidelines further state that “Applicants are encourage to preserve these fences.”

In addition, the application is not at all specific about which section of the fencing Mr. Lagoulis would like to remove, the reason for that removal, and the manner and type of replacement fence proposed. The Guidelines clearly state that “Where restoration is necessary, exact replication of the original in size, shape, orientation and material is preferred...” No plan for any replication has been put forth to the board. Specifically, under **Section 17. Steps, stairways, railings, and fencing** the Guidelines state that both the “new work should be appropriate to the period and character of the building” and “a drawing of railing design must be provided.” The applicant has failed to put forth a complete application for consideration of the Commission.

I urge the Commission to deny this application for removal of the trellis at 14 Fruit Street.

Sincerely,

Tara and KC Cederholm
20 Fruit Street

¹ In a telephone conversation on January 11, 2021 with Dianne Boisvert, Office Coordinator for the Fruit Street Historic District, she confirmed that a “trellis” is a form of “fencing.”



Figure 1, Fruit Street towards Fair Street from High Street, early 1900s, both sides of the street are lined with fences, including 14 Fruit Street, photo courtesy Newburyport Public Library Archival Center



Figure 1a, detail of figure 1, showing fencing in front of the walkway between 16 and 14 Fruit Street as well as in front of each building



Figure 2, Fruit Street towards High Street, c. 1880, both sides of the street are lined with low fences, including 14 Fruit Street, photo courtesy Newburyport Public Library Archival Center



Figure 2a, detail of figure 2 showing 14 Fruit Street with low fencing extending the length of the street including in front of the walkway between 16 and 14 Fruit Street



Figure 3, Fruit Street towards Fair Street from High Street, predates the iron fence in front of the Cushing House, both sides of the street lined with fences, photo courtesy The Museum of Old Newbury