

**Record No: HDC-26-22**

Historic District

Certificate of
Appropriateness

Status: Active

Submitted On: 6/18/2026

Primary Location100 S COLUMBIA ST
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27516**Owner**UNIVERSITY BAPTIST
CHURCH
100 S COLUMBIA ST
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27514**Applicant** Steve Harward
 919-448-7074
 lsteveharward@gmail.com
 100 S. Columbia Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Certificate of Appropriateness Form

Historic District *

Cameron-McCauley

Application Type

Check all that apply

Minor Work is exterior work that doesn't involve any substantial alterations, additions, or removals that could impair the integrity of the property and/or the district as a whole. See Chapel Hill Historic Districts Design Principles & Standards ("Principles & Standards") (p. 9-11) for a list of minor works.

Major Work (Historic District Commission Review) includes all exterior changes to structures and features other than minor works.

Contact HDC Staff Liaison(s) if you're unsure of the application type.

Maintenance or Repair Work☐**Minor Work (Staff Review)**☒**Major Work (Historic District Commission Review)**☐**COA Amendment**☐

Briefly describe the proposed changes. *

Installation of fencing bordering the existing Memorial Garden

Is this application for after-the-fact work?* 

No

Is this applicaiton a request for review after a previous denial?*

No

Applicant Authorization

Applicant Signature*



L. Steve Harward

Jun 6, 2026

Relationship to Property Owner*

Other

If other, please explain relationship to property owner. *

This COA is being submitted on behalf of University Baptist Church (UBC) by representatives of its Buildings and Grounds Committees. Representatives of the Buildings and Grounds Committees are elected by the church membership. UBC is an incorporated entity governed by its Constitution and By-Laws.



TOWN OF
**CHAPEL
HILL**

Planning Department
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-5705

phone (919) 968-2728

email

Property Owner Authorization for Historic District Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

The current property owner must complete and sign this authorization form if someone else applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness on their behalf. Please submit a separate form per property owner.

Project Name	Memorial Garden Fence Project			
Property Address	100 S. Columbia Street			
Parcel Identifier Number(s) (PINs)	9788362986			
Property Owner Name (must match County tax records)	University Baptist Church			
Property Owner Address	100 S. Columbia Street			
Property Owner Email	lsteveharward@gmail.com	Property Owner Phone	919-448-7074	
Relationship to Applicant	Representative – Co Chair, Ground Ministry Team			
If the property owner is an entity, provide detailed information regarding the principals of the entity. This COA is being submitted on behalf of University Baptist Church (UBC) by representatives of its Buildings and Grounds Ministry Teams. Representatives of the Buildings and Grounds Teams are elected by the church membership. UBC is an incorporated entity governed by its Constitution and By-Laws.				
Property Owner Acknowledgement As the property owner, you may represent yourself or be represented by attorney; however, professionals such as architects, engineers, designers, and others may provide factual evidence and expert opinions so far as they are qualified, but not legal arguments on behalf of the property owner.				
Property Owner Authorization Statement The undersigned property owner hereby authorizes the application for Conditional Zoning District and certifies that, to the best of the owner's knowledge and belief, all information supplied with this application is true and accurate.				
Signature	L STEVE HARWARD		Date	6/14/2026
Print Name	L Steve Harward			

University Baptist Church – Memorial Garden Fence Project
Certificate of Appropriateness Application Addendum

History: University Baptist Church is located at 100 South Columbia Street. Prominently sited at the southwest corner of South Columbia and West Franklin streets, the two story, front-gabled blond brick building was designed by Frank P. Milburn in an eclectic Classical Revival style with Beaux Arts influences. The northwest corner of the site has a memorial garden, dedicated in 1976 and is encircled with a stone wall that borders the sidewalk. The church is cited as a contributing member of the West Chapel Hill Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places and is encompassed by the McCauley-Cameron Historic District.

The church is bordered on South Columbia Street by the Beta Theta Pi fraternity, and on West Franklin Street by Carolina Square. Nestled between the church's sanctuary and education wing, the Memorial Garden serves as a memorial and an interment site for ashes of church members and their relatives. A renovation of the garden was completed in 1999 in conjunction with the construction of the church's education wing. Renovations included restorations to the rock wall surrounding the garden, new landscaping, a circular brick walk and rock wall inside the garden, and placement of plaques containing scriptural references to emphasize the purpose of the garden. The church has generously allowed the garden to be used by the public as a place of quiet respite.

In recent years, the Memorial Garden and adjacent church property have become a refuge in the downtown business district for persons experiencing homelessness or the need of temporary shelter. We now find that our grounds are routinely littered with personal belongings, debris, human waste, and drug paraphernalia. We have witnessed death, mental health crises, and illicit acts on the church's property. It has become evident that the presence of a Chapel Hill Transit (CHT) stop at the Franklin Street entrance to the church facilitates direct access of homeless and transient persons to the Memorial Garden. More recently, the church has voiced concerns to CHT that their current project to construct a new Rapid Transit Station near the Columbia Street entrance to the Memorial Garden (*25 feet from the front steps of our sanctuary and only 20 feet from the church's historic bell*) will exacerbate these problems and is incongruous with the character of the historic significance of the church and bell house. A depiction of CHT's planned transit station is included in the attached slides.

University Baptist Church seeks to be a positive force in helping persons experiencing homelessness and mental health issues. These needs are increasingly present at our doorstep, in our Memorial Garden and elsewhere on our property. We continue to seek effective solutions for these needs through our support of Interfaith Council's Community kitchen, providing space for Town's Cold Weather Shelter initiative, and working

University Baptist Church – Memorial Garden Fence Project
Certificate of Appropriateness Application Addendum

cooperatively with the Town to find effective solutions to address these needs while attempting to treat all persons seeking shelter with dignity and respect.

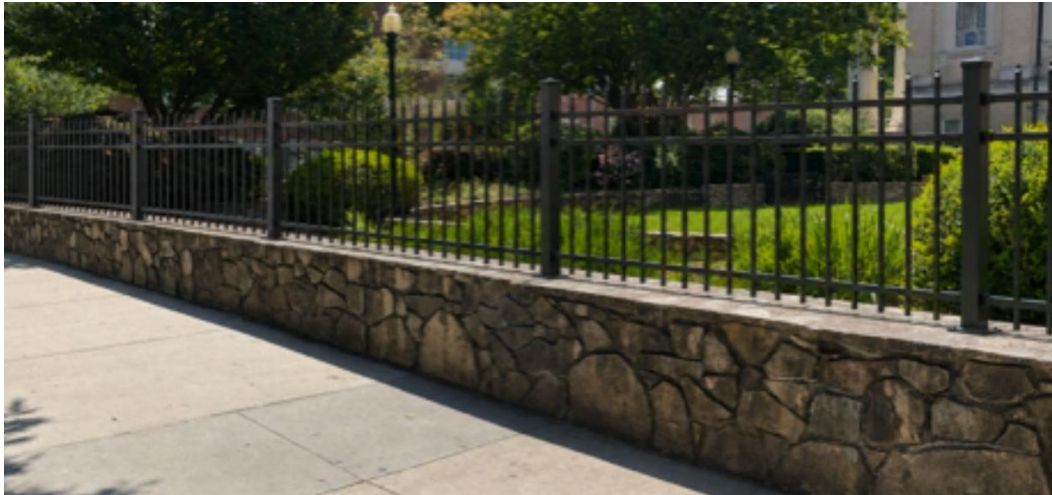
However, to preserve the purpose and reverence intended for the Memorial Garden, the church proposes to install fencing along the rock wall bordering the garden with controlled access at two gated entrances. It is intended that the style of fencing selected for the Memorial Garden would be a template for any future street-facing fencing the church may install and complement the existing railing used on the building.

A description of the project is provided below.

Description: The church proposes to install black aluminum fencing and two gated entrances bordering the Memorial Garden with the following characteristics (site plan attached):

- Material: Aluminum, black, picketed
- Installation:
 - Installed inside of the existing rock wall bordering the Garden
 - Approximately 48" in height above the rock wall
 - Gated entrances from Franklin and Columbia Streets
 - Approximate linear feet
 - Franklin Street: 77.5
 - Columbia Street: 85
 - Total: 162.5
- Manufacturer/Model: TBD - The church has not yet selected the specific manufacturer, model number, or installer of the planned fence. However, the following AI generated picture is intended to represent the style and appearance of fencing to be utilized for this project:

University Baptist Church – Memorial Garden Fence Project
Certificate of Appropriateness Application Addendum



Existing site conditions:

- A black, 5' chain link and wood fence defines the South border with the Beta Theta Pi fraternity
- A black 5' chain link fence defines the West border with Carolina Square
- A black 4' chain link fence borders the church parking lot near the Franklin Street entrance
- The church playground is bordered on three sides by a black, 4' chain link fence
- Black, hand railings are installed on exterior stairways leading to the Great Hall, the sanctuary, and the entrance to the Education wing
- Site Plan: attached

Design Standards: The proposed fencing project complies with the following principles and standards cited in the Town's guidelines for historic properties:

- 1.3 - Principles: "The height of stone walls and picket fences within the districts give definition to property lines without screening views of the front yards..."
- 1.3 – Principles: "Picket fences are an option in front yards where access must be controlled..."
- 1.3 – Principles: "Light gauge fencing to keep plants and gardens (protected) is acceptable in front and side yards..."

University Baptist Church – Memorial Garden Fence Project
Certificate of Appropriateness Application Addendum

- 1.3.8 – Standards: “Construct new front and side yard fences using traditional materials and designs that are compatible in configuration, height, material, scale, and detail with the character of the building, site, and district. “
- 1.1.2. Retain and preserve historic relationships between district buildings, structures, or streetscapes and their site features, including site structures, retaining walls, fences, foundations, driveways, and walkways.
- 1.1.7. Introduce new site features to be compatible in scale, design, and materials with the overall historic character of the site and district. Utilize traditional materials in the construction of benches, terraces, gazebos, trellises, fences, and walls.
- 1.3.6. Site new walls and fences in configurations and locations that are compatible with the character of the building, site, and district and consistent with the location and height of other walls and fences in the district.

Conclusion: A survey of properties in the McCauley-Cameron District and adjoining properties in the downtown business district demonstrates that there are a substantial number of black, aluminum, picketed fencing identified in our survey suggests that the church’s proposed fencing would be consistent with the Town’s design principles and standards. Additionally, we believe the proposed Memorial Garden fencing would enhance the overall appearance and security of the Memorial Garden and be in harmony with existing railing on the church.

Pictures and slides in the Power Point presentation provided with this application offer additional documentation of the existing garden site, fencing on adjacent properties, fencing in the McCauley-Cameron District, and Chapel Hill Transit’s planned rapid transit site.

University Baptist Church

- Founded 1854 as The Baptist Church of Chapel Hill
- First building located at corner of Church and West Franklin Streets (1855)
- Current building constructed in 1922/1923
- Greek revival architecture
- Education Building addition completed in 1997 (cornerstone 1998)



Memorial Garden

- Publicly accessible as a site for respite due to the generosity of the church and its members, many of whom mortgaged their homes to fund the purchase of this property
- Interment site for ashes of church members
- Memorials to church members
- Site of the Town's Christmas tree and tree lighting ceremony
- Unregulated use by homeless/transient population



University Baptist Church Memorial Garden Fence Project

Beta Theta Pi Border

Columbia Street Entrance



Carolina Square Border



University Baptist Church Memorial Garden Fence Project

Playground



Front Steps



University Baptist Church

Front Steps - Cameron Avenue



AI Generated View of Proposed Fencing



University Baptist Church Memorial Garden Fence Project

312 McCauley

McCauley-Cameron District



Columbia Street - Ackland Art

Adjacent University Property



University Baptist Church Memorial Garden Fence Project

Cameron – Wilson Court

McCauley-Cameron District



Ransom – Briar Bridge

McCauley-Cameron District



University Baptist Church Memorial Garden Fence Project

Franklin Street – near Presbyterian Church

Franklin – Rosemary District



Cameron Avenue-Carolina Square

McCauley-Cameron District



University Baptist Church Memorial Garden Fence Project

Cameron Avenue – Fraternity Court

McCauley-Cameron District



Cameron Avenue – Fraternity Court

McCauley-Cameron District



University Baptist Church Memorial Garden Fence Project

Franklin Street – YoYo Pump

Franklin Street Business District – Adjacent Property



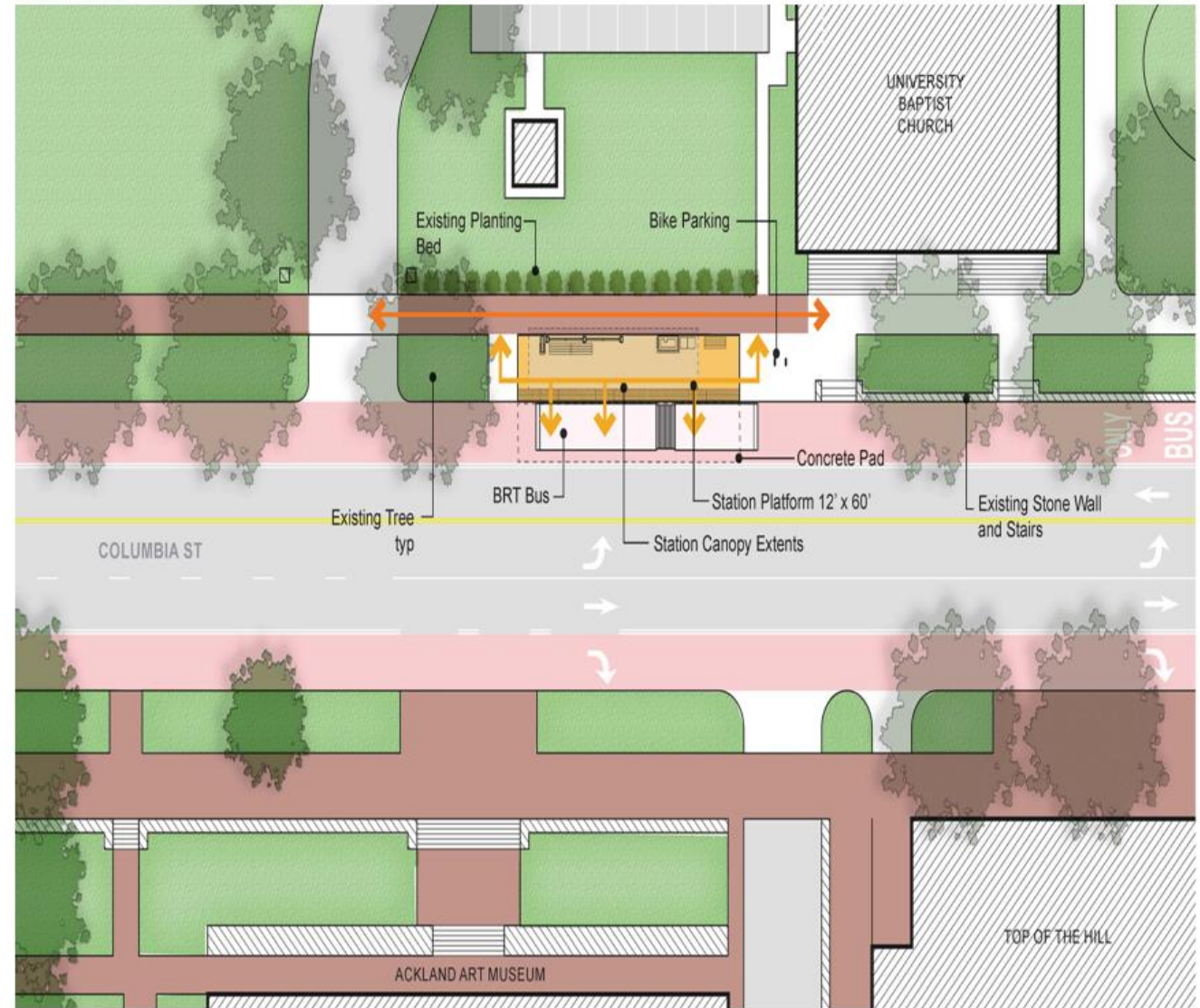
Franklin Street – Moe's Restaurant

Franklin Street Business District - Adjacent Property



Proposed Transit Station

- Impacts of transit station
 - 25' from proposed CHT transit station
 - 80' x 12' platform
 - Vertical design not yet established
 - Access ramps leading to the sidewalk grade
 - Bicycle racks
 - Eliminates wider steps designed to accommodate caskets
 - Compromises the south elevation view of the church building from vehicular traffic
 - Eliminates rock wall once required to be maintained by the Town
- Increases the risk of continued abuse of church property



Historic Bell

- 20' from proposed transit station
- Transit station completely shields view of Bell House from the street level
- Bell purchased by women of the church and mounted in the tower of the Baptist Church at Chapel Hill on February 15, 1855
- Bell was removed and hidden during the Civil War to prevent it from be melted for bullets
- Brought to the existing church on Franklin Street in March 1954

