Borough of Doylestown Building and Zoning Department
57 West Court Street, Doylestown, PA 18901
215.345.4140

FACT SHEET #3 – FENCE INFORMATION

BACKGROUND
The provisions of the Borough of Doylestown Code of Ordinance, PAUCC, and the ICC Property Maintenance Code, and the shall control the design and installation of fences.

DEFINITIONS Fence - a man-made barrier erected for purposes, including, but not limited to, enclosure, exclusion, protection, privacy, screening, security, retainment and aesthetics and located at the perimeter of or within the required yards of private property. This definition shall include the term 'wall" as it is commonly used.

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS
Installation of any fence requires a permit. A permit is also required for fence replacement or any repair of existing fences exceeding 50% or more of the value of the existing fence. Visit www.doylestownborough.net for more information.

FENCE REQUIREMENT

1. All fences and screens must be erected within the property lines, and no fence or screen shall be erected or planted so as to encroach upon a public right-of-way.

2. See-through fences shall not exceed six feet in height when erected in the rear and side yards. When erected in the front yard, such see-through fence shall not exceed four feet in height. Be aware that corner properties have two “front” yards.

3. Solid fences or screens shall not exceed six feet in height and shall not be permitted in front yards.

4. Fences shall have their most pleasant or decorative side facing the adjacent lot with all support posts and stringers facing inward toward the owner's yard unless such posts or supports are an integral part of the decorative design of the fence.

5. Fences shall not create a hazard, impede traffic visibility or be installed within 6 feet of a fire hydrant.

6. Fences must be kept in good condition, properly maintained and may not contain any signs, writing or graffiti.

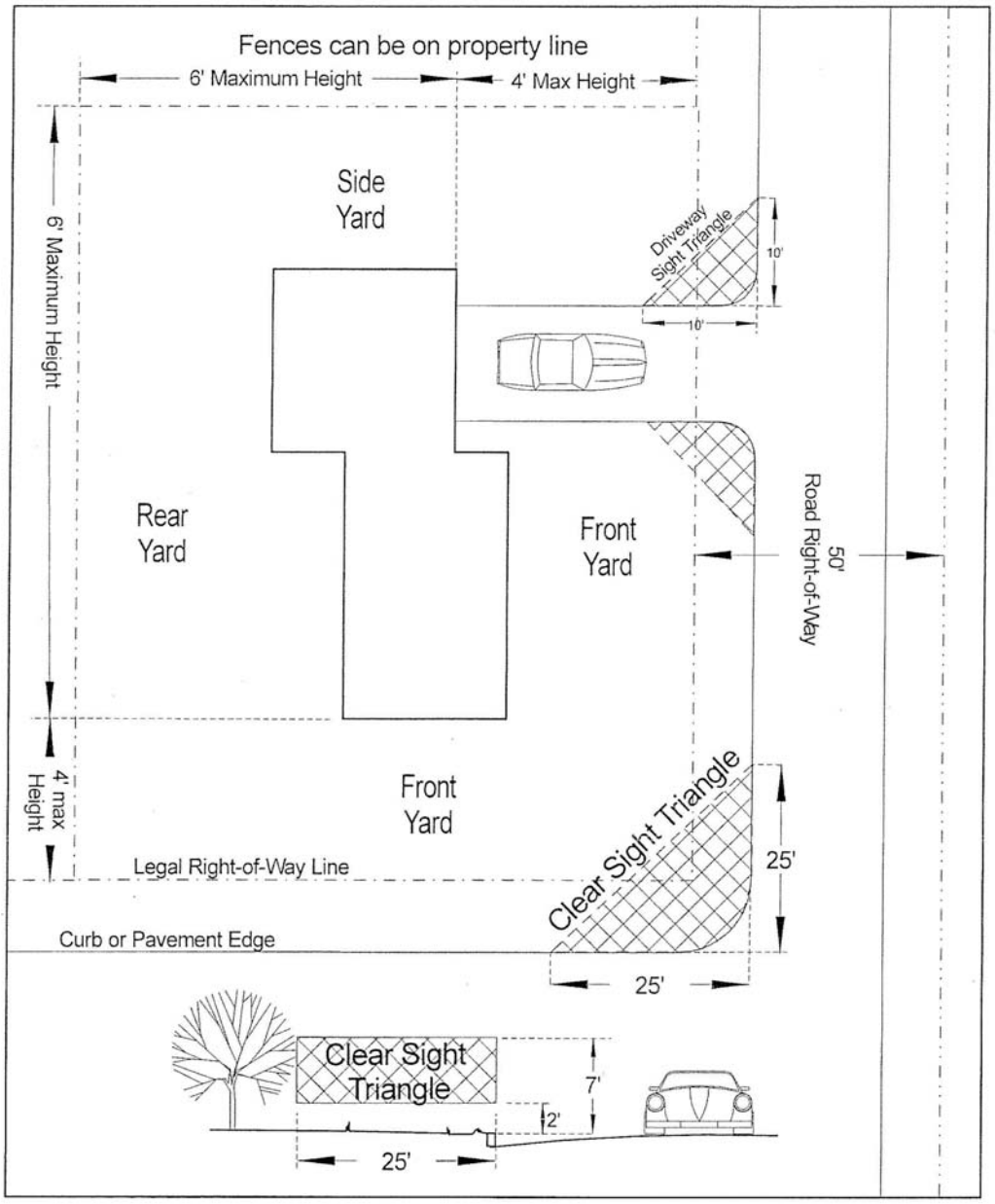
7. If posts or supporting members are in or on the ground, they shall be of decay corrosion- and termite-resistant material, whether treated or natural.

SIGHT TRIANGLE REQUIREMENT

No fence or other obstruction is permitted to be within a sight triangle. The sight triangle the area of visibility required on a corner to allow for the safe operation of vehicles, trains, pedestrians, and cyclists in the proximity of intersecting streets, rail lines, sidewalks, and bicycle paths.

A sight triangle is the triangular area found by measuring back 25 feet along the street lines of both streets from the point where they intersect and then connecting the points found with a straight line. (See Figure 1) The area within that triangle must be kept clear between 2 foot above curb level and 7 feet above curb level.

Figure 1



Living Fences: Living fences are subject to all of the provisions of this chapter, except that they shall be exempt from the permit provisions of this chapter. In addition, the living fence shall be planted so that the projected mature size of the living fence shall not be closer than two feet to any sidewalk in existence, any prospective sidewalk or lot line. Living fences must be maintained in a neatly trimmed condition and shall not interfere with the visibility of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Exempt Fences: The following fences are exempt from permit requirements, and at the discretion of the Zoning Officer, from the provisions of this Article, provided that they are not so constructed as to obstruct the vision of motor vehicle operators or to create other hazards to public safety:

A. Temporary fences constructed of materials approved by the Zoning Officer and not in excess of six feet in height which are erected at a construction site for the purpose of security and protection.
B. Fences erected at the order of the Zoning Officer for the protection of the public.
C. Decorative fences not exceeding 18 inches in height and garden fences not exceeding 24 inches in height.

The information provided in this guide is intended only to assist residents in understanding the code requirements for fences. It is not a complete recitation of the code. Property owners should consult the Doylestown Borough Code of Ordinance for answers to specific questions.