

**City of Santa Fe
Historic Districts Review Board
Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law**

Case # 2024-9369-HDRB

Address – 345 Garcia St.

Agent’s Name – Gayla Bechtol, AIA

Owner/Applicant’s Name – Robert Holleyman and Bill Keller

THIS MATTER came before the Historic Districts Review Board (“Board”) for hearing on November 26, 2024.

BACKGROUND

The single-family residence and the accessory structure at 345 Garcia St. are listed as contributing to the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. Constructed of adobe, concrete block and wood frame, likely in the early 1930s, this Pueblo Revival style main residence is 2,637 square feet. The property was originally part of the five-acre Mary Persis Maltby Victory estate. Mary came from New York in 1878 with her brother, William T. Thornton, who had been appointed United States Attorney for the New Mexico territory and later would be appointed the Territorial Governor. Mary married attorney John Patrick Victory, who Thornton would appoint Solicitor General of the Territory. Mary acquired the property upon John’s death and sold this parcel to J. Alfonso and Celine Armijo.

Celine Armijo was a singer and pianist, and active in *La Sociedad Folkorica*, a Spanish preservation society, and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). She entertained regularly at the house throughout the 1940s, with events there reported in the *New Mexican’s* weekly society column. Later noteworthy occupants/owners of the house include Roy Ringwald, the musical arranger for Fred Waring’s Pennsylvanians; Lafayette Cantrell, president of the Santa Fe National Bank, who helped establish the Santa Fe Sinfonietta and Choral Society; and attorney John Anthony Mitchell, who with his father Stephen A. Mitchell was involved in establishing Taos Ski Valley.

According to the 2024 Historic Cultural Properties Inventory, a remodel around 1987 included replacement of some windows and doors, creation of new openings and closure of old openings, installation of Territorial-type pediment trim, and elevation of the ceiling, roof and parapets at the back of the house. The Historic Preservation section does not have the 1987 case file and cannot verify the full extent of the alterations, however, photographs from the 1987 case were retained and attached to the HCPI.

The accessory structure in the southeast corner of the property currently serves as a guesthouse. The front appears to have started as a shed as it has a mixture of board sidings. The remaining portion appears to be an enclosed carport, according to the HCPI. A wood structure attaches on the west side of the building to create a partial carport. The accessory structure was built after 1958 and does not match the style of the home. Staff noted when visiting the site that

the rear, eastern wall was partially built of particle board. This structure is not mentioned in the 1985 Historic Building Inventory, so the reason for its contributing status is unclear.

A tall street wall, partially serving as a retaining wall, crosses the front of the property. The base is stone, the upper portion is stuccoed and the full height is about 53". Near the center is an arched opening at the pedestrian gate. The area of the gate was previously a parking space in the 1950s-60s, as seen in aerial photographs. The current driveway and pedestrian entrance were added by 1973 and are historic.

The Applicant requests:

- 1) Downgrade of the designation for the main residential structure from contributing to non-contributing.
- 2) Downgrade of the designation for the accessory structure from contributing to non-contributing.
- 3) Historic status designation of the yard and retaining wall.

FINDINGS OF FACT

After conducting a public hearing and having heard from the Applicant and all interested persons, the Board hereby FINDS, as follows:

1. Historic Preservation Division City staff reviewed the application and related materials and information submitted by the Applicant for conformity with applicable Santa Fe City Code ("SFCC") requirements and provided the Board with a written report of its findings ("Staff Report"), which evaluates the factors relevant to the application.
2. Historic Preservation Division Staff Recommendation: The Staff recommended the historic status of the main residential structure be downgraded to non-contributing due to the number of alterations to the original structure; the front wall be designated as contributing, as it helps define the character of the streetscape; and the accessory structure be downgraded to non-contributing, per SFCC Section 14-5.2(C), Designation of Significant and Contributing Structures.
3. The project is subject to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C), Regulation of Significant and Contributing Structures.
4. The project is subject to the requirements and general design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(D), General Design Standards.
5. The property is located in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District and is subject to the district design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(E).
6. SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(2)(a-c) gives the Board authority to review and approve "significant," "contributing," or "non-contributing" status designations and to designate primary façades of contributing structures.
7. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a "contributing structure" is "a structure, located in a historic district, approximately 50 years old or older that helps to establish and maintain the character of that historic district. Although a contributing structure is not unique in itself, it adds to the historic associations or historic architectural design

qualities that are significant for a district. The contributing structure may have had minor alterations, but its integrity remains.”

8. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “primary façade” is one or more principal faces or elevations of a building with features that define the character of the building’s architecture.
9. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “non-contributing structure” is a “structure, located in a historic district, that is less than 50 years old or that does not exhibit sufficient historic integrity to establish and maintain the character of the historic district.”
10. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report and exhibits and the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the main residential structure meets the definition of a “contributing structure,” because the alterations made to the structure, approved by the HDRB in Case # H-87-124, presumably would not have been approved if they would cause the structure to lose its contributing status.
11. The Board finds that the west and northwest corner façades are the primary elevations of the main residential structure with the features that define the character of the structure’s architecture.
12. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report and exhibits and the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the accessory dwelling structure meets the definition of a “non-contributing structure.”
13. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report and exhibits and the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the street frontage yard wall structure meets the definition of a “contributing structure.”
14. The information contained in the application and provided in testimony and evidence establishes that all applicable requirements for Board review have been met.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Under the circumstances and given the evidence and testimony submitted during the hearing, the Board acted upon the application as follows:

1. The Board has the authority to review and approve the application.
2. The Board grants the Applicant’s request to review historic status.
3. The Board maintains the main residence structure’s contributing status.
4. The Board designates the street frontage yard wall as a contributing structure.
5. The Board downgrades the status of the accessory dwelling structure to non-contributing.
6. The Board designates the following elevations of the main residential structure as the primary façades: west and northwest corner.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON THIS 25th DAY of MARCH, 2025, BY THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS REVIEW BOARD OF THE CITY OF SANTA FE.

Cecilia Rios, Chair

Date

FILED:

Andréa Salazar, City Clerk

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Frank Ruybalid
Assistant City Attorney

Date