

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

Case # 2024-9372-HDRB

Address – 1182 Cerro Gordo Rd.

Agent’s Name – High Desert Contractors, LLC

Owner/Applicant’s Name – Lanalee Lewis Revocable Trust

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

BACKGROUND

The single-family residence at 1182 Cerro Gordo Rd. is listed as contributing to the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. Tucked behind and below the grade of the residence sits an accessory structure which does not currently have a designated status. Farther to the rear of the property at the bottom is an archaeological remnant of a historic irrigation ditch, Ditch # 8, of the Acequia de la Muralla. The acequia does not have a distinct channel profile and is mainly identified by the short retaining wall to the north and the vegetation that grows along its path. Acequias in the Cerro Gordo neighborhood speak to the cultural history of the neighborhood in that the Cerro Gordo community was mostly agricultural in character. The Staff recommends that the acequia be preserved and not impacted by this or any future development on the site.

To the rear of the residence are several sections of stone retaining walls holding back the slope where the house sits. The most extensive is a section of 80 feet, roughly 6’ high, located directly below the house. The east section is built with local, undressed stone, mostly quartzite, laid in random courses. The west section, which is situated lower on the slope, consists of more uniform, block-like stones arranged in regular courses at its east end. This section appears to be of heavier construction, with supporting end piers, and has been repointed with cement mortar. The end of the wall at the west consists of dry-laid river cobbles. Part of the upper retaining wall appears in a 1960 aerial photograph. The origin of the other walls is unclear.

Attached to the upper retaining wall is a three-walled stone accessory structure of indeterminate age, designated on plat maps as the “Rock Shed.” This structure does not appear in the 1948 aerial photograph, however, a structure at this location appears in the 1960 aerial. Roughly 84 square feet, it is made of quartzite and other local and imported stones. The main pattern consists of medium-sized flat and oblong stones with smaller rocks filling the gaps between them. The stones are laid in mud mortar with cement patching at the window and top of the wall. The entrance is on the east through double wood doors of an old vintage. The interior is one room with an earthen floor and a new wood joist ceiling created by a deck above it. The deck is the subject of a red tag for work without a permit. The walls are partially mud-plastered, with sections that may be reconstructed or shored up with additional stones. This storage shed is typical of a shed from the era it was constructed and has been well maintained over the years partly due to the metal roof which protected it from weather damage. Due to its character, the Staff recommends it be designated as significant so that the whole structure would be preserved.

The Applicant requests:

- 1) Status review with primary façade designation, if applicable, for an accessory structure.
- 2) Status designation for the retaining walls.

These types of stone structures were located throughout the development of Cerro Gordo Road. The most outstanding of which are the garage at 1666 Cerro Gordo Rd., the stone church across from 1163 Cerro Gordo Rd., and the walls across from 1588 and at 1666½ Cerro Gordo Rd. Each of these structures have contributing or significant status.

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 accessory structure be designated as significant, the upper retaining walls be designated as contributing, and the lower retaining wall at the acequia be designated as contributing, per SFCC Sections 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 “significant structure” is a “structure located in a historic district that is approximately 50 years old or older, and that embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. For a structure to be designated as significant, it must retain a high level of historic integrity. A structure may be designated as significant: (A) for its association with events or persons that are important on a local, regional, national or global level; or (B) if it is listed on or is eligible to be listed on the State Register of Cultural Properties or the National Register of Historic Places.”
8. 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.”

9. 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.
10. 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.”
11. 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 structure and the upper yard wall meet the definition of a “contributing structure.” They add to the historic architectural design qualities that are significant for the district.
12. The Board finds that the three exposed façades, east, south and west, are the primary elevations of the accessory structure with the features that define the character of the structure’s architecture.
13. 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 the historic status of these structures.
3. The Board designates the accessory, shed structure as a contributing structure.
4. The Board designates the upper yard wall as a contributing structure.
5. The Board designates the following elevations of the accessory structure as the primary façades: all three exposed elevations, east, south and west.
6. The Board does not assign a historic status to the lower retaining wall, but as a condition to any changes to the acequia and lower yard wall, the Board requires that they be reviewed by the Archaeological Review Committee per SFCC Section 14-3.13.

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