

# City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

# memo

**DATE:** September 9, 2025

**TO:** Historic Districts Review Board Members

**VIA:** Heather Lamboy, Planning & Land Use Department Director *HLL*  
Maggie Moore, Assistant Land Use Director *MM*  
Gary Moquino, Historic Preservation Division Manager GM

**FROM:** Lani McCulley, Senior Planner, Historic Preservation Division *LM*

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**2025-011033-HDRB, 425 Abeyta St.,** Downtown & Eastside Historic District, Studio BOSE, agent for Henry Lanman III, owner, proposes to construct a 2,239 sq. ft. residence to a height of 15'-0" and an 866 sq. ft. garage to a height of 12'-10" with a connecting breezeway, and 551 sq. ft. of portals where the maximum allowable is 15'-1" on a vacant lot. An exception is requested to 14-5.2(E)(2)(b) for a publicly visible window at less than 36" at a corner.

**REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):**

**CITY SUBMITTALS**

District Standards & yard wall  
& fence standards.

Historic Inventory Form

Zoning Review Sheet

Other: [height calculations]

**APPLICANT SUBMITTALS**

Proposal Letter

Site Plan/Floor Plan

Elevations

Photographs

Other: [exception criteria]

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff finds that the exception criteria have not been met and recommends denial of the exception to place the two publicly visible corner windows at less than 36" from the corner. Otherwise, staff recommend approval of the other elements of the application as they comply with 14-5.2(D)

General Design Standards for all Historic Districts, and 14-5.2(E) Downtown and Eastside Historic District Design Standards.

**Sample motions:**

Two motions will be required in this case. One motion is required for the exception to 14-5.2(E)(2)(b) to have a publicly visible window at less than 36” from the corner, and one for the elements of the project that do not require an exception.

- a. In case 2025-011033-HDRB, for 425 Abeyta Street, approve/deny the exception to 14-5.2(E)(2)(b) to have a publicly visible window at less than 36” from the corner, finding that the exception criteria have/have not been met
- b. In case 2025-011033-HDRB, for 425 Abeyta Street, approve/deny the elements of the project that do not require an exception.

Should the Board deny the exception request, the applicant shall return with an alternative proposal for review and approval before proceeding to a building permit.

The property lies within the Historic Downtown Archaeological Review District. See Chapter 14, SFCC, Article 14-3.13(B)(1). There may be archaeological concerns associated with this project, and archaeological clearance may be required.

**BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:**

**Streetscape:**

Abeyta Street is a narrow one-way dirt road lined with high yard walls and foliage overgrowth. The gates include a single vehicle gate of metal and wood and pedestrian gates of wood. The houses are Spanish Pueblo-style single-story homes with a variety of white, blue, and green trim colors. Most of the homes have protruding vigas and portals with wood elements in natural stains or painted brown.



Figure 1: Location of property

**Site Description:**

425 Abeyta Street is a 0.46-acre vacant lot in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District just south of the corner lot at Abeyta and Camino del Poinente. Currently, the property is fenced with a tall chain link fence and is overgrown with a variety of vegetation.

**PREVIOUS CASE SUMMARIES:**

There are no previous cases for this property.

**APPLICANT’S REQUEST:**

The applicant proposes the following exterior alterations:

- 1) Construct a 2,239 sq. ft. residence to a height of 15’-0” in a Spanish Pueblo Style with a mix of divided lite and single pane windows, flat roof with parapets, in an earth-toned stucco. The corners of the building will be sharp corners with no bull nosing. The divided lite windows are integrated divided lite with muntins that are not easily removable. There are corner windows planned in the kitchen on the northwest corner of the west elevation and master suite on the southwest corner of the south elevation that will be publicly visible;

therefore, an exception is requested to 14-5.2(E)(2)(b) for publicly visible windows at less than 36” at a corner.

- 2) Construct an 866 sq. ft. garage to a height of 12’-10”.
- 3) Construct a covered 9’-6” high breezeway between the garage and residence.
- 4) Construct 551 sq. ft. of portals where the maximum allowable is 15’-1” with “wafer” style roofs.
- 5) Install skylights. The skylights will not be publicly visible.
- 6) Install ground-mounted HVAC on the east elevation. The HVAC will not be publicly visible.

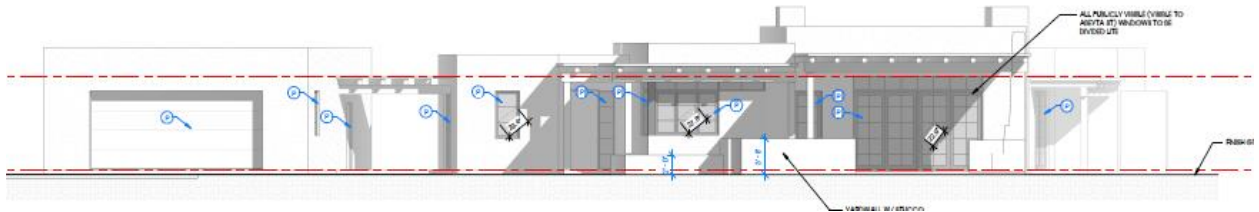


Figure 2: Proposed west elevation

### **EXCEPTION CRITERIA AND RESPONSES:**

Exception to 14-5.2(E)(2)(b): The applicant requests an exception to construct a publicly visible window at less than 36” at a corner.

(i) *Do not damage the character of the district*

#### **Applicant Response:**

The corner window unit is a beautiful feature that is evident in numerous structures in the same “Downtown and East Side Historic District” neighborhood. In this way, the rule that we are seeking an exception to is an arbitrary “style guide” and fails to acknowledge some of the real architectural components that exist in and define Santa Fe’s existing architectural landscape. The rule also does not acknowledge the influence of Midcentury architecture and the advent of the steel window, both important parts of Santa Fe’s history. As seen in the example images below, Santa Fe’s architecture in this very same district has innovatively and tastefully adapted the aforementioned influences and components into “pueblo” and “territorial” versions of themselves, which is in itself a glorious aspect of Santa Fe’s architectural history.

These buildings are located at Otero St, Delgado St, and Lorenzo Ln, respectively.



Figure 3: Applicant provided examples

In the spirit of reiterating this certain component of the district’s character, the client and the architect would like to deploy a corner window unit in the publicly visible kitchen area (see elevations).

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. The Historic Districts ordinance specifically calls out Old Santa Fe Style and Recent Santa Fe Styles as the required designs for buildings in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District; it is not arbitrary, and it is not intended to be a Midcentury architectural style. The Historic Districts are intended to be of an older design style. There are exceptions in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District, but they are exceptions to the code and cannot be considered as a reason for allowing another exception. This design of window is not in the streetscape of Abeyta Street.

The Lorenzo Lane corner window was part of a contributing structure’s primary facade that had a historic steel casement corner window. On that basis, the HDRB approved the corner window illustrated in the applicant’s response. The example on Otero Street is a historic window and therefore protected through the historic preservation standards of the Historic Districts ordinance.

(ii) *Are required to prevent a hardship to the applicant or an injury to the public welfare*

Applicant Response:

In short, the site plan that was developed in response to the site’s conditions has influenced the placement of the driveway, garage, and front entry of the home. As such, the kitchen is situated in such a manner that it is logically located, but also provides key views to the outside. This includes giving the ability of the person working at the kitchen sink to see incoming cars, arriving guests, and children playing in the west “front yard.” The corner window unit has been positioned in the floor plan to address exactly these functions. It is our view that without this corner window, the floor plan does not reach its full functional potential, with tangible shortcomings regarding the site layout and the issues mentioned above. See plan snippet and interior kitchen rendering below for illustration:



Figure 4: Applicant provided site plan



Figure 5: Applicant provided interior rendering

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. Having a particular view of the lot is not a hardship but a desire. While it is helpful to see the drive to be alerted when visitors

arrive, a view corridor to the driveway can be accomplished with careful placement of windows that meet the 36” corner rule.

(iii) *Strengthen the unique heterogeneous character of the City by providing a full range of design options to ensure that residents can continue to reside within the historic districts*

Applicant Response:

For reasons mentioned in the first response, the building’s design only works to strengthen the character of the city by being Pueblo style, single story, “true” exterior wood structural portals, divided lite windows on the publicly viewed facades, etc.

In addition, the home is for a young couple from Santa Fe, who plan to start a family soon. The lot is near the homes of previous generations of the same family. Everything about this project contributes to the community strength and overall integrity of the district and city’s aesthetic and societal objectives.

Regarding a “full range of design options” and the ability of future residents to reside within the historic districts, the home is a thoughtfully planned 3-bed 2-bath with a detached two-car garage - thereby making it extremely versatile and standard for a typical family’s needs, including future generations.

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. There is no evidence that another design element, such as a window located 36” from the corner, was considered. The residence to the north of this property is an example of the Old Santa Fe style, and the houses across the street are good examples of the Recent Santa Fe Style. This proposed residence does not represent the Recent Santa Fe style and does not strengthen the unique character of the area.

**RELEVANT CODE CITATIONS:**

**14-5.2 HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

**(A) General Provisions**

**(1) General Purpose**

In order to promote the economic, cultural, and general welfare of the people of the *city* and to ensure the harmonious, orderly and efficient growth and *development* of the *city*, it is deemed essential by the *governing body* that the qualities relating to the history of Santa Fe, and a harmonious outward appearance, which preserve *property* values and attract tourists and residents alike, be preserved, some of these qualities being:

- (a) The continued existence and *preservation* of historical areas and *buildings*;
- (b) The continued construction of *buildings* in the historic styles; and
- (c) A general harmony as to style, form, color, height, proportion, texture, and material between *buildings* of historic design and those of more modern design.

**(D) General Design Standards for All H Districts**

In any review of proposed additions or alterations to *structures* that have been declared significant or contributing in any historic district or a *landmark* in any part of the *city*, the following standards shall be met:

(1) General

- (a) The status of a significant, contributing, or *landmark structure* shall be retained and preserved. If a proposed alteration will cause a *structure* to lose its significant, contributing, or *landmark* status, the *application* shall be denied. The removal of historic materials or alteration of architectural features and spaces that embody the status shall be prohibited.
- (b) If a proposed alteration or new construction will cause an adjacent *structure* to lose its significant, contributing, or *landmark* status, the *application* may be denied.

(2) Additions

- (a) Additions shall have similar materials, architectural *treatments* and styles, features, and details as the existing *structure*, but shall not duplicate those of the existing *structure* in a manner that will make the addition indistinguishable from the existing *structure*.
- (b) Additions to *buildings* that meet the standards of Subsection 14-5.2(E) shall continue to meet those standards set forth in Subsection 14-5.2(E) in addition to the standards set forth in this section.
- (c) Additions are not permitted to *primary façades*.
- (d) Additions are not permitted to the side of the existing footprint unless the addition is set back a minimum of ten (10) feet from the primary facade. The addition shall not exceed fifty percent of the square footage of the existing footprint, and shall not exceed fifty percent of the existing dimension of the primary facade. To the extent architecturally practicable, new additions shall be attached to any existing noncontributing portion of *structures* instead of attaching them to the significant or contributing portion.
- (e) The height of additions:
  - (i) For significant and *landmark structures* shall be a minimum of six (6) inches less than the parapet or equivalent roof-feature of the existing adjacent connecting facade.
  - (ii) For contributing *structures* shall be no more than one additional *story* higher than the existing *structure*. To the extent architecturally practicable, two-story additions shall be set to the rear or the side rear of the *structure*. When an additional *story* is to be placed upon an existing contributing *structure*, that footprint may be no greater than fifty percent of the footprint of the existing *structure*, subject to the provisions of Subsection A(1) above. For the purposes of this paragraph, an additional *story* shall not exceed twelve (12) feet from the existing rooftop to the highest point of that *story*.

(3) Remodeling to Increase Height; Rooftop Appurtenances

- (a) For *remodeling* of existing significant and *landmark structures*, no increase in height of the *structures* is permitted. (For standards relating to additions to existing *structures*, see paragraph (2) above.)
- (b) For significant and *landmark structures*, *publicly visible* rooftop appurtenances, including but not limited to solar collectors, clerestories, decks, or mechanical equipment, shall not be added, nor shall the parapet be raised to conceal the *rooftop appurtenances*. For contributing *buildings*, solar collectors, clerestories, decks, or mechanical equipment if *publicly visible* shall not be added.

(4) Porches and Portals

Existing *porches* or *portals* shall not be enclosed.

(5) Windows, Doors, and Other Architectural Features

- (a) For all facades of significant and *landmark structures* and for the primary facades of contributing *structures*:
  - (i) Historic windows shall be repaired or restored wherever possible. Historic windows that cannot be repaired or restored shall be duplicated in the size, style, and material of the original. Thermal double pane glass may be used. No opening shall be widened or narrowed.
  - (ii) No new opening shall be made where one presently does not exist unless historic documentation supports its prior existence.
  - (iii) No existing opening shall be closed.
- (b) For all façades of significant, contributing, and *landmark structures*, architectural features, finishes, and details other than doors and windows shall be repaired rather than replaced. In the event *replacement* is necessary, the use of new material may be approved. The new material shall match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. *Replacement* or duplication of missing features shall be substantiated by documentation, physical, or pictorial evidence.

(6) Roofs

The existing roof styles and materials shall be maintained or replaced in kind if necessary. The addition of dormers or other roof features should only be considered when they are an existing or historical feature of the *structure*.

(8) Archaeological Resources

Discovery of archaeological resources made during the historic districts review process shall be referred to the archaeological review committee.

(9) Height, Pitch, Scale, Massing, and Floor Stepbacks

The height, pitch, *scale*, and massing of any *structure* in a historic district, as defined in this section, shall be limited as provided for in this section, unless further restricted within this chapter.

(a) Applicability

The following sections identify specific areas and specific *projects* subject to this section. Planning and land use department staff shall determine whether or not properties are included within this section. (Ord. No. 2007-45 § 30; Ord. #2020-22, § 16)

- F. When the proposed *building*, *yardwall*, or fence is located in a *streetscape* that includes no *buildings*, *yardwalls*, or fences, the height of the proposed *building* shall not exceed sixteen (16) feet. *Yardwalls* and fences in this *streetscape* shall not exceed five (5) feet in height.

(c) Height

(ii) In exercising its authority under this section, the board shall limit the height of *structures* as set forth in this section. Heights of existing *structures* shall be as set forth on the official map of *building* heights in the historic districts.

- A. If a proposed *building* has a parapet, the façade shall not be in excess of two (2) feet of the average of the height of the façades in the *streetscape*.
- B. If the proposed *building* has a pitched roof, the ridge height of the proposed *building* shall not be in excess of two (2) feet of the average of the ridge height of the pitched roofs in the *streetscape*.
- C. *Yardwalls* and fences shall be limited to a height that does not exceed the average of the height of other *yardwalls* and fences in the *streetscape*.
- D. Pursuant to Section 14-7.4(C), the height of any other *structure* shall be limited to the allowable *building* height within the applicable *streetscape*, as defined in this section. (Ord. No. 2002-37 § 26)
- E. The height and dimension of signage are as set forth in Section 14-8.10(H).
- F. The board may increase the allowable height for proposed *buildings* and additions located on a sloping site where the difference in the natural *grade* along the *structure's* foundation exceeds two (2) feet. In no case shall the height of a façade exceed four (4) feet above the allowable height of the applicable *streetscape* measured from natural or finished *grade*, whichever is more restrictive. This increase in height shall be constructed only in the form of *building* step-backs from the *street*.

(d) Pitch

If the determined *streetscape* includes over fifty percent of *buildings* with pitched roofs, the proposed *building* may have a pitched roof. A pitched roof is defined as a gable, shed, or *hipped roof*. The pitch of the roof shall match the predominant pitch extant in the *streetscape*.

(e) Scale

The height of a proposed *building* or addition, its façade length, and its roof form and pitch shall appear to be in proportion to the height, façade length, and roof form and pitch of *buildings* in the applicable *streetscape*, or the *building* on which the addition is proposed.

(f) Massing and Floor Stepbacks

The Board may require that upper floor levels be stepped back, to carry out the intent of this section; provided that the board in making such determinations shall take into account whether the height of the proposed *building*, *yardwall*, fence, or proposed stepback of upper floor levels is in harmony with the massing of the applicable *streetscape* and *preservation* of the historic and characteristic visual qualities of the *streetscape*. The Board shall also require that the *publicly visible* façades of the *structure* be in conformance with Subsections 14-5.2(E) through (H), and in meeting those requirements, may require that different floor levels be stepped back.

**(E) Downtown and Eastside Design Standards**

The *governing body* recognizes that a style of architecture has evolved within the *city* from the year 1600 to the present characterized by construction with *adobe*, hereafter called "old Santa Fe style", and that another style has evolved, hereafter called "recent Santa Fe style", which is a *development* from, and an elaboration of the old Santa Fe style, with different materials and frequently with added decorations.

(1) Old Santa Fe Style

Old Santa Fe style, characterized by construction with *adobe*, is defined as including the so-called "pueblo" or "pueblo-Spanish" or "Spanish-Indian" and "territorial" styles and is more specifically described as follows:

- (a) With rare exception, *buildings* are of one *story*, few have three stories, and the characteristic effect is that the *buildings* are long and low. Roofs are flat with a slight *slope* and surrounded on at least three sides by a firewall of the same color and material as the *walls* or of brick. Roofs are never carried out beyond the line of the *walls* except to cover an enclosed *portal* or *porch* formed by setting back a portion of the *wall* or to form an exterior *portal*, the outer edge of the roof being supported by wooden columns. Two-story construction is more common in the territorial than in other sub-styles, and is preferably accompanied by a balcony at the level of the floor of the second *story*. Façades are flat, varied by inset *portales*, exterior *portales*, projecting vigas or roof beams, canales or water-spouts, flanking buttresses and wooden lintels, architraves and cornices, which, as well as doors, are frequently carved, and the carving may be picked out with bright colors. Arches are almost never used except for nonfunctional arches, often slightly ogive, over gateways in freestanding *walls*;
- (b) All exterior *walls* of a *building* are painted alike. The colors range from a light earth color to a dark earth color. The exception to this rule is the protected space under

*portales*, or in church-derived designs, inset panels in a *wall* under the roof, in which case the roof overhangs the panel. These spaces may be painted white or a contrasting color or have mural decorations.

- (c) Solid *wall* space is always greater in any façade than window and door space combined. Single panes of glass larger than thirty (30) inches in any dimension are not permissible except as otherwise provided in this section;
- (d) The rule as to flat roofs shall not be construed to prevent the construction of skylights or installation of air conditioning devices, or any other necessary roof *structures*, but such *structures* other than chimneys, flues, vents and aerials, shall be so placed as to be concealed by the firewall from the view of anyone standing in the *street* on which the *building* fronts;
- (e) True old Santa Fe style *buildings* are made of *adobe* with mud plaster finish. Construction with masonry blocks, bricks, or other materials with which the *adobe* effect can be simulated is permissible, provided that the exterior *walls* are not less than eight (8) inches thick and that geometrically straight façade lines are avoided. Mud plaster or hard plaster simulating *adobe*, laid on smoothly, is required; and
- (f) It is characteristic of old Santa Fe style commercial *buildings* to place a *portal* so that it covers the entire sidewalk, the columns being set at the curb line.

## (2) Recent Santa Fe Style

Recent Santa Fe style intends to achieve harmony with historic *buildings* by *retention* of a similarity of materials, color, proportion, and general detail. The dominating effect is to be that of *adobe* construction, prescribed as follows:

- (a) No *building* shall be over two stories in height in any façade unless the façade shall include projecting or recessed *portales*, *setbacks*, or other design elements;
- (b) The combined door and window area in any *publicly visible* façade shall not exceed forty percent of the total area of the façade except for doors or windows located under a *portal*. No door or window in a *publicly visible* façade shall be located nearer than three (3) feet from the corner of the façade;
- (c) No cantilevers shall be permitted except over projecting vigas, beams, or wood corbels, or as part of the roof *treatment* described below;
- (d) No less than eighty percent of the surface area of any *publicly visible* façade shall be *adobe* finish, or stucco simulating *adobe* finish. The balance of the *publicly visible* façade, except as above, may be of natural stone, wood, brick, tile, terra cotta, or other material, subject to approval as hereinafter provided for *building permits*;
- (e) The *publicly visible* façade of any *building* and of any adjoining *walls* shall, except as otherwise provided, be of one color, which color shall simulate a light earth or dark earth color, matte or dull finish, and of relatively smooth texture. Façade surfaces under *portales* may be of contrasting or complementary colors. Windows, doors, and *portals* on *publicly visible* portions of the *building* and *walls* shall be of one of the old Santa Fe styles; except that *buildings* with *portals* may have larger

plate glass areas for windows under *portals* only. Deep window recesses are characteristic, and

- (f) Flat roofs shall have not more than thirty (30) inches overhang.