

# 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 *HL*  
Maggie Moore, Assistant Land Use Director *MM*  
Gary Moquino, Historic Preservation Division Manager GM

**FROM:** Amanda Romero, Senior Planner, Historic Preservation Division ALR

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2025-011046-HDRB, 222 Polaco St., A, B & C, Westside-Guadalupe Historic District, Contributing, Gayla Bechtol, agent for Lee Kirch, owner, requests primary façade designation. Amanda Romero

**REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):**

**CITY SUBMITTALS**

District Standards & yard wall & fence standards.

Historic Inventory Form

Zoning Review Sheet

Other:

**APPLICANT SUBMITTALS**

Proposal Letter

Site Plan/Floor Plan

Elevations

Photographs

Other:

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the historic status of the structures be maintained as contributing and to designate the primary facades for Bldg. A (2) as the south F3 and west F4 facades; for Bldg. B (3) the north F1 and east F2 facades; and for Bldg.C (1) the north F1, F2, F3, east F4 facades, per 14-5.2(C) Designation of Significant, Contributing or Noncontributing Status Within Historic Districts.



### Sample motions:

Primary façade designation (for each structure):

- a. In case 2025-011046-HDRB, for 222 Polaco St. A, Contributing, designate the south (F3) and west (F4) facades as primary.
- b. In case 2025-011046-HDRB, for 222 Polaco St. B, Contributing, designate the north (F1) and east (F2) facades as primary, excluding non-historic material
- c. In case 2025-011046-HDRB, for 222 Polaco St. C, Contributing, designate the north (F1, F2 & F3) and east (F4) facades as primary, excluding non-historic material and false parapet.

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:**

There are three single-family residences at 222 Polaco Street, addressed as A, B, C, and are listed as contributing to the Westside-Guadalupe Historic District. The overall character of the Polaco streetscape is very similar to properties found throughout the Westside-Guadalupe Historic District. This property was known as Rivera Family Compound. Built between 1936 to 1940, with 1950s early 1970s additions. Isidro Rivera y Quintana and wife Amalia owned this property as early as 1934. The adult males of the Rivera family were laborers like many hard-working class Santa Feans. The buildings materials reflect the limited means of the family. The 3 homes remained in the family for generations thereafter.

Building A, also known as building 2 in the (HCPI) is in the vernacular style, with basic flat surfaces. The north elevation has no fenestration, and the east elevation has street facing entry door and a non-historic walled patio. The south elevation has one door and one 6 divided light wood sash window. The west elevation has one 3 divided light and two lower 6 divided light wood sash windows.

Building B, known as building 3 in the (HCPI) is built in Mission to Pueblo style with undulating parapets and swooping wingwalls on each side of the façade east, two 1/1 wood sash windows. North elevation has chimney flanked by small windows. The south elevation has aluminum sliding window. West has had two additions with aluminum sliding window.

Building C, known as building 1 in the (HCPI) is built of adobe. The east elevation has a 1/1 hung sash wood window, 1 aluminum sliding window, and a faux parapet. The north elevation has 2 side-by-side 4/1 windows, glass block windows, that likely were installed with the 1950's addition. The west elevation has one 8 divided light wood window, and the north sections have a shed roof, covering addition. South elevation has one 1/1 hung wood sash window.

## **PREVIOUS CASE SUMMARIES:**

On August 12, 2025, the Historic District Review Board approved case #2025-010698, for wall and vehicular and pedestrian gates.

There are no other cases on record for this property.

## **APPLICANT'S REQUEST:**

The applicant proposes the following:

Status review and primary façade designation for three contributing residences.

## 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.

### (C) Regulation of Significant and Contributing Structures in the Historic Districts

(Ord. No. 2004-26)

#### (1) Purpose and Intent

It is intended that:

- (a) Each *structure* to be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical *development*, such as the addition of conjectural features or architectural elements from other *buildings*, shall not be undertaken;
- (b) Changes to *structures* that have acquired historic *significance* in their own right shall be retained and preserved, recognizing that most *structures* change over time;
- (c) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a *structure* be preserved; and
- (d) New additions and related or adjacent new construction be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the original form and integrity of the historic *property* and its environment would be unimpaired.

#### (2) Designation of Significant, Contributing, or Noncontributing Status within Historic Districts

##### (a) Status Designation

*Structures* within historic districts may be designated a status of "significant," "contributing," or "noncontributing" based upon the definitions of these terms in Article 14-12. Staff shall maintain a record as to the current status of *structures* located in the Historic Districts.

##### (b) Board Authority to Review Status Designation

- (i) The Board is authorized to change the status of a *structure* or to designate a status for a *structure* with no status designated.

(ii) A change in status or the designation of a status shall be based upon an evaluation of data provided through survey or other relevant sources of information and the definitions of "significant," "contributing," or "noncontributing."

(e) Appeals (Ord. No. 2009-42 § 16)

Decisions made by the historic districts review board may be appealed to the *governing body* as set forth in Section 14-3.17.

(f) Restoration of Status

If a *property owner* makes changes to a *structure* without the proper *city* approvals which result in the lowering of the *structure's* status, staff or the board may require the *property owner* to restore the *structure* such that its former status is restored.

(4) Compliance with General and Specific Design Standards Required

All *development* located within the historic districts and subject to this Section 14-5.2 shall comply with all applicable general *development* standards set forth in Subsection 14-5.2(D), as well as any applicable specific *development* standards set forth in Subsections 14-5.2(E) through (I).

(5) Exceptions

Staff shall determine whether an exception to this section is required. The historic board may grant an exception to the regulations set forth in this section provided that such exception does not exceed the underlying zoning.

(a) Height

If the *applicant* requests approval of a height in the historic district that exceeds the underlying zoning district requirement, the *applicant* shall first receive an exception to this Section 14-5.2. If approved by the historic board, the *applicant* shall proceed to the board of adjustment or other applicable *city* body for consideration of the proposed variance.

(b) Design Standards and Signage

The board may recommend exceptions to Subsections 14-5.2(D)(1-8, 10-11) and 14-5.2(E) through (I) for construction or alterations within the historic district. The recommendation for exceptions shall be made to the *governing body*. Procedures for public notice and hearing before the *governing body* shall be as set forth in Section 14-3.6(B)(3). Exceptions are *project* specific and do not apply to the subject *property* in perpetuity. If approved by the *governing body*, the inspections and enforcement *office* shall accept and review an *application* for, and issue, as appropriate, a *building permit*. The *applicant* for such exceptions shall conclusively demonstrate and the board shall make a positive finding of fact that such exceptions comply with all the criteria listed as follows:

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

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

(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.

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

The board is the *city* administrative board reviewing and granting or denying requests for exceptions from regulations set forth in Subsection 14-5.2(D)(9). When requesting exceptions the *applicant* shall use the procedures for public notice and hearing set forth in Section 14-3.6(B)(3), unless the *applicant* also requests a variance to the underlying zoning. In such a case the *applicant* for the H ordinance exception shall not be required to publish a legal ad in the local newspaper. Exceptions are *project* specific and do not apply to the subject *property* in perpetuity. The board may grant exceptions and impose conditions thereon to Subsection 14-5.2(D)(9) for height of *structures* within the historic districts as specified in Subsection 14-5.2(D)(9)(a). The *applicant* for such exceptions shall conclusively demonstrate and the board shall make a positive finding of fact that such exceptions comply with all the criteria listed as follows:

- (i) Do not damage the character of the *streetscape*;
- (ii) Prevent a hardship to the *applicant* or an injury to the public welfare;
- (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;
- (iv) Are due to special conditions and circumstances which are peculiar to the land or *structure* involved and which are not applicable to other lands or *structures* in the related *streetscape*;
- (v) Are due to special conditions and circumstances which are not a result of the actions of the *applicant*; and
- (vi) Provide the least negative impact with respect to the purpose of this section as set forth in Subsection 14-5.2(A)(1).

14-12 Significant Structure:

A structure located in a historic district that is approximately fifty 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.

14-12 Contributing Structure:

A structure, located in a historic district, approximately fifty 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.

**14-12 Noncontributing Structure:**

A structure, located in an H district, that is less than fifty years old or that does not exhibit sufficient historic integrity to establish and maintain the character of the H District.

**14-12 Primary Façade:**

One or more principal faces or elevations of a building with features that define the character of the building's architecture.

**14-12 Historic Compound**

An identifiable grouping of historic resources, including buildings, structures and landscaping elements, as described in Section 14-5.2(K)(2)(a). Historic compounds may be comprised of more than one lot.