

**CITY OF SANTA FE  
200 LINCOLN AVENUE  
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO**

**MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD  
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025, 5:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Cecilia Rios	Chair
John Bienvenu	Vice Chair
Scott Cherry	Member
Mary Ellen Degnan	Member
Amanda Mather	Member

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Madeleine Aguilar Medrano	Member
Jennifer Biedscheid	Member

**STAFF:**

Amanda Romero	Senior Planner
Lani McCulley	Senior Planner
Paul Duran	Senior Planner
Maggie Moore	Assistant Land User Director
Frank Ruybalid	Assistant City Attorney
Gary Moquino	Historic Preservation Division Planner Manager

Minutes prepared by Lorena Araujo of Minutes Solutions Inc. from a recording.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Roll call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

- Cecilia Rios, Chair
- John Bienvenu, Vice Chair
- Scott Cherry, Member
- Mary Ellen Degnan, Member
- Amanda Mather, Member

Members absent:

- Madeleine Aguilar Medrano, Member
- Jennifer Biedscheid, Member

Staff:

- Amanda Romero, Senior Planner
- Lani McCulley, Senior Planner
- Paul Duran, Senior Planner

- Maggie Moore, Assistant Land User Director
- Frank Ruybalid, Assistant City Attorney
- Gary Moquino, Historic Preservation Division Planner Manager

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**On a motion made by Member Bienvenu, seconded by Member Cherry, it was resolved to approve the agenda. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There were no minutes to approve.

**4. APPROVAL OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

**On a motion made by Member Degnan, seconded by Member Bienvenu, it was resolved to approve the findings and conclusion from February 11, 2025, for Case No. 2024-009613-HDRB, 1182 Cerro Gordo Road, and Case No. 2024-009650-HDRB, 202 Irvine Street. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

**5. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Camila Kennedy, 140 Romero Street, requested a status review for the reappeal of a case presented on June 10, 2025, which was denied due to a technical error. It was noted that the Board designated every wall facing the street, including the garden wall, as a contributing structure. Meanwhile, a private surveyor and city staff member, Lani McCulley, recommended that the house remain non-contributing. The garden wall is made of cinder block, which is not historically significant despite its age, and its designation is inconsistent with historic district guidelines that discourage “fake historic” structures. The designation requires seeking multiple \$250 exemptions for minor safety improvements, including adding a coyote fence, modifying a driveway wall, and relocating a gate, which is outside of the applicant’s budget. The Board was asked to reconsider its decision.

Chair Rios turned the matter over to legal counsel, as it is unusual for an applicant to argue a case at a later meeting. Assistant City Attorney Moore explained that the appeal was not accepted as timely and that there is no process in the code to rescind a decision outside the appeal process. The deadline for appeals has passed, and Robert’s Rules of Order and the city code require finality in land use decisions.

Assistant City Attorney Ruybalid advised that if the appeal was not properly filed within the appeals window of July 15 to July 3, 2025, it was subject to rejection. While the deadline and the window for a motion to reconsider have passed, Robert’s Rules allow for a motion to rescind, provided it is placed on a future agenda. Such a motion would require either a two-thirds vote of members present or most of the full Board membership. If the motion is rescinded, another hearing would be required. It was agreed that Chair Rios and the responsible staff would convene to discuss the matter and notify the applicant of the decision.

Richard Martinez, PO Box 925, advised that he is an architect, and in 2023, the Board rescinded a decision on a project in which all four sides of a house were designated as primary façades, preventing changes within 10 feet. The Board subsequently rescinded that decision, allowing modifications to proceed.

A resident expressed support for Ms. Kennedy’s request and described a recent incident where an unknown person left clothing and human waste outside the property.

Robin Smith expressed support for Ms. Kennedy's request, emphasizing the importance of safety for single women in the neighborhood.

Mary Lane, 132 Romero Street, speaking on behalf of 23 residents in her complex, expressed support for Ms. Kennedy's request, citing the repeated break-ins in the area.

Janie Cravens, 134 Romero Street, noted that other fences on the street exceed the current four-foot height limit and that adding locks and higher fencing significantly improved safety on her property.

Joan Aon, 133 Romero Street, expressed support for Ms. Kennedy's request, as they would be an aesthetic improvement to the area.

Stephanie Benonato, PO Box 1601, expressed concern at setting a precedent for rescinding decisions, noting that in Mr. Martinez's case, the Board reconsidered the decision at the following meeting but not through a formal rescission. The proper appeal process requires two stamped copies and payment to be considered complete, and the applicant's next legal recourse would be the district court. Allowing rescissions could lead to challenges and prolong Board business. Additionally, concern was expressed for the 614 Paseo de Peralta case, in which the Board declined to approve fencing requested for safety reasons, noting safety concerns must be unique to the property and not general to the area. City Council also overturned the Board's decision to keep 1030½ Houghton Street contributing, suggesting Council members may not fully understand the meaning of the contributing status. The status preserves the primary façade but still allows other improvements. It was requested that the Board clarify at a future meeting regarding a recently approved fence on that property, noting that a part along the driveway appears inconsistent with historic character and may reduce parking.

Elizabeth West, on an unrelated matter, reminded the Board of the discussion on the status review of the Soldiers Monument, noting that Chapter 14 of the city code is written in Arabic numerals, which might reflect a symbolic nod to Arabic heritage. In contrast, other chapters use Roman numerals.

## **6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

### **6.1 515 Paseo de Peralta**

Rebecca Wood provided information on 515 Paseo de Peralta, which includes an original brick house and several additions and outbuildings. The site is bordered by yard walls, some of which were deemed non-contributing except for the stone wall along the street. At the August 12, 2025, hearing, the main house was determined to be historically significant, while additions and outbuildings were deemed non-contributing.

The proposal involves removing non-contributing additions, repairing the house's rubble stone foundation and brick walls, rebuilding and extending the deteriorated south porch and stairs to match early 1900s photos, and providing accessible access. The house, currently split into three apartments, would be converted back to single-family use, and a two-story addition would be constructed. Lower levels would be entirely below grade, while the upper level includes a roof deck, a guest suite, an art studio, and a two-car garage.

Board feedback was requested. The Board noted that this was an advisory discussion rather than a formal hearing and that no comments made during the session were binding.

The Board advised that additions to significant structures must be lower than the historic structure and an exception may be needed, and attachments to primary façades require

approval. Materials, treatments, and style must complement the existing structure. The historic house should remain the focal point. Development at 511 Paseo de Peralta would block the view of the house and addition from certain angles.

The Board recommended that the applicant engage with preservation staff on exceptions, code compliance, and design adjustments before submitting a formal application.

## **6.2 219 and 219A Washington Avenue**

Robert Evans of Eleanor Design Services presented the draft designs for 219 and 219A Washington Avenue. The property was previously a chiropractic office with a storage shed attached to the rear. The proposal involves upgrading the property to support the owners' existing seven-unit hotel next door at 215 Washington Avenue.

219 Washington Avenue was approved to be converted into three units, and the plan proposes to add a two-story rear addition with two more units. The building height was reduced to be within the historic district limits in response to previous feedback. The style was revised and now aligns with the neighboring building's appearance, while the other side would retain a hip roof.

Options for 219A Washington Avenue include either a one-story or two-story structure, the latter of which would require an exception. The Board was asked if it would support an exception.

The Board reiterated that this was an advisory discussion rather than a formal hearing, and that no comments made during the session would be binding. While the Board appreciates that the revisions represented a significant improvement, it cautioned that it could not predict the outcome of a formal vote, especially since the members most concerned about height and style were absent.

## **7. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **8. NEW BUSINESS**

### **8.1 Case No. 2025-011046-HDRB, 222 Polaco Street**

**On a motion made by Member Cherry, seconded by Member Degnan, it was resolved to approve that the east (F2), south (F3), and west (F4) façades of 222 Polaco Street, Building A, be designated as primary. Member Bienvenu opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

**Member Bienvenu made a motion, seconded by Member Degnan, to approve adopting the staff recommendations regarding 222 Polaco Street, Building B, and maintain its status as contributing and designate the whole north and east façades as primary, excluding all known historic material. Motion withdrawn upon the Committee's agreement.**

**On a motion made by Member Bienvenu, seconded by Member Degnan, it was resolved to approve that the east façade (F2) and only the original part of the north façade (F1) of 222 Polaco Street, Building B, be designated as primary, excluding all known historic material. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

**On a motion made by Member Cherry, seconded by Member Degnan, it was resolved to approve that the east façade (F4) and north façade (F1 to F3) of 222 Polaco Street,**

**Building C, from the east corner up to the first jog to the north, be designated as primary, excluding all non-historic material. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

Senior Planner Romero advised that Units A, B, and C of 222 Polaco Street are designated as contributing properties within the Westside Guadalupe Historic District.

For Building A, it was recommended to designate the south (F3) and west (F4) façades as primary. For Building B, it was recommended to maintain its contributing status and designate the north (F1) and east (F2) façades as primary. For Building C, it was recommended to designate the north (F1 to F3) façades and the east (F4) façades as primary.

Gayla Bechtol, 320 Aztec Street, expressed concerns, suggesting that the west façade (F6) was the most defining feature of the building, given that many of the other façades had been significantly altered. Only the north façade retained enough historic integrity to justify a primary designation, noting that the east façade would require reconstruction to recapture its historic appearance. The Board should exercise restraint with designations, and only Building A's west façade should be designated primary, as the south façade no longer retains its original doors or windows.

Stephanie Benonato, PO Box 1601, agreed with Ms. Bechtol's concern that some façades were being designated based on what they could look like rather than their current state. The Board was asked to consider not designating Building A as contributing or only designating the door opening as primary. Regarding Building B, the Board was asked to designate only the original portion of the north façade as primary and exclude what has been heavily altered. Regarding Building C, the Board was asked to reconsider whether it should remain contributing, given the alterations.

The Board acknowledged the challenge with the simple vernacular structures, which have been significantly altered. The need to balance protection of historic character with flexibility for future use was highlighted, while avoiding over-designation and still preserving the most defining original elements.

After discussion, Member Bienvenu's motion, seconded by Member Degnan, to approve adopting the staff recommendations regarding 222 Polaco Street, Building B, and maintain its status as contributing and designate the whole north and east façades as primary, excluding all known historic material, was withdrawn upon their agreement.

## **8.2 Case No. 2025-011031-HDRB, 127 Duran Street**

**On a motion made by Member Degnan, seconded by Member Mather, it was resolved to approve the demolition of the shed at 127 Duran Street on the grounds that it is a non-contributing, unstable structure that does not warrant preservation, friendly amendment made by Member Bienvenu as all demolition criteria under Section 14-3.14(G) have been satisfied for the reasons detailed in the staff recommendation. Friendly amendment accepted. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

Senior Planner McCulley advised of the proposed demolition of a non-contributing shed on Duran Street, within the Westside Guadalupe Historic District. While the structure is compatible with the general streetscape, it is not historically significant enough to warrant preservation and is in poor condition and appears unstable.

At the February 11, 2025, hearing, the Board agreed that both the residence and the shed should remain non-contributing. The applicant has requested permission to demolish the

accessory structure in its entirety, and staff concluded that the application meets all criteria for demolition.

### **8.3 Case No. 2025-011032-HDRB, 241 Maynard Street**

**On a motion made by Member Bienvenu, seconded by Member Cherry, it was resolved to approve the 241 Maynard Street proposal, with the added condition that the final roof material and color reflect a deep, rust-like, brownish red and receive staff approval. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

Senior Planner McCulley advised of the proposed remodel at 241 Maynard Street, a property designated as non-contributing due to its age. There is no record of previous work on the property except for a temporary structure approved in 2019, which has since been removed. The street is characterized by a mix of chain link, board, and coyote fencing and surrounding homes are mostly Spanish Pueblo Revival with a few vernacular styles.

The applicant proposes an addition on the west elevation at the existing bump-out, a portal within the allowable height, replacement of the double front doors with a single arched door, and reconfiguration of openings including converting the dining room window into a kitchen door, relocating the window to the north elevation primary bedroom, and installing metal exterior stairs at the new east and west entrances. The gray asphalt roof would be replaced with a barn-red metal Pro-Panel roof, the solar panels would be removed, and three new low-profile compliant skylights would be installed. The applicant proposed a new yard wall with matching wood pedestrian and vehicle gates at the maximum allowable height. Staff determined the proposal meets all applicable standards and recommended approval.

Richard Martinez, PO Box 925, expressed concern that the digital renderings presented do not reflect the quality of his drawings and provided large-format copies to the Board. The proposal seeks to improve the “cookie-cutter” style of the house and increase privacy with fencing, acknowledging that current regulations allow only 48 inches along Don Felix Street without an exception. The portal, living room bump-out, new roof, and wall would add character and better align with Santa Fe’s architectural style.

Raymond Montoya, father of the property owner, expressed support for the project, noting the intent to beautify the home and comply with all regulations.

Stephanie Benonato supported the additions but suggested a more subdued tone for the roof, and raised concerns about the wall height, asking whether an exception would be needed for a uniform height and whether long runs of wall might require articulation to break up the mass.

The Board found the roof color acceptable after Mr. Martinez explained that it would mimic a brownish-red and weathered, rusted metal roof. The Board requested that the final product be reviewed by staff. The wall-height exception is a separate process, and approval could not be granted at this hearing.

### **8.4 Case No. 2025-011043-HDRB, 528 and 530 Calle Corvo**

**On a motion made by Member Bienvenu, seconded by Member Degnan, it was resolved to approve adopting the staff recommendation to designate the main residence as contributing with the east and southeastern façades, including the portal but excluding non-historic doors and windows openings, Façades 1 and 2 as primary façades, to designate the yard wall as contributing for its historic form but not in a way that would prevent it from being stuccoed, and to designate the workshop and garage as non-contributing. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

Senior Planner Duran advised that 528 and 530 Calle Corvo are set within a neighborhood of predominantly Spanish Pueblo Revival and Territorial-style buildings constructed between the 1930s and 1950s. The property consists of a main house at 528 Calle Corvo and a smaller apartment at 530 Calle Corvo with a workshop at the rear, both occupied by the owner. The rear workshop was originally a shared garage with the neighboring property but was partitioned, and its addition in 1975 gives it sufficient age for contributing status consideration. The two non-historic greenhouses and a shed were excluded from review due to their age.

The east façade is considered the most architecturally significant, with its wraparound portal and distinctive terracotta tile, though there are some 1980s pop-out windows. The north façade is plain, while the west façade includes the primary entrances to both residences and is the most representative of the building's original style. Many surrounding homes are one-story and feature distinctive red terracotta tile on portals and entry roofs.

Staff recommended designating the primary residence as contributing, upgrading its historic status, and that the east and southeastern façades, including the portal but excluding non-historic doors and windows, be designated as primary façades. The workshop should be considered non-contributing despite its age, and the yard wall should be designated contributing based on its historic dimensions and relationship to the streetscape. The designation would not prevent the wall from being stuccoed in the future, consistent with code.

Ju Tan, 1219 Saratoga Lane, explained that they discovered the need for a status review after starting the project. It was clarified that the house was built of CMU, not adobe, and that the garage is not shared with the neighboring lot. The applicant argued against upgrading the property to contributing status, as the house lacks a coherent architectural character, blending elements such as steel casement and wood-clad windows without consistency. A window assessment found it would be acceptable to replace the existing steel windows with wood-cladding, as has been done elsewhere on the street. Furthermore, the portal's thin wrought iron posts are structurally unsound and stylistically more Victorian than appropriate, and they intend to replace them with wood posts to match the neighbourhood. The CMU walls are entirely uninsulated, and a contributing designation could complicate the addition of insulation, since that would involve covering historic material. Retaining the property's non-contributing status would provide flexibility to create a more cohesive and energy-efficient home. John Murphy's HCPI report recommended non-contributing status for both the workshop and yard wall, noting their limited architectural significance despite their age.

Susan Lamden, 615 Calle Grillo, assured the Board that they have no intention of harming the neighbourhood's character, and asked whether the deteriorating CMU yard wall could be excluded from contributing status to complete repairs.

Board Counsel Ruybalid clarified that the recommendation focused on the east and southeastern façades as the key character-defining elements and excluded the 1980s windows. The garage and workshop addition could be designated non-contributing by the Board.

## **8.5 Case No. 2025-011033-HDRB, 425 Abeyta Street**

**On a motion made by Member Bienvenu, seconded by Member Degnan, it was resolved to deny the corner window exception at 425 Abeyta Street, but approve the remainder of the application provided the building's exterior corners are rounded with at least a 2.5-inch radius to emulate adobe construction, the window reveals are a minimum of 2.5 inches with rounded corners, the trim color is lightened from dark charcoal to a bronze or similarly acceptable tone, the garage door is similar in color to the wood elements of the house, and that the revised plans reflecting these conditions are**

**submitted to staff for approval before permitting. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

Senior Planner McCulley advised that the applicant proposed constructing a one-story residence with an earth-toned stucco finish, flat roof with parapets, integrated divided-light windows, and sharp, squared building corners. The structure's style was updated to be "recent Santa Fe" with a contemporary interpretation. The project includes a garage connected by a breezeway, wafer-style roofs, skylights, and ground-mounted HVAC units on the east elevation, which are not visible to the public.

The applicant requested an exception to allow two corner windows less than 36 inches from the building corners, one of which would be fully publicly visible. Staff found that the exception criteria had not been met and recommended denial of the corner windows, while recommending approval of the rest of the project as compliant with general design standards and Downtown and Eastside District standards.

Rajah Bose, 212 Lorenzo Lane, applicant and architect, supported the exception, framing it as an opportunity to reference the district's architectural evolution subtly. The corner windows are present in several structures in the district, including the home and office of John Gaw Meem. However, the applicant would consider more rounded profiles, as the goal is to create a meaningful, contemporary building that contributes to the district's architectural story.

Elizabeth West, a nearby resident, expressed concern about the project's visual impact and argued that the house's sharp corners, very light stucco, and forward placement of the garage would stand out firmly on the intimate street. The applicant should embrace the design guidelines rather than seek exceptions. Past approvals of corner windows on Canyon Road and Paseo de Peralta set a poor precedent.

Stephanie Benonato emphasized that "recent Santa Fe style" must still emulate adobe construction and cannot be used as justification for introducing mid-century modern elements. All four exception criteria in the ordinance must be satisfied, and the hardship criterion was not met. The applicant should consider setting the garage back further to reduce its prominence from the street.

The Board discussed the importance of adhering to the ordinance's requirement that all construction emulate adobe building methods, which underlie the three-foot rule, deep reveals, and other dimensional standards. Allowing the exception on aesthetic grounds could unintentionally open the door to corner windows districtwide. Nonetheless, the applicant was commended for a thoughtful and well-composed design that respects the district and offers a high level of architectural quality.

## **8.6 Case No. 2025-011034-HDRB, 511 A Camino Sin Nombre**

**On a motion made by Member Degnan, seconded by Member Mather, it was resolved to approve the request for demolition of 511 A Camino Sin Nombre, as the staff findings reflect that the criteria for demolition and an exception were met. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

Senior Planner McCulley advised that the applicant is requesting approval to demolish the property due to its extreme deterioration. The structure, a single-family residence, is listed as contributing to the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. The adjacent connected property was constructed in the 1920s and remodelled in adobe in 1989, 1994, and 2005. HCPI data or case history is not available. Staff are not requesting a new HCPI report and primary façade designation, as the status review would not affect the outcome of the request. Staff concluded that this represents demolition by neglect.

The applicant requested an exception to allow demolition of a contributing structure. Staff found that both the demolition criteria and the exception criteria were met and recommended approval of the request.

Michael Krantz, 62 Castaneda Avenue, San Francisco, California, agent for the applicant, noted that this is an opportunity to contribute positively to the neighborhood's preservation.

Stephanie Benonato expressed concern over a demolition by neglect and questioned how long the current owner had held the property. Demolishing the building does not preserve the neighbourhood and opens the door for an oversized replacement. Past Board decisions required applicants to retain the original footprint and return for further approvals if additions were proposed. The Board was urged to consider those guidelines to offset the loss. Homes on Palco Street have recently been designated contributing but might face similar demolition requests due to their deteriorated state.

The Board acknowledged the unfortunate state of the property, which is beyond restoration. The primary concern is ensuring a replacement is compatible with the district.

Assistant City Attorney Ruybalid clarified that while the Board can consider streetscape compatibility, there is no code basis to mandate reconstruction on the original footprint, and doing so could conflict with zoning requirements regarding setbacks or lot coverage.

#### **8.7 Case No. 2025-0011047-HDRB, 1341 Canyon Road**

**On a motion made by Member Bienvenu, seconded by Member Cherry, it was resolved to approve the application for 1341 Canyon Road with the condition that the windows be true or simulated divided lights matching the configuration of the 2018 approval. None opposed. None abstained. Motion carried.**

Senior Planner Romero advised that the property within the Downtown and Eastside Historic District contains principal buildings constructed in the Spanish Pueblo Revival style, which are significant to the district.

In 2018, the Board determined the garage to be non-contributing and later that year, approved a project to convert the garage into a studio. The approval was extended once but ultimately expired. Despite the expiration, construction proceeded that deviated from the original approval, resulting in a stop-work order. The new application seeks approval for the construction of a portal along the north and east elevations, installation of natural-wood exterior doors with stained finish, construction of a stuccoed 4-foot CMU yard wall, installation of bronze exterior lighting fixtures, and retention of previously installed windows on the west and south elevations that were not included in the original approval.

Michael Mizell, P.O. Box 2765, advised that he is a friend of the property owners and has assisted them in meeting the requirements. The building has deteriorated and collapsed into the neighbour's property, prompting emergency stabilization. While the repairs exceeded the scope of the original approval, the owners are seeking to bring the project into compliance.

Stephanie Benonato urged the Board to require that all windows be changed back to the divided-light configuration that was part of the original approval, noting the recent case on Gildersleeve Street where the Board required unapproved windows to be replaced in kind, and arguing that the same principle should be applied. Allowing applicants to retain unapproved work after the fact would undermine the Board's authority and weaken historic preservation efforts, particularly on Canyon Road, which is an essential and sensitive historic corridor.

The Board noted the importance of upholding previous decisions and expressed concern that approving unapproved alterations retroactively could incentivize applicants to ignore the process and seek after-the-fact validation.

**9. MATTERS FROM THE BOARD**

There were no matters from the Board.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next Historic District Review Board meeting will be held on September 23, 2025.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**On a motion duly made and carried, it was agreed that there was no further business to transact; the meeting closed at 9:25 p.m.**

**DISCLAIMER**

The above document should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

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Member

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Member

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Date

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Date