



**Regular Meeting of the Historic
Districts Review Board
July 8, 2025, at 5:30 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall
200 Lincoln Avenue**

Meeting Minutes

View meeting on City YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9T6tLrQ0Q>

Call to Order

Chair Rios called the regular meeting of the Historic Districts Review Board to order at approximately 5:30 pm in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

1. Roll Call

Roll Call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

Members Present

Ms. Cecilia Rios, Chair
Mr. John Bienvenu, Vice Chair
Ms. Jennifer Biedscheid
Ms. Madelein Aguilar Medrano
Ms. Mary Ellen Degnan
Mr. Scott Cherry

Members Absent

Ms. Amanda Mather (excused)

Others Present

Ms. Heather Lamboy, Planning and Land Use Director
Ms. Margaret Moore, Planning and Land Use Assistant Director
Mr. Frank Ruybalid, Assistant City Attorney
Ms. Lani McCulley, Senior Planner
Ms. Mariah Kavanaugh, Planner Technician

Note: All items in the Board packet for all agenda items are incorporated herewith by reference. The original Board packet is available on Civic Clerk and can be requested from the Historic Preservation Division.

2. Approval of Agenda

Director Lamboy stated that there were no specific changes to the agenda, but she noted that in Section 9, New Business item “h” was withdrawn and items “d”, “g”, and “i” were postponed, with item “i” postponed to a date certain of July 22, 2025.

Member Bienvenu moved to approve the agenda as amended. Member Degnan seconded. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

3. Approval of Minutes

No changes were made to the minutes of June 10, 2025.

Member Biedscheid moved to approve the minutes. Member Binvenu seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote (5-0).

4. Approval of Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

No Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law were presented with this agenda.

5. Matters from the Public

No matters from the public were offered.

6. Staff Communications

Director Lamboy stated that the land development code and the general plan projects are marching along. The Land Use Department will have a table at the “Night at the Movies” event at Swan Park on Friday. In this city-sponsored project, the department is soliciting opinions and input regarding the general plan update. The department was also at the “Pride” event because the team is trying to reach out to the community to get their feedback on the general plan update.

7. Old Business

No items were listed under Old Business.

8. New Business

- a. **2025-010666-HDRB, Shelby St. Foot Bridge**, Downtown & Eastside Historic District, no status, Wonderstone Consulting LLC, agent for City of Santa Fe, owner, requests a historic status review for the pedestrian bridge.

Ms. Lani McCulley presented the case and staff recommendation. Staff recommended that the historic status of the footbridge structure be designated as contributing per section 14-5.2(C)(2) Designation of Significant, Contributing or Noncontributing Status Within Historic Districts.

Chair Rios asked that many of the bridges listed in the report be designated as significant.

Ms. McCulley confirmed.

Chair Rios questioned why staff were recommending contributing to this bridge since the board has designated many significant bridges, including some of the mentioned, such as the Delgado Street bridge and the Grant Bridge, which is probably one of the oldest bridges here in town, from about the 1920s, and so is the Delgado Street Bridge. The Delgado Street Bridge was one of the first bridges that accommodated traffic, and that was in the 20s, and then the Don Gaspar Bridge. This is a lovely bridge, so she wondered why it should not be significant.

Director Lamboy responded that with reference to the status, staff examined the historic background, the HCPI, and the history of the construction of the bridges along that corridor. There was a bridge constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, and this one replaced that bridge because the wood members were rotting in late 1968. There have not been a lot of changes architecturally to the bridge over the years. There's not much to change, and the stone finish likely replicated to a certain degree the Don Gaspar bridge, but staff felt that the status of contributing would be appropriate in this case.

Nicole Ramirez Thomas, P.O. Box 8337, South Lake Tahoe, California 96158, was sworn in. She stated she is assisting the parks and open space division with this bridge replacement project, which has become rather urgent. The reason that the applicant has requested the bridge to be non-contributing is that it creates a false sense of history with the National Register site that it sits within. The city has its ordinance and its ability to look at something that's 50 years or older and determine what its significance is to downtown Santa Fe and this River Park area, and how it developed over time. This information is detailed in the HCPI form. It was difficult to find information on the construction of any of the footbridges crossing the river. The larger vehicle bridges that have been designated significant, the placement of those bridges is the same, even if the materials that they've been constructed with have changed over time. When looking at the Sanborn insurance maps, there was, at one time, a wooden bridge, which was replaced by the stone bridge. Bridges have changed over time with the materials available, better engineering practices to handle greater loads of traffic. Those vehicle bridges are very different from this footbridge. The engineers' evaluation determines that the T beam that exists in the bridge could not be 56 or 57 years old. It must be younger than that. It's possible that there was another replacement at some time, possibly in the 1980s, though there is no documentation has been found on it. The construction materials are not particularly unique. The stone is sandstone, and the CCC constructed structures are all limestone.

Chair Rios asked for clarification that the bridge had changed at some time, and the location had changed.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas showed a 1968 aerial photograph from the HCPI form. She pointed out that there are two bridges next to each other in the aerial. She stated that bridge B,

the eastern bridge, is likely the CCC-constructed bridge built in 1934, and then bridge A, just to the west, is the location of the existing bridge.

Member Biedscheid asked if an Early Neighborhood Notification meeting related to the bridge had been provided.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas confirmed it had been held on June 24, 2025.

Member Biedscheid stated they agreed with the assessment of non-contributing, but in the interest of understanding how this element of a public city space is valued by the public, was there any discussion of its status at those meetings, or if there was any other indication about how the community views the design of the bridge?

Ms. Ramirez Thomas, there wasn't any discussion about the status; however, largely the sentiment was that people want to see a stone bridge replacing this bridge, and for that reason, in the design packet, there is a proposed stone bridge for consideration, and the applicant does have some questions regarding that design.

Member Cherry pointed out that in the HCPI, there's a photo of the picnic table, and asked if it was potentially built with the same stone as the bridge, and when the table might have been constructed.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that the picnic tables were installed as part of the state park, which means the tables were put in about the same time as the bridge, even though there were delays in the area becoming a state park.

Public Comment:

Jerry Richardson, 703 Don Felix, Santa Fe, was sworn in. Mr. Richardson stated he appreciated that the Board was hearing comments. He said he has been a longtime historic preservationist and president of the Historic Guadalupe Neighborhood Association, and helped found it. He said he started walking over that bridge when he was a law clerk and used the Supreme Court Law Library, and he always loved the bridge and thought it added a lot of charm to the town. He supported the contributing status; he felt the significant status might make it too difficult to have the bridge replaced or repaired as needed. He commended the staff and John Murphy on their reports and stated that it was very important to make sure a functional bridge is in that area.

Beverly Spears, 1897 Conejo Drive, Santa Fe, was sworn in. Ms. Spears stated that the bridge could be considered non-contributing because it is over 50 years old and is made of local materials, especially local stone. It fits in beautifully with the environment of the stone-lined river. It contributes a great deal to the character of that section of the river and the whole downtown. She strongly supported the idea of it being a contributing.

Ms. Stefanie Beninato, PO Box 1601, Santa Fe, New Mexico, was sworn in. Ms. Beninato supported the idea that this bridge should be contributing. She echoed Beverly Spear's comments. She also pointed out that just because it was a state park and designated as such in 1940, it doesn't mean that this bridge itself doesn't have its own historic significance and contributes to the area in the river. Her concern was that if the bridge was designated non-contributing, a steel bridge could replace this bridge, which contributes to that section of the river. The existing bridge reflects the materials along the river, the walls that people built next to the river with the rocks, so the bridge should be designated as contributing.

Board Action:

Member Bienvenu moved to adopt the staffs' recommendations to designate the bridge as contributing and have findings entered that the bridge is greater than 50 years old and helps to establish and maintain the character of the Downtown and Eastside Historic District, adds to the historic associations and historic architectural design qualities that are significant for that district, and further note that the standards set forth for the National Register are different than the standards that govern the designation and are not applicable here. Member Cherry seconded. The motion passed with the Board voting unanimously by roll call vote (5-0).

- b. **2025-010683-HDRB, Shelby St. Foot Bridge**, Downtown & Eastside Historic District, contributing, Wonderstone Consulting LLC, agent for City of Santa Fe, owner, requests to demolish the pedestrian bridge. An exception is requested to section 14-5.2(D)(1)(a) for demolition of a contributing structure.

Ms. Lani McCulley presented the case and staff recommendation. Staff found that the exception criteria for section 14-5.2(D)(1)(a) for demolition of a contributing structure had been met; therefore, staff recommended approval of the application with the condition that the reconstruction of the bridge matches the existing bridge in appearance and reuses the existing stones of the bridge, as it complies with 14-5.2(D) General Design Standards for all Historic Districts, and 14-5.2(E) Downtown and Eastside Design Standards and 14-3.14 Demolition of Historic or Landmark Structure.

Chair Rios clarified whether, by demolition, this meant that everything related to the bridge would be removed.

Ms. McCulley confirmed that was the intention.

Member Cherry stated that from what he saw, the stone walls that channelize the river are of limestone, and the proposed removal of the bridge would potentially remove part of the stone wall. He questioned what was included in the demolition of the bridge because the photos showed that underneath the bridge, each side of the bridge has two

buttresses that are made of sandstone material, but are not masonry, woven into the limestone channelizing walls. If the demolition of the bridge is approved, would the sandstone and buttresses be all that is removed, or would part of the limestone channelized wall be required to be demolished?

Ms. McCulley stated that she understood that the limestone channel is being retained.

Member Biedscheid asked for the staff-recommended condition that the reconstruction of the bridge match the existing bridge, if that referred to simply the stones of the concrete decking and metal railing as well.

Ms. McCulley stated that staff are asking that it emulate what is already there, which includes the materials.

Member Bienvenu, in your report and in your presentation, which was a great job summarizing all the information that goes into these three consecutive decisions, but it does seem that we would be deciding the third issue when we decide the second. There does not seem to be any way of getting around that because there are requirements in the code that would require a condition in this case, just as staff has requested, unless exceptions are granted. In essence, it is deciding both the second and third cases simultaneously here. He also pointed out that there are three code provisions that are being considered, which would seem to come up every time there's a demolition request of a contributing building in the historic districts. The one staff focused on was 14-5.2(D)(2)(d), which provides for the removal of historic materials or alteration of architectural features and spaces that embody the status shall be prohibited, and that's concerning a contributing structure. There would also be 14-5.2(D)(5), which states that for all facades of contributing structures, architectural features and details other than doors and windows shall be repaired rather than replaced, and if replacement is necessary. The board deals with this frequently with windows and other things, though this case is not about windows. It provides that in the event replacement is necessary, the use of new material may be approved, but it must match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. That seems to apply as well here to the extent that there are additional new materials being added to the old materials in order to make the bridge functional.

Ms. McCulley confirmed the second exception code does apply as part of the third case.

Director Lamboy stated that Member Bienvenu was correct, and staff tried to consider the demolition separate from the new construction. This case is unique enough it might be prudent for Ms. McCulley to give her presentation on the proposed bridge so that we can combine the two in a single presentation and have conversation about the two if that is the pleasure of the board.

Member Bienvenu stated that there is a third provision that needs to be considered concerning demolition, which is 14-3.14, which applies to demolition in the historic districts, and it has its own set of requirements.

Ms. McCulley confirmed and stated that the applicant had addressed those requirements as part of the case, and it is available in the staff report.

Member Bienvenu stated he was pointing all this out because he thought it was going to determine what comes out of the board's final decision, so much as it's necessary to address all three of those code provisions; however, the board ultimately decides this matter. Also, all three code sections are informative as to the intent of the ordinance in terms of preserving historic materials, design, and even details whenever those materials are lost. He said the case reminded him somewhat of the breezeway at the Drury because in that case the breezeway had been taken away, but the board asked for it to be reconstructed in essence which some people sometimes mistakenly assume is a bad preservation approach because it is reconstructive rather than original, but when there is a structure that is being preserved where there is no need to speculate what its original appearance was because it can be identified in detail then the appropriate preservation technique is to reconstruct in-kind. This is applicable in this case.

Chair Rios asked Member Bienvenu to go over 14-3.14 for the board.

Member Bienvenu explained the third provision 14-3.14 is in determining whether a request for demolition in an historic district should be approved the board shall consider a) whether the structure is of historical importance, b) whether the structure for which demolition is requested is an essential part of a unique street section or block front and whether the street section or block front will be reestablished by the proposed structure and c) the state of repair and structural stability of the structure under consideration.

Ms. McCulley confirmed that the section was addressed in the staff report.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated the applicant also struggled with separating the demolition from the design because the demolition inherently asks what is replacing the structure.

Tyler Ashton, project engineer, 4401 Massad Street, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109, was sworn in. Mr. Ashton stated that as far as the demolition goes, right now the footprint would just be the existing sandstone, but it would depend on what bridge type is going back in, if the space would need to be widened, or not. However, the intention is to keep as much, if not all, of the limestone that's currently there.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that if a stone facade is chosen, it might require broadening how the abutments are placed, and in which case, it might require some of the CCC rock lining to be minimally bothered on either side of the existing abutment for this existing bridge. If there's a lighter-weight bridge chosen, then it may not need to be disturbed.

Member Cherry agreed that the decision on the demolition is predicated on the decision on the construction and the design requirement. He asked if there would be another case regarding the effects on the limestone channel, since that is a significant structure.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that from her experience with demolitions, there could be something to the effect of the board allowing demolition to the minimal extent associated with whatever design is chosen in the next case. Then, in the design discussion, there can be more specific details about what that disturbance might look like.

Member Cherry stated that when reviewing the proposed designs for the next case, there is some widening of one of the proposed options, which would imply that some of that wall would potentially be removed.

Director Lamboy stated that when thinking about the lightest touch and the impact on the Stone Line Channel walls of the Santa Fe River, the question would be, does it threaten the status of that structure? Now granted that's not stated, but on the other hand, the removal of certain areas of stonework to accommodate a bridge that will be accessible with the Americans with Disabilities Act, there is a balancing act. The common denominator here is that the bridge must be widened to meet current code to a certain degree, and then the lightest touch is certainly an item in the next case. If it's the pleasure of the board to hear both cases at once, it can be done so that there can be more discussion.

Member Cherry stated he believed that there is a requirement to demolish historic material for the one structure, then it seems that it would also need to be required for the other structure that is affected by the first request.

Director Lamboy pointed out that the entire structure is not going to be demolished, but a portion of it may be impacted depending on the design. But at this point, a wholesale demolition is not being requested for the supporting walls. Therefore, staff do not feel another case is required.

Member Biedscheid stated that, with the way the conversation was going, to assess the demolition criteria that require the determination of whether the proposed structure will reestablish the streetscape, it would be appreciated if the other case details could be shared, and then the board could act on both cases.

Chair Rios asked the board members how they felt about that process.

Member Cherry agreed it would make the review easier.

All the board members agreed.

The Board requested that the next case be presented so the two cases could be discussed together.

- c. **2025-010684-HDRB, Shelby St. Foot Bridge**, Downtown & Eastside Historic District, contributing, Wonderstone Consulting LLC, agent for City of Santa Fe, owner, requests to construct a pedestrian bridge. An exception is requested to section 14-5.2(D)(5)(b) for not matching the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.

Ms. Lani McCulley presented the case and staff recommendation. Staff found that the exception criteria had not been met and recommended denial of the exception to section 14-5.2(D)(5)(b) for not matching the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. However, staff recommended approval of the design option 2, which closely emulates the existing bridge and complies with Section 14-5.2(D) General Design Standards for all Historic Districts, and 14-5.2(E) Downtown and Eastside Design Standards.

Chair Rios asked if this bridge was being demolished from the ground up, as in everything structurally, and a brand-new bridge out of a different material was being constructed.

Director Lamboy stated that there are stone channels along the Santa Fe River. Those will not be disturbed unless there's some disturbance in removing the bridge, and whatever design is being proposed is approved. There is a possibility of some disturbance. The full bridge structure is what's going to be removed.

Nicole Ramirez Thomas, previously sworn in, stated that in terms of the demolition, that very certain that the existing sandstone abutments associated with the bridge will be removed. She also answered Mr. Cherry's question if the river channel being the rock lining that the CCC did would be disturbed by putting in a new bridge and Miss Lamboy is saying that it would be de minimis in a way that wouldn't require there to be like a separate hearing in terms of the CCC structure versus the existing stone bridge, there would be very little disturbance and only as it applies to the bridge construction. She continued that from the discussion at the ENN and tonight, a stone bridge is preferred. The applicants agree that there's some quaint element of that. There was anticipation that the stone element would be requested to be replaced, so the second design option was presented to allow the board to look at that design, but the applicant did have some design detail questions for the board. The initial design is a prefab bridge with stucco pilasters for the abutments. However, the division is not attached to having one design or the other and understands that people have expressed a desire to have a particular look. One option discussed was the use of a nice stone veneer on the bridge, which would keep the quaint, slender look that the bridge currently has. Whereas trying to put larger full stones or the stones that exist currently for the bridge might create a broader look and footprint for the bridge, which is also being widened for ADA access. Chair Rios asked for clarification on the veneer.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas confirmed that veneers could be discussed as a consideration for the amount of weight the bridge could hold. Since it is a pedestrian structure, placing rocks on the bridge may not be feasible.

Mr. Ashton explained that this was the way the Camino Alire Bridge was done with a stone veneer. It looks like a stone, but it is not a stone. It's a lot lighter because the substructure of the lower bridge is a pre-manufactured bridge. The rock would then be added to the existing bridge. The existing bridge is a double T-beam slab that was put down with the rock façade placed on it. The existing rock does not have any structural integrity for the pedestrian bridge. The deck has failed, and the deck is sitting on top of the rock. So, the rock may be supporting the deck just a little bit now, and it's what's keeping the bridge up, but it was not designed that way. It was a double T beam adorned with stone. The question is whether we could use veneer or do we should reuse the stone that is there. Actual stone will increase the size of the bridge because it will need to be able to handle the weight of the rock, whereas a veneer is lighter and thinner but has the appearance of stone.

Member Biedscheid asked if the veneer was actual rock that is cut thin, or if it is a substance manufactured to appear as rock.

Mr. Ashton explained that there are multiple ways to create veneer. It can be cut rock to make it thinner, kind of like thin bricks on some homes, or it can be molded in molds from substances like concrete and paint, or colored material. It can be done so that it looks realistic.

Member Cherry stated that, from his understanding that the bridge would be structurally steel with a stone façade, where it is natural stone or natural stones cut to tile the facade, or a cultured stone facade, but that's the overall proposal of that second bridge. That is the consideration and the current bridge; the stone is a facade now, it's not structural, as Mr. Ashton pointed out. It appears maybe they tried to make it structural and failed, and so it was retrofitted with the steel because there is a rebar that formed an Arch or ellipse with a flat section across the top or the bottom there. However, he wanted to understand the feasibility issue. He asked if it is unfeasible to make a true natural stone arched bridge because of cost, because there are stone arched structures all over the world that are many hundreds of years old, or what would make it unfeasible.

Melissa McDonald, Parks and Open Space Division Director, 1104 Don Gaspar Avenue, Santa Fe, was sworn in. Ms. McDonald explained that the Parks and Open Space Division is working on the project, and they want to keep the integrity of the design and the facade as it is now. Going to a total stone structure was talked about, but was not something considered because trying to emulate what is currently existing, and the existing bridge was designed to have a beam with the rock facade. Having a real stone veneer versus a manufactured product, if that's the desire of the committee, could be done. Cost is always

a factor. Right now, the stone option is coming in anywhere between \$750,000 to a million dollars to build that bridge. The city has allocated funds and is committed to trying to rebuild the bridge because it has been unusable for two years, but it is still seeking additional funds. If the cost rises drastically, it would be difficult for us to find the budget to build. A stone bridge would increase the cost significantly, as well as increase the engineering and other factors that contribute to it.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that, according to the HCPI form, the design of the bridge was intended to be a midcentury urban look; therefore, creating a true stone bridge isn't in keeping with what exists and what is now a contributing structure.

Member Cherry stated that the board is balancing mimicry versus replacement with a charming character that fits into the nature of the district. He agreed that an authentic stone bridge would necessarily fit, but neither would a cultured stone.

Ms. McDonald stated that the team would consider the comments if the bridge were to be approved. Cement does not have to be used. There can be a solution to the materials. Incorporating the existing stone is an option, but it could be difficult because, with demolition and the way the stone is put into the ridge with thick grouting cement, the stone can't always be reused. As much as possible can be retained and integrated, but there is a certain amount that won't be reusable.

Member Cherry asked if the deck would be in brick.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that it was a design question for the board, along with several other questions the team had. They wanted to know if the board would prefer the approach to be brick or concrete. It is currently concrete, though the rendering was brick.

Ms. McDonald stated it could be either concrete or brick.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that the concrete would be brown concrete to comply with the district standards, and the team anticipated the board not wanting to replace it with gray concrete.

Member Degnan asked, with all the wonderful foot bridges and bridges in Santa Fe, have we ever had to redo a complete replacement of a historic bridge?

Ms. Ramirez Thomas confirmed that almost all of the footbridges have been replaced to some extent, and the Brothers Lane Bridge, which is proximal to this bridge, has been replaced with a wood bridge. The packet demonstrated that there is no consistency with what bridge design looks like in crossing the river, and what the pedestrian bridges look like, both inside and outside of the historic districts.

Member Aguilar Medrano stated she preferred option two with the stone. The existing concrete is grey, and she likes the way it matches the mortar in between the stone; it looks very uniform. Contrary to the city ordinance, she would be in favor of grey concrete if concrete is used. The abutting materials on the other side are pavers, so there would not be an awkward intersection of pinkish and grey concrete. The existing bridge has vertical posts spaced widely, and it gives this airy feel. This design option 2 has replicated that while also bringing the bridge up to code by making the new horizontal dividers very minimal in comparison to the vertical posts. Her question was what color the rails would be; the depiction is beige. The preference for the stone would depend on what the stone is and what the final look would be. She did not like the formed concrete option. With that option being faux, she would prefer something authentic, like the modern interpretation of option one. Similarly, veneers tend to have a very uniform appearance, which wouldn't mimic the character of this stone, while completely opposed to it, she felt some photos of the product and how the bridge would look would be appreciated before approval. She stated she looked up the Camino Alire Bridge, and she would not want that duplicated in this area. She was still unclear if the full stones could be used as a façade as it is currently.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas asked to give her list of questions on the design to the board. She asked if the approach on either side was preferred in brick, like the downtown sidewalks, or concrete as exists, and then if concrete would be colored or grey. The railing color and style are now in question as well. So, did the board prefer a more rounded railing or a square railing in beige a black, or dark brown? Sandstone is the existing stone façade. Would the board prefer sandstone or limestone, which is what the river channel is lined with, and which she felt would have a lack of difference in the periods? Then, with the abutments, it sounds like rock is preferred, but stucco may be an option, and then, if an interpretive plaque is desired as well.

Member Bienvenu stated that he believes that the board preferred not to design a new bridge; they are more interested in protecting what's there, and if it didn't have to be demolished, that would be a simple decision to make here, which would be to repair the bridge. Once it's gone, then your options are unlimited, and that's what you're proposing to the board is all the things that could be modified here to make it different. That's an endless chase because now the board is designing a new aesthetic structure that is partially historic and partially contemporary, and the aesthetic preferences of the people that happen to be in the room tonight. That is not a comfortable design option. The easiest answer is to say to replace the bridge with something as close to the existing bridge as possible in terms of color, texture, design, aesthetic qualities, and detail. That would be the task before you. He believed it would throw out simulated stone, by definition, square railings to replace what's there, and some of the color changes; not because none of these things might be aesthetic improvements, but just because we'd be redesigning the structure at that stage. He asked, if we decided to just tell you, that the demolition is approved on the condition that it be replaced with a structure that emulates the existing structure as closely as possible and given all the constraints they are operating on, would

the applicant be able to come back to the next meeting with a redesign for approval and would that meet the scheduling needs?

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that the challenge is the timeline because the city may not receive money from the state legislature if this bridge project is not completed before December, and it takes 16 weeks to manufacture the bridge. Understanding the desire is to match the existing, we would request that staff be allowed to approve of that.

Member Bienvenu commented that the board often lets staff make those final decisions as to whether it conforms to what they understand to be the board's concerns.

Chair Rios agreed with Member Bienvenu's comments and reminded the board that the bridge was designated contributing and the ordinance states to replicate it as closely as what exists, making it ADA accessible, but trying to use the same materials as this. She also pointed out that the board must remember the big picture, which is that this is Santa Fe, New Mexico, a city that is over 400 years old, and the board is charged with trying to preserve all the things that have value, such as this bridge. She pointed out that by comparing the two photos, the picture on top is a very nice bridge, but it is a very refined bridge that has nothing to do with the bridge on the bottom. So, about the materials that the design has existed on that bridge for many years, and the focus should be on what that bridge looks like now, and replicate it as it exists.

Member Cherry agreed with Member Bienvenu and commented that your request is more of guidance on what can be approved, and you should follow the direction of what is there.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas stated that the board had answered her questions and realized that the design would match more closely what exists. She asked if there was any critique about the rendering of the stone bridge, since that would also be helpful.

Chair Rios asked if the indication was that this had to be completed by December and stated she felt this should come back to the board.

Public Comment:

(Inaudible) In Santa Fe, he was sworn in. He stated that by combining the cases, the board is getting ahead of itself because there is not really a discussion about demolition. He stated he went to the meeting at the land office a few weeks ago, and he left questioning why they had the meeting. The decision was made there. He could not believe that the bridge could not be repaired for a million dollars. He said he was a retired contractor, and he could get it fixed. He said the bridge is beautiful as it is, and everybody loves it. He questioned whether there was enough effort put into figuring out how to repair the bridge.

John Penn LaFarge, 647 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, was sworn in. Mr. LaFarge echoed the previous comments because it seems a million dollars is extensive. He said it is

important that this bridge contributes to the charm and character of downtown and Santa Fe. He felt that so much of our charm has been lost to cold, repetitive buildings that look as though they could be designed by somebody with no imagination and really no understanding of Santa Fe style. He said This bridge, small though it may be, does have a great deal of character and charm. He thought option number two should be the option taken, adhering as closely as possible to replacing it without altering the bridge that is there currently.

Beverly Spears, previously sworn in, applauded and supported Member Bienvenu for stating that the bridge should be rebuilt to be as similar as possible to what's there in appearance. She questioned whether a six-foot width was necessary since a wheelchair does not need that width. She felt that if four feet is not enough, then surely five feet was plenty. She stated it wasn't explained why the new bridge has to be longer than the existing bridge, which has served the community very well for more than 50 years. She also questioned the increased height because the guard rails for commercial structures need to be 42 inches, but she understood this request to be more than the required 42 inches. She summarized that the proposal is for something longer, wider, and higher than what is there, and given the contributing status of the bridge, all of this needs to be justified so that the increase is as minimal as possible. She also confirmed that it's important to use as much of the existing material of the bridge as possible, including the stone.

Jerry Richardson, previously sworn in, stated he would support preserving the bridge as much as demolishing and rebuilding it to resemble what is there, and design number two comes close. He was shocked that all three cases had to be heard at one time because of the time limits. Since the bridge has been shut down for two years, it does not make sense to crunch it all at one time. He said he was concerned about approving a design without really knowing what it is, but if the staff understands that it should conform as much as possible to the existing bridge, then he would support it so that something that resembles the existing bridge is constructed.

Katherine Rivera, P.O. Box 363, Santa Fe, was sworn in. Ms. Rivera shared that she attended the early neighborhood notification meeting, though she did arrive late. She did not hear the issues about repairing the bridge. However, in conversation with others, she understood the consensus was that people were thrilled or relieved with design number two. She said the purpose of the meeting was more informational; it was not to wrestle down some of the key design elements, which is part of the board's job or part of an architect's job. She said she felt she needed to share that there was a sense of relief from the community that the replacement bridge was going to look and feel like number two.

Elizabeth West, 318 Sena Street, Santa Fe, was sworn in. Ms. West found both renderings interesting, and while she did not attend the early neighborhood notification meeting, it seemed the general feeling of the board members and the public was that the upper black bridge is so appallingly wrong in juxtaposition with a much better image. She felt it would have been interesting if there had been a third image or another image that

was a different version of what Miss Spears was mentioning. She said the second version looks better, and the first is a good idea for what is very obviously could be done if it were done wrong.

Ms. Stefanie Beninato, previously sworn in, said she was disappointed that the engineers in the 21st century cannot figure out how to repair this bridge as opposed to demolishing the bridge, and she did not feel there was much effort put into that. She said the timeline is very arbitrary because her understanding of state money is that it is not going to be in place by December. She said the skeleton might be manufactured by December, but it would not be in place. She urged the board to have the design return to the board for consideration, even at the next meeting. She said doing this would give them four months to get the skeleton of the bridge done. She agreed with Ms. Spears that the railing seemed to be too high and that six feet was not necessary for a footbridge. She felt that everyone would be courteous by waiting to cross if it was necessary because this is how it always has been, even on the city's sidewalks. She pointed out that there are sidewalks that wheelchairs cannot use at all, but it is not something that the city widens, even when they are being repaired. She wondered how many people might have fallen off the bridge with its 18-inch railings as opposed to the 3 ½ foot high railing, which is visually distracting. She agreed with the board members that the bridge should look as much like the existing and the existing materials, including the stones, should be incorporated as much as possible in the reconstruction of the bridge rather than finding something new that looks similar, and it should be what is existing so that it contrasts with the stone walls that line the river. She stated that she again would urge the board to have the final design return to the board for review and that while she appreciated that they trusted staff to make the decision, the board owed it to the public to have it returned for review at a public meeting.

Cynthia Pacheco, 220 Est Marcy, Santa Fe, was sworn in. Ms. Pacheco thanked the board for allowing significant public input this evening. She said she works for the Supreme Court, which is her first interest in the bridge, because she would like to be able to use it. She also doesn't want to see the bridge collapse any further as a citizen of Santa Fe. She stated that at the neighborhood meeting, constituents were advised by the project engineer that the tension rods on the bridge had failed, and he went into great detail about why the bridge cannot be rehabilitated. She was satisfied with the explanation. She said the board should consider what might happen if it did not take action tonight. The city already has a significant portion of the funding from the state of New Mexico. If action is not taken tonight, the burden of the financing will shift entirely to the citizens of Santa Fe because it's too late now to go and ask for capital money for the upcoming session, which means the request cannot be made until the legislative session in 2027 and the money would not be issued until later that year, at which point this starts all over. Right now, the bridge can be built with the money that the city has, but prices do not go down, especially when it comes to construction and the looming threat of tariffs, etc. What's going to take us \$1.7 million today could cost us \$5 million three or four years from now. She said she would like the board to consider this, and she thought staff did an excellent job putting the packets together, and the engineer had gone above and

beyond to explain what needs to be done. She strongly encouraged the board to adopt design number two with the lightest touch possible for demolition.

Member Cherry asked for clarification on the height, width, and length of the new bridge.

Mr. Ashton explained that the height would be set to 42 inches or 3'6", which is standard ADA, the width is required at a minimum of 48 inches clearance to satisfy ADA and PROWAG (Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines), while the width could be reduced to 48 inches, the entire 48 inches has to clear for walking area, so the request is for the full bridge to be at 6'0", and the length is increased to 42 feet so that the new abutments are located back behind the limestone lining in order avoid impacting the channel stone. It will seem the same length because the work is under the bridge underground.

Member Cherry asked where the 42 inches of the railing were being measured.

Mr. Ashton explained that it is 42 inches from the walking surface to the top of the railing.

Member Cherry asked if he understood correctly that there is a rail a little bit lower than that because the rendering shows the stone that the railing interfaces with to be higher than the railing.

Mr. Ashton confirmed that the stone pilasters at the ends may be a bit higher than 42 inches, but the railing must be no lower than 42 inches, so the stones need to be higher to make the connection.

Ms. Ramirez Thomas wanted to address the question of why the schedule is so compressed. She said the funds for the design were not released until late January this year, and then it's taken this long for issuance of the HCPI form, meeting with staff, getting documentation, and all the other details that needed to be done to get to this point.

Mr. Ashton added that the reason for the request to demolish the bridge rather than repair it is that the existing double T beam slab is a post-tension member, and concrete is good under compression but not under tension, which is why the steel and rebar are in the bridge currently. This type of bridge is built with what are called tendons, steel tendons, in them. Once it's post-tensioned like this, a T-slab is, and once concrete gets to a specific strength, the tension on those gives a lot of strength to the bridge structure. The process is used in things like basketball courts and building roof structures. In this case, the concrete has passed its design life, and it is delaminating. The tendons have become exposed. The anchors that those tendons were embedded in the concrete have become exposed. The tendons have lost their tension, and again, concrete is great in compression, but it's not in tension. If the tension members are no longer there to take the tension, then the tension will be on the concrete, and the concrete's just going to crumble. He compared it to an old car that is still being driven, though the main frame is

completely rusted out. There might be some work that might help put underneath the bridge, but there are complications with going underneath the bridge. He reminded the board that it was stated earlier that the Army Corps was looking at removing this bridge because it couldn't pass the FEMA-recommended flood levels. So, if work is done below the low quarter of the bridge, it would limit the capacity to pass water even more, and anything underneath the bridge will still turn to rubble on top, so it would be rusting metal and rubble.

Board Action:

Member Bienvenu moved in case 2025-010683-HDRB, for the Shelby St. Foot Bridge request for demolition to that the staff's recommendations be adopted, that findings be entered, that the exception criteria under 14-5.2(D)(1)(a) have been met concerning alternative two presented by the applicant for the reconstruction as to be further modified and discussed in the next case, and that the board has considered the factors outlined in 14-3.14 and determined that those factors all indicate that demolition of the structure would be appropriate on condition that the bridge be reestablished in the same location with the same materials, and design to match as closely as possible the existing bridge as to be further determined in the subsequent case. Member Degnan seconded. The motion passed with the Board voting unanimously by roll call vote (5-0).

Board Action:

Member Bienvenu moved in case 2025-010684-HDRB, Shelby St. Foot Bridge requesting construction of the pedestrian bridge that findings be entered that consistent with staff's recommendation the exception criteria have not been met with respect to option number one as presented by the applicant but that the exception criteria are met with respect to option two as requested by the applicant, with the further conditions that final plans be developed that show that the replacement bridge will correspond as closely as possible to the existing bridge with respect to materials and design and will utilize the materials of the existing bridge that can be salvaged, specifically the rock, and that no artificial stone facades be utilized in any event, that the dimensions be as to the extent they're changing from the dimensions of the bridge as it exists in either length or width or height, be the minimum divergence as is possible from what exists that would be consistent with the ADA and any other applicable legal requirements and that the revised plans be submitted to staff for approval to be given only as is consistent with the board's concerns as expressed tonight, and if the staff has any question as to whether or not the plans are consistent with the board's desires that it will be rescheduled and come back to the board for a final determination. Member Biedscheid seconded.

Member Biedscheid offered a friendly amendment as a clarifying condition related to the length of the bridge that to pursue the lightest touch possible, which includes not disturbing the river channel rocks, that the length considers avoid touching the channels.

Member Bienvenu accepted the friendly amendment.

Member Cherry stated he was concerned about the dimensions allowing an increase in height but potentially minimizing an increase in width, which will change the scale of the bridge. The design, as it is proposed with a six-foot width and an addition to the required height, matches the scale proportionally of the existing bridge. If the width is limited to four feet and then the height goes to 42 inches proportionally, the bridge will look significantly different, even though making it six feet wide makes it a bigger bridge.

Chair Rios agreed with Member Cherry.

Member Cherry made a friendly amendment to allow the six-foot width.

Aguilar Medrano stated she did not feel she had enough information about what the finished stone would look like, as it makes such an impact that it is so important to get that right. She felt that the final design needed to come back to the board to know exactly what material was found that could be used. She needs to know what it will look like. Even with a real stone veneer, the thickness of that is consistent and gives this flat appearance, which the current bridge doesn't have. It currently has an organic, irregular pattern that makes it feel special, and that's what I should preserve. There is not enough information at this point to predict if that's going to happen. So, while she is in favor of everything in the motion, she would most likely vote no at this point just because she felt it was necessary to come back to the board.

Chair Rios said she believed Member Bienvenu indicated that it should come back to the board.

Member Bienvenu clarified that the motion was framed so that it was to go for staff approval, and only if staff found that they weren't certain whether it met the board's desires, then it would come back to the board for review. However, he was perfectly fine when it came back. He asked if it could be placed on the agenda for the next hearing on July 22, 2025.

Director Lamboy stated it could be put on that agenda. However, if the board did not have confidence regarding the material and concerns that have been discussed this evening, they could issue a conditional approval to have the stone itself return to the board. Thereby, the bridge itself would be approved, not the stone, and then that would be brought back, and other choices are obvious.

Member Bienvenu asked how long it would take them to have the plans redrawn and over to staff for approval, as compared to returning to the board in two weeks.

Mr. Ashton stated it would take three to four weeks because they would need to meet with the bridge manufacturer to figure out what needs to happen before the structure, which won't really be seen. After all, it's going to have the rock on top of it, and there would need to be coordination with the structural engineers and the manufacturers of the

bridge. He stated the bridge was the same type and they would be happy to bring it back, but then they can also reuse the existing stone.

Member Bienvenu asked if updated plans that address the issues described could be ready in two meetings from now if the applicant needed to go back to the manufacturer first.

Mr. Ashton asked what date they would need to submit since the submittal is due to staff a couple of weeks before the meeting.

Ms. McDonald pointed out that the timelines are very important here, whether they fit in the submittal deadlines. She encouraged the board to consider approving the conceptual plan and have them come back to the Board with the stone information because, with the deadlines, this was a simple accommodation, but she was concerned about the strict timing requirements for both the Board hearings and their construction scheduling.

Director Lamboy stated that the packet is due out to the Historic Districts Review Board on the 18th of July, which is the Friday before Tuesday the 22nd. So, to give a little time, it would be possible to get the information as late as the 17th.

Ms. McDonald stated that if the board could approve the concept and size, they could return with the stonework at another hearing.

Attorney Ruybalid stated that the conundrum is that there would be approval for something that could later be disapproved because this is a final decision that could be appealed, and the decision could end up being reversed.

Chair Rios stated that there was a motion on the table. She said it is the responsibility of the board to review projects, and if they're important enough to review and they need to come back, then that is what needs to be done. She said she was sorry for the time constraints that were needed to be followed but the board and staff are trying to work with them because they are also citizens in the community and working together is the goal, but it is not clear why it took so long to come to the Board for the project in the first place and it did not seem appropriate to place the pressure on the board to approve the project immediately because of the applicants time constraints. She continued that the board has to follow what the ordinance says, and this project is important enough that it should come back to the board.

Member Cherry stated that he would like to amend his friendly amendment for the motion on the table based on the current conversation. He said his amendment would be to increase the width to six feet and match the stone exactly, and the grout joints in width and size and depth of recess of the grout behind the stone to match what's there exactly.

Member Bienvenu asked for clarification if that was using the existing stone or something as close as possible to the existing.

Member Cherry said something as close as possible because when the bridge is demolished, much of the stone is going to get broken into smaller pieces, which are then not going to be in-kind anymore; they will be smaller, and the sandstone is readily available, so it needs to match exactly what is existing, including the size.

Member Bienvenu accepted the amendment.

Director Lamboy asked for the entire motion to be repeated prior to the vote.

Member Biedscheid stated that her concern would be that if there is not a vote on this with the urgency of the timeline, what may happen is that no bridge would be constructed at all. She felt it was relevant that the applicant had agreed to the lightest touch possible and reusing the existing stone as much as possible to replicate the existing bridge. There is good direction for the staff to review the amended plans, and it is more important to have something built than to have the project abandoned.

Member Bienvenu provided a summary of the motion: to adopt findings that the exception request as to design 1 is denied for the reasons given by staff but that the exception criteria under 5.2(D)(1)(a) are met for the design option number two on condition that final plans be prepared that show detail of those of that option that establish that the design imitates as closely as possible the existing bridge in terms of design, massing, materials and detail, that the alteration in dimensions necessary to accommodate the ADA and to maintain proportionality are granted and that to the extent the existing rock cannot be reused because it is not salvageable that the pattern that the replacement rock match as closely as possible the existing rock and that it be laid with the same pattern and points in between and texture as existing and that final plans showing all of these conditions are met will be submitted to staff for approval, and staff will determine whether or not the plans meet these criteria and if they have any doubt they will return the revised plans to this board for final determination and that the application be approved on that basis.

Member Cherry stated he thought the motion summary encapsulated his friendly amendment.

Chair Rios confirmed that Member Cherry wanted the bridge to be six feet wide or less.

Member Cherry stated the scale should be as proposed, 6-foot-wide with a 42-inch-high handrail.

Member Bienvenu confirmed that the idea was to maintain the same proportionality.

Member Cherry stated that because the code requires the handrail to go up to 42 inches, it dictates that the six-foot width is going to emulate that proportionality the best.

Member Biedscheid stated that the restated motion included both friendly amendments for the dimensions.

Vote:

The motion passed by roll call vote with Members Bienvenu, Biedscheid, Degnan, and Cherry voting for and Member Aguilar Medrano against.

- d. **2025-010697-HDRB, 401 E. Palace Ave.**, Downtown & Eastside Historic District, contributing, Andrew Lyons Design, agent for Abrams Development LLC, owner, requests status and primary façade designations of residence and garage, and yard walls.

Ms. Lani McCulley presented the case and staff recommendation for Amanda Romero in her absence. Staff recommended that the historic status of the residential structure be upgraded to significant, the accessory structure (garage) be upgraded to significant, and the yard walls be designated as contributing, per section 14-5.2(C) Designation of Significant, Contributing or Noncontributing Status Within Historic Districts.

Chair Rios asked if there was evidence that showed that the house and garage had always been white and if the pediments had been the same color as well.

Ms. McCulley stated the research indicates the color of the house and the garage has always been white, and there is no history of the color of the pediments.

Member Biedscheid said she thought there was a reference in the HCPI to different layers of plaster underneath the current white stucco of different colors.

Ms. McCulley stated that the underlying layers are also white.

Member Cherry stated he observed that it looked to be pentile with a parging coat of smooth plaster that was gray, that's about 3/4 of an inch thick, and then it has a very thin layer of white plaster over that, and then there's white paint on top. He explained parging was typically a technique that was done very similarly to plaster, but using cement mortar, and masons do it to parge layers, to build out surfaces. He said this is subjective and nuanced, but the reason he observed that as parging as opposed to plaster is really because plastering is with a foam float finish with very round features as opposed to that building which is very unique in the sense that somebody paid great attention to detail of how plane and flat the wall was made as opposed to using a very short soft applicator which would mold itself to the undulations of adobe. This was made to be very straight-lined.