

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

Case # 2025-10489-HDRB

Address – 539 Garcia St.

Agent’s Name – Aviva Baumann, Wildflower Construction, LLC

Owner/Applicant’s Name – Penny Rembe

THIS MATTER came before the Historic Districts Review Board (“Board”) for hearing on June 24, 2025.

BACKGROUND

The Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style single-family residence at 539 Garcia St. is listed as contributing to the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. It was constructed of adobe in the 1940s as part of the José Dolores Garcia family compound. A rear addition was constructed sometime between 1958 and 1966 in a ranch style at a lower height than the original structure. After 1978, a bay window addition was added on the west elevation and two window openings changed. According to the 2025 Historic Cultural Properties Inventory (HCPI), the south elevation porch appears to have been reconstructed at an unknown date due to the types of materials used in the construction, including milled plates and precut corbels. The residence is one of the original homes located in the Garcia Estate Subdivision, which was developed to accommodate Garcia family members with land deeded from the Garcia family ranch. No primary facades have been designated on the residence.

A garage which may date back to the original construction of the house sits on the northwest corner of the lot, but it has not been assigned a historic status. It is an adobe one-car garage in Pueblo-Revival style consistent with the house style. The windows are wood sash windows, with one being a three-over-one window and the other a one-over-one window.

The Applicant requests the following:

- 1) Status review with primary façade designation, if applicable, for the residential structure, and
- 2) Status review with primary façade designation, if applicable, for the garage accessory structure.

The residential structure retains its original footprint, except for the bay window and rear addition. The residence contributes to the historic associations and architectural design qualities that are significant for the Downtown and Eastside Historic District and specifically to the José Dolores Garcia Estate Subdivision. The Staff believes the south façade holds the most historic integrity of the residence, even with the changes and/or reconstruction of the portal. The garage’s east elevation retains the most historic integrity of the garage, with the three-over-one wood window, which is most likely original to the structure. The Staff has concluded that the residence and the associated garage are contributing to the district.

FINDINGS OF FACT

After conducting a public hearing and having heard from the Applicant and all interested persons, the Board hereby FINDS, as follows:

1. Historic Preservation Division City staff reviewed the Application and related materials and information submitted by the Applicant for conformity with applicable Santa Fe City Code (“SFCC”) requirements and provided the Board with a written report of its findings (Staff Report), which evaluates the factors relevant to the Application.
2. Historic Preservation Division Staff Recommendation: Staff recommended that the historic status of the residential structure be maintained as contributing, with the south façade designated as the primary façade; and that the accessory structure be assigned contributing status, with the east facade designated as primary, per SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(2), Designation of Significant, Contributing or Non-Contributing Status Within Historic Districts.
3. The project is subject to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C), Regulation of Significant and Contributing Structures.
4. The project is subject to the requirements and general design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(D), General Design Standards.
5. The property is located in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District and is subject to the district design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(E).
6. SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(2)(a-c) gives the Board authority to review and approve “significant,” “contributing,” or “non-contributing” status designations and to designate primary façades of contributing structures.
7. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “contributing structure” is “a structure, located in a Historic District, approximately 50 years old or older that helps to establish and maintain the character of that Historic District. Although a contributing structure is not unique in itself, it adds to the historic associations or historic architectural design qualities that are significant for a district. The contributing structure may have had minor alterations, but its integrity remains.”
8. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “primary façade” is one or more principal faces or elevations of a building with features that define the character of the building's architecture.
9. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “non-contributing structure” is a “structure, located in a Historic District, that is less than 50 years old or that does not exhibit sufficient historic integrity to establish and maintain the character of the Historic District.”
10. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report, and the exhibits, testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the residential structure meets the definition of a “contributing structure,” as recommended by Staff.
11. The Board finds that the south façade is the primary elevation of the residential structure with the features that define the character of the structure’s architecture.
12. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report, and the exhibits, testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the garage structure meets the definition of a “contributing structure,” as recommended by Staff.

13. The Board finds that the south façade is the primary elevation of the garage with the features that define the character of the structure’s architecture.
14. The information contained in the application and provided in testimony and evidence establishes that all applicable requirements for Board review have been met.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Under the circumstances and given the evidence and testimony submitted during the hearing, the Board acted upon the application as follows:

1. The Board has the authority to review and approve the application.
2. The Board grants the Applicant’s request to review historic status.
3. The Board maintains the residential structure’s contributing status.
4. The Board designates the accessory (garage) structure as a contributing structure.
5. The Board designates the following elevation of the residence as the primary façade: south.
6. The Board designates the following elevation of the accessory structure as the primary façade: south.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON THIS 28th DAY of April, 2026, BY THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS REVIEW BOARD OF THE CITY OF SANTA FE.

Cecilia Rios
Chair

Date

FILED:

Geralyn Cardenas
City Clerk

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Frank Ruybalid
Assistant City Attorney

Date