

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

Case # 2025-10874-HDRB

Address – 423½ W. San Francisco St., Unit A

Agent’s Name – Walter Klump

Owner/Applicant’s Name – Ellen Yarrell

THIS MATTER came before the Historic Districts Review Board (“Board”) for hearing on August 12, 2025.

BACKGROUND

The single-family residence and garage at 423½ W. San Francisco St., Unit A, are listed as contributing to the Downtown and Eastside Historic District with the south and east elevations designated as primary on the main structure and the north and west elevations designated as primary on the garage. The main residential structure was constructed in the 1880s on a 0.08-acre parcel and is comprised of approximately 1,093 square feet of heated space. It was built in a vernacular fashion in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style, as seen by the rectangular building shape, adobe block construction material, deeply inset windows and doors, and recessed three-over-one window on the east elevation.

The archival research in the Sanborn maps shows an addition to the west and east on the main residential structure between 1930-1948. The garage structure was built post-1948. Window and door alterations and a latilla portal were added on the south and west facades in the 1990s. The north façade is currently a painted-mural cinderblock wall associated with the 126 N. Guadalupe St. parking area for Concrete Jungle Smoke Shop.

Prior to an April 8, 2025, Historic Districts Review Board status review hearing, Case # 2025-10102-HDRB, there were no known previous status evaluations, Board cases, or Historic Cultural Properties Inventories (HCPI) or Historic Building Inventory (HBI) surveys on the subject property. In April, 2025, the Board upgraded the historic status of the main structure and garage to contributing, and designated the south and east elevations as primary on the main structure, and the north and west elevations as primary on the garage.

The Applicant now asks the Board for approval of the following items:

- 1) Stucco the east, south, and west facades of the exterior with cementitious stucco, color El Rey “Sand,” in a smooth texture.
- 2) Remove both existing non-historic portals in front of the south façade.
- 3) Remove all existing non-historic lighting fixtures from exterior façades and install Artesanos Imports sconces.
- 4) Replace all existing canales with in-kind galvanized steel trough units.
- 5) Replace broken coyote fence in front of the southern façade in kind.
- 6) Build a 3-foot stucco yard wall with wood gate between the main house and garage.
- 7) Remove all non-historic aluminum storm doors and windows and replace all non-historic

windows with Kolbe heritage series all-wood, simulated divided-lite windows. The selected Kolbe Heritage Series windows feature primed, pine sash with simulated divided lites, using 7/8-inch-wide beveled wood muntin bars on both the exterior and interior, along with an internal spacer to replicate the appearance of true-divided-lite panes. The 1/1 windows across the south façade of the central core were selected to replicate units that existed prior to the 1990s renovation. Knowledge of the original design of the other windows throughout the house is unclear, and the historical window consultant selected lite configurations considered appropriate to the period and to the existing openings.

- 8) Seal south elevation door # 2 and remove door hardware.
- 9) Install Gree condenser in front of the south façade near the existing mechanical equipment and garbage bins. It will be obstructed by a coyote fence.
- 10) Infill 1/2-lite door opening on the south facade. The interior has been filled in by a previous owner. This requires an exception to SFCC Section 14-5.2(D)(5)(a)(iii), which prohibits the closure of existing openings on the primary façades of contributing structures.
- 11) Install double doors on the east façade for egress, in compliance with the International Residential Code (IRC). This requires the removal of a historic window and enlargement of the window opening. This requires an exception to SFCC Section 14-5.2(D)(5)(a)(i), which prohibits the removal of historic windows, and prohibits the enlargement or reduction of window openings on the primary façades of contributing structures.

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. Land Use Department Staff conducted a preliminary zoning review (“PZR”) and determined that the application appears to meet the underlying zoning standards set forth in the Santa Fe City Code (“SFCC”).
2. Historic Preservation Division Staff reviewed the application and related materials and information submitted by the Applicant for conformity with applicable SFCC requirements and provided the Board with a written report of its findings (“Staff Report”), which evaluates the factors relevant to the application.
3. Historic Preservation Division Staff Recommendation: Staff recommended approval of the proposed project and recommended a finding that all the exception criteria had been met and that the application complied with SFCC Section 14-5.2(D), General Design Standards for all Historic Districts, and 14-5.2(E), Downtown and Eastside Design Standards. Staff recommended that the proposed stucco be installed utilizing the same rough texture of the existing stucco to retain the historic character of the building.
4. The project is subject to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C), Regulation of Significant and Contributing Structures.
5. The project is subject to the requirements and general design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(D), General Design Standards.
6. 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).

7. Under SFCC Sections 14-2.6(B-C), 14-5.2(A)(1), 14-5.2(C)(2)(a-d & f), 14-5.2(C)(3)(a-b), 14-5.2(C)(4), and 14-5.2(D), the Board has authority to review, approve, with or without conditions, or deny, all or some of the Applicant's proposed design to assure overall compliance with applicable design standards.

Door Infill on South Primary Façade:

8. The Applicant requests approval to infill a door on the south primary façade. The existing opening has been partially filled from the interior by a prior owner. The door has the appearance of a functional exit from the exterior but does not function as a door.
9. SFCC Section 14-5.2(D)(5)(a)(iii) prohibits the closure of an existing opening. The Staff determined that an exception to SFCC Section 14-5.2(D)(5)(a)(iii) would be required for approval of this element of the application, and the Applicant requested the exception.
10. To obtain an exception, the Applicant was required to conclusively demonstrate that the three exception criteria set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(b) have been met.
11. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report and exhibits, and the evidence and testimony presented at the hearing, the Board agrees with Staff's finding that the Applicant has conclusively demonstrated that all exception criteria have been met:
 - a. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(c)(i), the Board finds that granting the exception would not damage the character of the district, because the existing door is not historic and does not add to the character of the district. The glass panes reveal interior drywall, and the door has subsequently been covered with a curtain. The removal of the door and stucco infill will improve the existing aesthetic by eliminating a non-conforming condition;
 - b. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(c)(ii), the Board finds that the exception is required to prevent a hardship to the Applicant or an injury to the public welfare, because the existing condition of this door presents financial and practical hardship on the Applicant. Restoring the interior opening and converting it into a functional exit would create an exterior door that enters into a bathroom, and would require significant demolition and reconfiguration of the existing bathroom to avoid that; and
 - c. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(c)(iii), the Board finds that granting the exception would strengthen the unique heterogeneous character of the City by providing a full range of design options to ensure that residents can continue to reside within the Historic Districts, because this modification enables the room to be used as a fully functional bedroom, and maintaining a non-functional exterior door opening into a bathroom limits the usability and flexibility of this historic home and may discourage continued occupancy.
12. The Board finds that the Applicant has conclusively demonstrated that all of the exception criteria have been conclusively demonstrated with respect to infill of the historic door opening on the south primary façade.

Enlargement of Window Opening on East Primary Façade:

13. The Applicant proposes to remove the existing historic window on the east, primary façade, enlarge the opening and install a full-height door. The primary objective of the proposed alteration is to address egress from the east wing.

14. Under SFCC Section 14-5.2(D)(5)(a)(i), historic windows on primary façades of contributing structures shall be repaired or restored wherever possible, and no window opening shall be widened or narrowed. The Staff determined that an exception to SFCC Section 14-5.2(D)(5)(a)(i) would be required for approval of this element of the application, and the Applicant requested the exception.
15. To obtain an exception, the Applicant was required to conclusively demonstrate that the three exception criteria set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(b) have been met.
16. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report and exhibits, and the evidence and testimony presented at the hearing, the Board agrees with Staff's finding that the Applicant has conclusively demonstrated that all exception criteria have been met:
 - a. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(b)(i), the Board finds that granting the exception would not damage the character of the district because the proposed double doors (Kolbe Heritage, all wood, simulated divided-lite) will be built in-kind to the existing doors on the south facade. This elevation of the building is not visible from a public right-of-way and the modification will not affect the character of the house or the district;
 - b. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(b)(ii), the Board finds that the exception is required to prevent a hardship to the Applicant or an injury to the public welfare, because the proposed change addresses the safety of the occupants of the existing building by allowing unobstructed egress to the outside patio, as required by the International Residential Code (IRC), Section R-310.1, Emergency Escape and Rescue Opening Required; and
 - c. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(5)(b)(iii), the Board finds that granting the exception would strengthen the unique heterogeneous character of the City by providing a full range of design options to ensure that residents can continue to reside within the Historic Districts because, beyond safety considerations, the proposed door will facilitate improved access to an existing patio, promoting an indoor-outdoor living experience. This enhancement supports contemporary living standards while respecting the building's historic context.
17. The Board finds that the Applicant has conclusively demonstrated that all of the exception criteria have been conclusively demonstrated with respect to removal of the historic window and enlargement of the opening to create a full-height door on the east primary façade.
18. Under SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(3)(b), the Board has the authority to approve an application for alteration or new construction on the condition that changes relating to exterior appearance recommended by the Board be made in the proposed work, and no permit is to issue until new drawings or documentation, satisfactory to the Board, have been submitted.
19. The information contained in the Staff Report and exhibits, and the testimony and evidence submitted at the hearing, establishes that all applicable requirements for Board review as herein described have been met.
20. The information contained in the Staff Report and exhibits, and the testimony and evidence submitted at the hearing, establishes that all applicable design criteria have been met, subject to the conditions imposed by the HDRB, as described below.

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 approves Items # 1-11 as set forth in the application, as recommended by Staff, with the following additional conditions:
 - a. That the stucco texture be matched unless the applicant can prove by photos submitted to the Staff that a smoother texture existed prior to the existing stucco style.
3. The Board grants the two exceptions requested in the application for Items # 10 and 11.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON THIS 9th of JUNE, 2026, BY THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS REVIEW BOARD OF THE CITY OF SANTA FE.

Cecilia Rios, Chair

Date

FILED:

Geraldyn Cardenas
City Clerk

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Frank Ruybalid
Assistant City Attorney

Date