

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

Case # 2025-11537-HDRB

Address – 521 Calle Corvo

Agent's Name – Rajah Bose, Architect

Owner/Applicant's Name – Louis Pepper & Ruth Williamson

THIS MATTER came before the Historic Districts Review Board (“Board”) for hearing on January 13, 2026.

BACKGROUND

The single-family residence at 521 Calle Corvo is listed as contributing to the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. The roughly 1,346-square-foot structure was built in 1946 in the Territorial Revival architectural design style, as seen by the red brick coping on top of the parapet, recessed wooden-framed, picture windows, and terra-cotta tile on the entry portal, commonly observed on the Calle Corvo streetscape. According to a 2025 Historic Cultural Properties Inventory, this is possibly the second house built in the Calle Corvo subdivision. The house has a modified H-plan with a symmetrical front façade. Its composition centers on an inset portal flanked by cubic projections. The arrangement recalls the influence of the historic Roque Lobato House, whose form was repeatedly adapted to organize small Territorial-style dwellings. It includes an attached one-car garage and a short front yard wall.

At this hearing, the Applicant asks the Board to review the structure’s historic status and to designate primary facades, if applicable. The GIS map, a 1984 Historic Building Inventory, and historic cases refer to the structure as contributing. However, there is no record of a status review. Most likely, the status is a result of the mass inventory of the Historic Districts in the 1980s. In September, 2025, John Murphey authored a Historic Cultural Property Inventory on the property and concluded that since the main residential structure has maintained its original footprint since 1958, the structure should remain contributing, and further that the south, street-facing façades should be designated as primary. The Staff recommends the historic status of the main residential structure be maintained as contributing, and the south façades (1, 2, 3 and 4), including the portal but excluding the non-historic doors and windows, be designated as primary. This recommendation excludes the garage and yard wall. Based on aerial evidence and the 1984 HBI, which did not note a garage or yard wall, the garage and yard wall were constructed after 1984, and are not 50 years old.

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 the historic status of the main residential structure be maintained as contributing, and the south façades (1, 2, 3, and 4), including the portal but excluding non-historic doors and windows, be designated as primary, per SFCC Section 14-5.2(C), Designation of Significant and Contributing Structures. Staff recommended that the garage structure and yard wall be designated as non-contributing due to their modernity.
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 exhibits and the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the structure meets the definition of a “contributing structure,” as recommended by Staff. The Board finds that the red brick coping, picture windows and terra-cotta tile on the entry portal are historic architectural design qualities that contribute to the Calle Corvo streetscape.
11. The Board finds that the South façades are the primary elevations of the structure, with the features that define the character of the structure’s architecture, including the portal and window and door openings but excluding the non-historic windows and doors.
12. 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:

Finding of Fact and Conclusions of Law – Status or Primary Façade Designation
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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 structure's contributing status.
4. The Board designates the following elevations of the main house as the primary façades: South facades # 1, 2, 3 and 4.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON THIS 22nd DAY of SEPTEMBER, 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