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

Case # 2026-11769-HDRB
Address – 600 Camino Rancheros
Agent's Name – Marc Naktin, Architect
Owner/Applicant's Name – Melchijah Spragins Jr., Spragins Family Revocable Trust

THIS MATTER came before the Historic Districts Review Board ("Board") for hearing on January 27, 2026.

BACKGROUND

The 1999 Spanish Pueblo Revival style main residence on the lot at 600 Camino Rancheros is located in the Historic Review Historic District and is not historic. The 0.65-acre lot has a lower elevation at the front of the structure and a higher elevation – up to 18.8 feet – in the rear. The residence is 4,144 square feet and has five roofed porches and a 703-square-foot attached garage. The property also has two accessory dwelling units: one on the northeast corner of the lot at 677 square feet, and one at the southwest corner at 770 square feet. There is also a 43-square-foot utility shed.

Camino Rancheros has a rural character along the vegetation-lined road, though the housing tends to be larger residences that are close in proximity to each other. The lots are generally sloped with the high point at the street and the houses having a setback of about ten feet, so that the houses are hidden behind coyote fences and yard walls in addition to the vegetation. Most of the residences are Spanish Pueblo Revival-style homes, the details of which are not visible.

There are a total of 20 structures in the streetscape of 600 Camino Rancheros. Only seven of the 20 structures on the streetscape are included in the height calculation. Thirteen of the structures in the streetscape range in height from 16.7 to 22.6 feet and are excluded from the height calculation, either grandfathered due to their construction before adoption of the Historic District's height ordinance in 1997 or approved by the HDRB with an exception for height. Seven of the excluded homes have portions of the residence as a second story.

The Applicant proposes the following exterior alterations:

1. Construct a 1,322-square-foot second-floor addition to a height of 24 feet, where the maximum allowable height is 14'8". An exception is requested to SFCC Section 14-4.6(F)(2)(II)(a) for exceeding the maximum allowable height.

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 application and a finding that the criteria had been conclusively demonstrated for an exception to SFCC Section 14-4.6(F)(2)(II)(a) to exceed the maximum allowable height.
4. The project is subject to the requirements and general design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-4.6(E), General Design Standards for All Historic Districts.
5. The property is located in the Historic Review District and is subject to the district design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-4.6(G)(3).
6. Under SFCC Sections 14-2.2(F)(2) and (3)(I), 14-4.6(A)(1), 14-4.6(C)(3)(I-II), and 14-4.6(C)(4), 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.
7. Under SFCC Section 14-4.6(F)(2)(II)(a), "If a proposed building has a parapet, the façade shall not be in excess of two (2) feet of the average of the height of the façades in the streetscape."
8. The Applicant proposes to construct a second story addition to a height of 24 feet on a parapeted house where the maximum allowable height is 14'8". The Staff determined that an exception to SFCC Section 14-4.6(F)(2)(II)(a) would be required for approval of the application, and the Applicant requested an exception.
9. To obtain an exception, the Applicant was required to conclusively demonstrate that the six exception criteria set forth in SFCC Section 14-4.6(D)(3)(II) have been met.
10. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report and exhibits, and the evidence and testimony presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the Applicant has not conclusively demonstrated that all exception criteria have been met:
    a. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-4.6(D)(3)(II)(a), the Board finds that granting the exception would damage the character of the streetscape because any structure 10 feet over the maximum allowable height would damage the character of the streetscape;
    b. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-4.6(D)(3)(II)(b), the Board finds that the exception is not required to prevent a hardship to the Applicant or an injury to the public welfare because the existing house, at 4,144 square feet, is large enough to accommodate the Applicant's needs and there is no persuasive showing that a second-story expansion is necessary;
    c. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-4.6(D)(3)(II)(c), the Board finds that granting the exception would not 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 it has not been demonstrated that the existing house is insufficient for the Applicant's needs;
    d. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-4.6(D)(3)(II)(d), the Board finds that there are not special conditions or circumstances that are peculiar to the land or structure

involved that are not applicable to other lands or structures in the related streetscape: The terrain and lot configuration of this property is closely similar to all the other properties on the applicable streetscape;

e. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-4.6(D)(3)(II)(e), the Board finds it has not been conclusively demonstrated that the special conditions or circumstances affecting the property are not the result of the actions of the Applicant because there are no special conditions and the design choice in this application is specific to this applicant; and

f. Pursuant to SFCC Section 14-4.6(D)(3)(II)(f), the Board finds that granting the exception would not provide the least negative impact with respect to the purposes set forth in SFCC Section 14-4.6(A)(1) because the additional height has a larger impact than is necessary.

11. The Board finds that the Applicant has failed to conclusively demonstrate that all of the exception criteria have been met.
12. 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.
13. The information contained in the Staff Report, and the exhibits, testimony and evidence submitted at the hearing, establishes that all applicable design criteria have not 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 denies the exception requested in the application.
3. The Board denied the application.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON THIS 13th DAY of OCTOBER, 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