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

Case # 2026-12282-HDRB
Address – 1295 Cerro Gordo Rd.
Agent's Name – Harvey N. Monroe, Jr., AIA, Terraplen Architects + Planners, LLC
Owner/Applicant's Name – Anne T. Pfauth and Thomas Eric Sikes

THIS MATTER came before the Historic Districts Review Board ("Board") for hearing on May 12, 2026.

BACKGROUND

The adobe 1930s Librado and Plácida Ortiz House at 1295 Cerro Gordo Rd. expresses a vernacular Pueblo Revival style, with exposed vigas at the façade and rounded parapets. Ownership of this property by the Armijo family, eponyms of Armijo Lane which runs north and south nearby, extends back to 1917 when it formed part of a five-acre irrigated parcel held by Ramoncita Armijo, Ramon Armijo and Florencio Armijo. In the 1920s, the land on both sides of Cerro Gordo Road came under the ownership of Abundio Armijo, Sr., a farmer, rancher and a founding member of La Unión Protectiva. According to a 2026 Historic Cultural Properties Inventory by Architectural Historian John W. Murphey, Abundio's daughter Plácida married Librado Ortiz, and they settled on the subject property.

The residence started as two connected rooms, but is now 1,030 square feet, excluding the two portals. The south façade features an arched porch entry and wood casement windows, and appears to retain its original configuration. There was an addition of two rooms in the 1930s, which created a bump-out at the northeast corner. The origin of the stone retaining wall in front of the house is unclear. The low planters immediately in front of the house appear in earlier aerial photographs and lend period character to the property, helping to establish its historic setting. The lower rockwork is first clearly visible in 1978 aerial imagery.

The Historic Design Review Board approved the demolition of the garage in 1995 under Case # H-95-185. In 1996, the structure was 927 square feet when a 115-square-foot addition was placed on the north elevation and the west-elevation portal altered, along with other changes. The HDRB approved these alterations under Case # H-96-024, with the condition that the divided-lite casement windows on the west and south were to be restored, and the addition's roof was to be flat. The HDRB awarded Roberta Glynn Armijo a Heritage Preservation Award in 1997 in recognition of the home's sensitive renovation. The property remained in the Armijo family until this past year when Roberta Glynn Armijo placed it on the market.

The residence appears on the City of Santa Fe's official Building Historic Status map with a contributing designation, although no primary façades have ever been designated for it. The Applicant makes the following requests from the Board:

1) Status Review with primary-façade designation, if applicable, for a residential structure.

2) Status Review for the low planter/deck stone walls directly in front of the residence.
3) Status Review for the lower retaining walls at the entrance from Cerro Gordo Road.

The planter/deck stone walls directly in front of the residence are not a type of structure that has been historically designated in the past. These are not yard walls, but a planter; the Staff does not believe it is appropriate to give historic designations to planters even though it does meet the code definition of "structure." Therefore, if a status is assigned to the planter, the staff would recommend a non-contributing status.

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: The Staff recommended a finding that the historic status of the structure be maintained as contributing and the south and east elevations be designated as the primary façades (facades 1, 2, 3, including the portal, and 4), and that the retaining walls be designated as non-contributing per SFCC Section 14-4.6(C), Designation of Significant, Contributing or Non-Contributing Status Within Historic Districts.
3. The project is subject to SFCC Section 14-4.6(C), Regulation of Significant and Contributing Structures.
4. The project is subject to the requirements and general design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-4.6(E), 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 14-4.6(G)(2).
6. Under SFCC Section 14-9.3, 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."
7. Under SFCC Section 14-9.3, 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.
8. Under SFCC Section 14-9.3, the definition of a "non-contributing structure" is a "structure, located in an H district, that is less than 50 years old or that does not exhibit sufficient historic integrity to establish and maintain the character of the H District."
9. SFCC Section 14-4.6(C)(2)(I-III) gives the Board authority to review and approve "significant," "contributing," or "non-contributing" status designations and to designate primary façades of contributing structures.

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 residential structure meets the definition of a "contributing structure," as recommended by Staff. The Board finds that its contributing status is based on its vernacular development, and distinctive details, such as its rounded parapets, and arched porch entry and exposed vigas on the south façade.
11. The Board finds that the south, including the portal, and the east façades (1-4) are the primary elevations 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 exhibits and the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the yard wall and planter structures meets the definition of a "contributing structure." These features are necessary due to the slope of Cerro Gordo Road, and the stone construction of these features is consistent with the character of this street.
13. 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 following elevations of the residential structure as the primary façades: south, including the portal, and east façades (1-4).
5. The Board designates the yard walls and planter walls as a contributing structures.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON THIS 10th DAY of NOVEMBER, 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