

Legislative Council Service

Information Memorandum

DATE: June 25, 2024

TO: State-Local Government Historical Review Board

FROM: Raúl E. Burciaga

SUBJECT: State of NM Executive Office Building Project - Application to Demolish Existing Structures at 402, 406, 410 and 414 Don Gaspar Avenue

Background

In 2023, the State resumed work on the Executive Office Building (EOB) project, requesting historic status review of all structures on the subject property at the direction of City staff. Historic status was re-assessed by the City of Santa Fe (City) Historic Districts Review Board (HDRB) on May 9, 2023, and the status designations are summarized below:

Address	Structure	Date of Construction	Historic Status	Primary Façade(s)
128 South Capitol St.	Motor Pool Building	c. 1966-1969	Non- Contributing	N/A
	Garage	c. 1970-1981	Non- Contributing	N/A
	Yard Wall	c. 1970-1981	Non- Contributing	N/A
130 South Capitol St.	Concha Ortiz y Pino Building	1961	Contributing	North façade with entry + West façade with courtyard wall
402 Don Gaspar Ave.	Casita	c. 1930	Contributing	East + North
	Garage	c. 1930	Contributing	East
406 Don Gaspar Ave.	Casita	c. 1930	Contributing	East + South
	Garage	c. 1930	Contributing	East
410 Don Gaspar Ave.	Casita	c. 1930	Contributing	East + South
	Garage	c. 1930	Contributing	East
414 Don Gaspar Ave.	Casita	c. 1930	Contributing	East + South

These structures are not listed on the National or State Register of Cultural Properties.

On October 16, 2023, the State submitted applications to the City regarding the State's proposal to demolish the structures listed above to accommodate the construction of the proposed EOB. On January 9, 2024, the HDRB considered the requests at a public hearing and approved demolition of the structures at 128 and 130 South Capitol St., namely the Concho Ortiz y Pino Building, Motor Pool Building, garage, and the yard wall, subject to the State and City concurring on the design of the EOB. The HDRB was not in agreement with the State's request to demolish the Don Gaspar structures.

In accordance with Section 3-22-6(G) NMSA 1978 and Santa Fe City Code §14-5.2(M)(4)(a), the State-Local Government Historic Review Board was formed to resolve the disagreement regarding the demolition of the structures at 402, 406, 410, and 414 Don Gaspar Ave.

Historical Summaries by Building

To document the history of each of the buildings on the subject property, Historic Cultural Properties Inventory (HCPI) forms were submitted with the historic status review applications and are available online (see link for exhibits at end of this memo). Below are summary statements of the history of each of the buildings for which demolition is proposed.

- 402 Don Gaspar Avenue: Constructed in approximately 1930 in the Spanish Pueblo Revival style as a residential structure and detached garage. The stuccoed pen-tile residence is a single-story bungalow that was originally divided into two residential units, and has more recently been used as an office and is now vacant. The single-car garage at the west edge of the property is built of stuccoed pen-tile, with an east-facing garage door.
- 406 Don Gaspar Avenue: Constructed in approximately 1930 in the Spanish Pueblo Revival style as a residential structure and detached garage. The stuccoed pen-tile residence is a single-story bungalow that is now being occupied as an office. The single-car garage at the west edge of the property is built of stuccoed pen-tile, with an east-facing garage door.
- 410 Don Gaspar Avenue: Constructed in approximately 1930 in the Territorial Revival style as a residential structure and detached garage. The stuccoed pen-tile residence is a single-story bungalow with brick coping and white wood trim that is now occupied as an office. The single-car garage at the west edge of the property is built of stuccoed pen-tile, with an east-facing garage door.
- 414 Don Gaspar Avenue: Constructed in approximately 1930 in the Territorial Revival style as a residential. The stuccoed pen-tile residence is a single-story bungalow with brick coping that is now occupied as an office.

Existing Conditions

As reflected in the inspection reports provided by City of Santa Fe Building Official, Bobby Padilla, and by the State of New Mexico Construction Industries Division Bureau Chief, Martin Romero, the existing condition of the buildings at the subject properties is poor (see attached Inspection Reports). Code officials for the City and the State have determined that due to the poor condition of the structures, it would be extremely difficult to bring the structures into compliance with energy conservation, electrical and plumbing codes, and demolition is recommended. The City Building Official, Bobby Padilla, issued two Historic Inspection Reports - the first dated November 22, 2022, and the second dated December 7, 2023, just prior to the HDRB hearing conducted on January 9, 2024. The only difference between the two reports is that Mr. Padilla's recommendation that the structures be demolished was removed from the later report.

In 2021, the State of New Mexico conducted a long-range, strategic space master planning effort and evaluated the potential costs associated with renovating the existing casitas on Don Gaspar, such that they would meet building code and life-safety standards. A comprehensive condition assessment was conducted of state-owned office spaces on the subject property, along with associated cost estimations of performing necessary renovations. For the casitas and associated garages, costs of renovating and bringing the structures into code compliance were estimated at over \$1.8 million in 2021. Accounting for construction escalation since that time, renovation costs for the casitas and associated garages are presently estimated to be approximately \$2.6 million. Additionally, sewer/service lines would have to be replaced at cost possibly exceeding \$3 million.

Conceptual Design of Executive Office Building

The State of New Mexico's planned EOB will house the consolidation of various departments into a single building on the subject property located within the Capitol Complex. The project is being designed as a multi-story building of approximately 160,000-190,000 gross square feet, inclusive of below-grade parking for over 700 cars.

Pedestrian circulation was a critical factor in site design, taking into account multiple buildings in the surrounding area that are important for pedestrian connection - primarily the New Mexico State Capitol to the east, the Bataan Memorial Building and adjacent annexes to the north, and the Villagra Building to the west. Consideration for plazas, pathways, portales, and intuitive wayfinding have been woven into the plan. The main entrance to the building is planned to face the primary street of South Capitol Street, just as the Concha Ortiz y Pino Building is presently oriented. Parking is planned to be below grade, and the entrance to the parking structure is planned on the west, adjacent to the entrance/exit of the public parking garage to the south on Galisteo. Understanding the vehicular flow and one-way traffic for the site, it was logical to plan for the vehicular access to be located at the southwest corner of the site. This reduces additional traffic in the area by removing cars from the roadway sooner and helping improve pedestrian

movements on the northern part of the site.

A pedestrian alley has been provided to the south between the proposed building and the parking garage, which will also allow for east-west movement between the structures and allow for easy access to the State Capitol to the east. A secondary entrance to the EOB is aligned with the vertical circulation core of the existing garage, so users exiting the parking garage can easily access the new building. If security allows, persons could also pass through the lobby on the first floor and proceed through the building to access other buildings like the Bataan Memorial Building.

The design of the EOB reflects the City's design standards, as provided in SFCC §14-5.2(M)(3) and the character of adjacent state buildings in the Territorial Revival style. The goal is to achieve harmony with other buildings with the use of similar materials, color, proportions, and details. Strategies also include shaping the buildings to reduce the scale, with the use of stepped parapets and setbacks in the façade to break up the overall massing. The exterior material is stucco of different colors, and where a cornice is present in the design, it will be of brick or stucco. The window pattern is primarily a set of punched windows with some inset to help with shading and to reference the character of historic adobe buildings in the vicinity. A portal is used on the north and east facades to aid in pedestrian circulation to and from the State Capitol. A portico ("portal") is used to help denote the primary entry and is located as part of the public plaza on the north face of the building.

Careful considerations were given to the alignment of the EOB's edges with those of adjacent structures to preserve the continuity of the streetscape pattern. In addition, the northeast corner of the building is set back to protect the view corridor of the State Capitol from the historic Villagra Building. The site slopes from east to west and has a fall of approximately 11 feet, with the lower end towards the west. To have a single unified floor the high side as the datum point was selected. The result is a building with stepped massing that transitions at the public entry plaza, roughly midway across the site from east to west. The lower level is partially below grade and exposed on the north and west sides. This results in a shorter building element that can be closer to the street, helping with an improved building massing and a better street edge. Building setbacks and heights balance the zoning and historic overlay requirements with the scale of other state buildings within the immediate vicinity. The building is no higher than 57'-0" at the highest point of the street and the setbacks respect the Business Capital District zoning standards of the State Capitol subdistrict. By way of comparison, the State Capitol Building is approximately 63' tall and the Bataan Memorial Building is approximately 104' tall at their respective highest points.

Demolition Criteria

The criteria for demolition of a structure in the City's historic districts are provided in SFCC §14- 3.14(G)(1) and addressed below:

In determining whether a request for demolition in a historic district should be approved or denied, the HDRB shall consider the following:

Whether the structure is of historical importance;

Applicant Response: The 1983 Don Gaspar Architectural Historic Survey describes the unique attributes of the area south of the State Capitol Building, which is notable as an early twentieth century residential subdivision reflecting a unique blend of Anglo-American house forms with traditional Santa Fe design elements, developed predominantly between the 1890s and the 1940s. The study establishes that bungalows such as the "Don Gaspar Casitas" on the subject property are common in the Don Gaspar Area Historic District and are reflective of the pattern of development that was typical in this neighborhood in the early decades of the twentieth century. This stands in sharp contrast to the development pattern of the Downtown and Eastside Historic District, which is characterized by a semi-rural pattern of incremental residential development that evolved over four centuries, spanning the Spanish, Mexican, Territorial, and American periods and their associated architectural styles and forms. The structures at 402, 406, 410, and 414 Don Gaspar Avenue do not maintain the character of the historic district in which they are situated but rather relate more to the adjacent historic district to the south.

Whether the structure for which demolition is requested is an essential part of a unique street section or block front and whether this street section or block front will be reestablished by a proposed structure; and

Applicant Response: The "Don Gaspar Casitas" are situated within a streetscape dominated by large institutional structures, including the Bataan Memorial Building and the State Capitol (also known as the Roundhouse). These structures are reflective of the Capitol Complex Historic Neighborhood that took shape between the expansion of the former State Capitol (now the Bataan Memorial Building) in 1922, the construction of the NM Public Welfare Building (now the Villagra Building) in 1934 and the Supreme Court Building in 1937, and the extensive expansion of the Capitol campus in the 1950s and 1960s with construction of numerous state office buildings, a new State Capitol, and renovation of antecedent government buildings in the Territorial Revival style. This character will be re-established with the construction of the EOB, for which a design narrative and concept plans have been provided.

The state of repair and structural stability of the structure under consideration.

Applicant Response: As stated in the structural inspection reports provided by City of Santa Fe Building Official, Bobby Padilla, and State of New Mexico Construction Industries Division Bureau Chief, Martin Romero, the existing condition of structures is poor. Both code officials have determined that due to the poor condition of the structures, it would be extremely difficult to bring the structures into compliance with energy

conservation, electrical and plumbing codes, and demolition is recommended.

Exceptions to SFCC §14-5.2(D)(1)(a)

Because the proposed demolition of the Don Gaspar structures will inherently cause those structures to lose their Contributing historic status, City staff determined that exceptions are required to SFCC §14-5.2(D)(1)(a), which states the following:

The status of a significant, contributing, or landmark structure shall be retained and preserved. If a proposed alteration will cause a structure to lose its significant, contributing, or landmark status, the application shall be denied. The removal of historic materials or alteration of architectural features and spaces that embody the status shall be prohibited.

The criteria for exceptions as outlined in SFCC §14-5.2(C)(5)(b) are addressed below:

Do not damage the character of the district;

Applicant Response: The demolition of the casitas will not damage the character of the Downtown and Eastside Historic District, as the character of these structures relates more to the character of the Don Gaspar Area Historic District than to the character of the district in which they are situated. Furthermore, the character of the streetscape and surrounding Capitol Complex Historic Neighborhood will be strengthened by the construction of the EOB, which continues the historic development and expansion of the Capitol Complex.

Are required to prevent a hardship to the applicant or an injury to the public welfare;

Applicant Response: The proposed demolition is required to prevent a hardship to the State of New Mexico in that the cost to bring the existing buildings into code compliance is excessive and will not achieve the desired program and space required to house state offices.

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.

Applicant Response: The proposed demolition will make way for the construction of a new state building, which will serve to continue the 20th century pattern of expanding the campus of state buildings and furthering institutional applications of Territorial Revival style within this context. In this sense, the demolition will allow for the State of New Mexico to fully realize the design potential of the subject property, and the design of the EOB will conform to historic development patterns and stylistic expression. In developing the conceptual design of the EOB, the design team considered several options, including renovating the existing buildings or creating smaller building volumes in

various configurations; however, the design option that has been selected serves the programmatic needs of the State while also achieving harmony of scale and style with the other buildings within the Capitol Complex.

Exhibits available at

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/8ij8dq1aiwcz1803mycgh/AAhwRMFhebs-GiJoStMWiK4?rlkey=mxdgw7jdjvw2yi39yrp85qcp&st=sywu74h8&dl=0>

- Floor Plans & Elevations
- Casita Photos
- HCPI Forms
- City & State Inspection Reports
- Long Range Strategic Space Master Plan Excerpts
- EOB Conceptual Design Package

Disclaimer

This memorandum is submitted as background information. Any opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the New Mexico Legislature, the Capitol Buildings Planning Commission or any other member of the commission or legislative staff.