

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

April 3, 2019

HDRC CASE NO: 2019-146
ADDRESS: 118 FLORIDA ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 2992 BLK 31 LOT 13
ZONING: C-2 NCD-1
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
APPLICANT: Arthur Giron (on behalf of owner, Veronica Giron)
OWNER: Veronica Giron
TYPE OF WORK: Historic Landmark Designation

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a finding of historic significance for the property located at 118 Florida St.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Unified Development Code Sec. 35-606. - Designation Process for Historic Landmarks.

- a. **Authority.** Requests for landmark designation may only be made by or with the concurrence of the property owner. In instances where a property owner does not consent to the landmark designation, the historic preservation officer shall request a resolution from city council to proceed with the designation process prior to any zoning commission hearing. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a request for landmark designation may be made and approved by the city council. To the extent that this subsection conflicts with any other provisions of this chapter, this paragraph shall control except for buildings, objects, sites, structures, or clusters heretofore designated as local landmarks or districts, National Register landmarks or districts, state historic landmarks or sites, or state archaeological landmarks or sites. Additionally, requests for designation shall be made on a form obtained from the city historic preservation officer through the office of historic preservation. Completed request forms shall be returned to the office of historic preservation for processing. All buildings, objects, sites, structures, or clusters heretofore designated by the city council as historic landmarks under any pre-existing ordinance of the City of San Antonio shall be accorded the protection of properties designated historic landmarks under this chapter and shall continue to bear the words "historic, exceptional" (HE) or "historic, significant" (HS) in their zoning designation.
- b. **Designation of Historic Landmarks.**
 1. **Initiation.** Any person, the historic and design review commission, zoning commission, the historic preservation officer, or the city council may initiate a historic landmark designation by filing an application with the historic preservation officer. Requests for designation shall be made on a form obtained from the city historic preservation officer. Completed request forms shall be returned to the office of historic preservation for processing. Owner consent for historic landmark designation shall be required unless a city council resolution to proceed with the designation has been approved. Additionally, owners may submit with the application a written description and photographs or other visual material of any buildings or structures that they wish to be considered for designation as non-contributing to the historic landmark.
 2. **Decision.** The historic preservation officer shall refer a completed application for historic landmark designation to the historic and design review commission. Property owners of proposed historic landmarks shall be notified of the historic and design review commission hearing by the historic preservation officer by mail prior to a historic and design review commission hearing for historic landmark designation. Notice to property owners shall state the place, date, time and purpose of the historic and design review commission hearing. The historic preservation officer shall also send notice of the meeting to any registered neighborhood associations located within the proposed district boundary. The historic and design review commission shall make and forward its recommendation to the zoning commission within forty-five (45) days from the date of submittal of the designation request by the historic preservation officer. Upon submittal of the historic and design review commission's recommendation, the proposed historic district or landmark designation shall be submitted to the zoning commission for its review recommendations along with its finding of historic significance. The zoning commission and the city council shall process the application as prescribed in [section 35-421](#) of this chapter and this section. The zoning commission shall schedule a hearing on the historic and design review commission recommendation to be held within sixty (60) days of receipt of such recommendation and shall forward its recommendation to city council which shall schedule a hearing to be held within sixty (60) days of council's receipt of such recommendation. Upon passage of any ordinance

designating a historic landmark, or removing or upgrading the designation of historic, the city clerk shall send notice of the fact by mail to the owner or owners of affected property.

Unified Development Code Sec. 35-607. – Designation Criteria for Historic Districts and Landmarks.

- a. **Process for Considering Designation of Historic Districts and Landmarks.** Historic districts and landmarks shall be evaluated for designation using the criteria listed in subsection (b) and the criteria applied to evaluate properties for inclusion in the National Register. In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the criteria listed. Historic districts shall consist of at least two (2) or more structures within a legally defined boundary that meet at least three (3) of the criteria. Additionally, all designated landmarks and districts shall demonstrate clear delineation of the legal boundaries of such designated resources.
- b. **Criteria for Evaluation.**
 3. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;
 5. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;
 9. Its character as a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of historically, architecturally or culturally significant sites, buildings, objects or structures united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development;
 13. It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif.

FINDINGS:

- a. The request for landmark designation was initiated by the property owner.
- b. **HISTORIC CONTEXT:** The structure at 118 Florida St is single-story Folk Victorian structure with detached garage located in the Lavaca neighborhood and the S Presa St/S St. Mary's neighborhood conservation district (NCD-1). It was built c. 1907 for August F. and Leita Small. Veronica Giron currently owns the property. The address first appears in city directories in 1907 as 112 Gembler St. The address shifted to 118 Gembler in 1921, and finally to 118 Florida in 1929. The structure's first appearance on a Sanborn map was in 1912 in the same configuration as today. The structure is located in the S Presa St/S St. Mary's neighborhood conservation district (NCD-1), sandwiched between the King William and Lavaca historic districts. The neighborhood is identified by staff as an eligible local historic district. The two historic districts and the NCD cumulatively contain dozens of individual local historic landmarks. Leita Small was custodian of the Alamo from 1922 to 1946, replacing her mother Fannie Applewhite who was custodian from 1915 to 1922. Leita remained at 118 Florida after separating from her husband c. 1934, and lived there until c. 1946. It was home to a number of residents in quick succession from 1948 to 1960, when it was purchased by Josephine Guerra (alternately Josefina Reyna), the applicant's great grandmother. When Josephine passed away, ownership of the structure changed hands but stayed within the family.
- c. **SITE CONTEXT:** 118 Florida is located at the center of the south side of Florida Street, a one-way street that runs east to west. The block is bounded to the north by Florida St, to the east by S Presa St, to the south by W Carolina St, and to the west by S St. Mary's St. The area is a mix of single-family homes, businesses, and churches. There is a small public park across the street from the east end of the block called Florida Park. Setbacks are deep, approximately 15-20 feet from the right-of-way. The sidewalk abuts a concrete curb; when present, driveways on the block have solid concrete aprons leading to concrete or gravel ribbon drives. Homes have concrete sidewalks leading through gates of chain-link fences. There are five extant structures designed as residences along Florida St: there is a two-story Queen Anne at the northwest corner of Florida and S Presa streets, and the remaining four houses including the subject structure are in a row along the south side of the street. The subject structure is adjacent to a Minimal Traditional home to the east and two Craftsman homes to the west. Across the street from the subject structure is a parking lot.
- d. **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** 118 Florida is a single-story Folk Victorian structure with a complex roof that combines cross-gable and pyramid forms. The structure is clad in bright blue painted clapboard siding and has a metal roof with vented ridge caps. Wood trim is painted white, and hardi board with evenly spaced metal vents has been installed as skirting around the foundation. Windows are primarily one-over-one wood windows, with the exception of a fixed one-over-one wood window with a geometric design in the top sash below the gable

of the primary façade. The structure has a covered porch. A sidewalk leads from the gate in the chain-link fence to the front porch, and then turns east along the front edge of the porch before turning south to connect to the porch side stairs. A gravel ribbon drive runs along the east side of the house leading to a detached two-car garage with front-facing gable. The north and primary elevation has a gable at the west edge with decorative shingles and round decorative element centered in the peak. A dormer with one-over-one wood window is centered on the roof. The porch is inset under a metal canopy, accessed by steps on the east edge and on the north edge in line with the front door. The original columns have been replaced by wrought-iron columns with a curled organic design. There are two doors at the corner on the west and south walls. East of the door on the south wall is a single one-over-one wood window. Centered below the gable on the projection is a single fixed one-over-one wood window with a geometric design in the top sash. The east façade has a gable at the north end with a single one-over-one wood window centered on the elevation; there are no decorative shingles in the gable. South of the gabled section, reading south to north, the elevation has three taller one-over-one wood windows followed by shorter one-over-one wood window. The south and rear elevation features both a gabled roof form near the west edge as well as a hipped roof form over a projection at the east edge. The gable does not have decorative shingles; the eaves from the central pyramid roof form cuts across the bottom of the gable and intersects with the projection. A pair of ganged one-over-one wood windows is located just left of center below the gable, and there is a modern door centered on the elevation. The projection has a single one-over-one wood window. An elevated wood deck with stairs is present, running from about the center of the ganged windows to the projection. There is a plywood shed structure attached to this elevation that houses the water heater. The west façade is divided into two sections: the northern section is the larger part and has three one-over-one wood windows equally spaced across. The original third window on this elevation, when read north to south, has been replaced with a smaller one-over-one window; the original opening is clearly visible and infilled with clapboard siding. The elevation then steps back a bit, and the southern section, roughly half the size of the northern section, has a pair of ganged one-over-one wood windows at center.

Character-defining features of 118 Florida St include:

- Standing seam metal roof
- Wood clapboard siding
- Decorative shingles in the front gable
- Geometric tracery in front fixed window
- One-over-one wood windows
- Ribbon drive

- e. **EVALUATION:** In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the 16 criteria listed. Staff evaluated the structure against all 16 criteria and determined that it was consistent with UDC sec. 35-607(b):
 3. **Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;** The structure's first resident, Leita Small, was one of the first custodians of the Alamo while it was under the management of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.
 5. **Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;** The structure is an example of Folk Victorian architecture.
 9. **Its character as a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of historically, architecturally or culturally significant sites, buildings, objects or structures united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development;** The structure is part of the S Presa St/S St. Mary's neighborhood conservation district (NCD-1), identified by staff as eligible for local historic district designation.
 13. **It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif;** The structure is surrounded by two historic districts and is included in an NCD and contributes to an understanding of the development patterns and architectural styles found in this part of San Antonio.
- f. The City offers a tax incentive for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties because historic landmarks possess cultural and historical value and contribute to the overall quality and character of the City and its neighborhoods. If historic designation is approved, rehabilitation and restoration work may be eligible for this incentive. State and Federal tax incentives are also available for properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and provide substantial relief for rehabilitation projects.

- g. If the HDRC approves the Finding of Historic Significance, then the recommendation for designation is submitted to the zoning commission. The zoning commission will schedule a hearing and then forward its recommendation to the City Council. City Council has the ultimate authority to approve the historic designation zoning overlay.
- h. Per UDC Sec. 35-453, once the commission makes a recommendation for designation, property owners must receive a written approval (a Certificate of Appropriateness) for any exterior work until the City Council makes their final decision.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a finding of historic significance and that the Historic and Design Review Commission should recommend approval for the landmark designation of 118 Florida St to the Zoning Commission and to the City Council based on findings a through e.

CASE MANAGER: Jessica Anderson



Flex Viewer

Powered by ArcGIS Server

Printed: Mar 27, 2019

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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Statement of Significance

Property Address: 118 Florida St

1. Application Details

Applicant: Veronica Giron

Type: Owner-initiated Designation

Date Received: 15 March 2019

2. Findings

The structure at 118 Florida St is single-story Folk Victorian commercially-zoned structure designed as a residence with detached garage located in the Lavaca neighborhood and the S Presa St/S St. Mary's neighborhood conservation district (NCD-1). It was built c. 1907 for August F. and Leita Small. Veronica Giron currently owns the property.

The address first appears in city directories in 1907 as 112 Gembler St. The address shifted to 118 Gembler in 1921, and finally to 118 Florida in 1929. The structure's first appearance on a Sanborn map was in 1912 in the same configuration as today.¹ The structure is located in the S Presa St/S St. Mary's neighborhood conservation district (NCD-1), sandwiched between the King William and Lavaca historic districts. The neighborhood is identified by staff as an eligible local historic district. The two historic districts and the NCD cumulatively contain dozens of individual local historic landmarks.

Lavaca's residential sector is one of the oldest in the San Antonio area that has survived into modern times and many of the homes in this area are landmark structures of unique character. The district was initially partitioned into residential lots by the city in 1852 and by developers Samuel Maverick and Thomas Devine in 1854. However, no substantial development occurred there until after the beginning of a period of intense building in the King William District in the early 1870s.²

The Lavaca neighborhood was designed primarily for working class families. Archival records indicate that the neighborhood mix during the initial development period included carpenters, stonemasons, shopkeepers, clerks, tailors, bartenders, teamsters, and butchers. Residents were mostly of Germanic heritage, but also included those of Polish, Hispanic, and African American descent. Thus, the neighborhood contains adobe and stone saltbox homes from the Spanish era and the 1850s, several styles of vernacular homes from the turn-of-the-century era, and modern bungalows as well.³

Leita Small was custodian of the Alamo from 1922 to 1946, replacing her mother Fannie Applewhite who was custodian from 1915 to 1922.⁴ Management of the Alamo was granted to the Daughters of the Republic of Texas in 1905, making Leita and her mother among the first custodians. Leita's mother was considered a Real Daughter of the Republic, a title claimed by about 65 women across Texas whose fathers helped found the Republic. Leita's grandfather, Capt. Thomas W. Grayson, owned the boat *Yellow Stone* by which

¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: San Antonio, Texas. 1912, volume 4, sheet 363.

² Office of Historic Preservation. Properties File, Historic Districts: Lavaca. "Lavaca National Register Historic District" (Microsoft Word document). Accessed 27 March 2019.

³ "Lavaca National Register Historic District" (Microsoft Word document).

⁴ "Mrs. Small Leaves Alamo." San Antonio *Light*, Sunday, 14 July 1946, p. 3-B.



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General Sam Houston traveled across the Brazos after the battle at Gonzales. The same boat was used to hold Santa Anna after he was captured at San Jacinto by Texas troops.⁵

August Small was a longtime employee of the Express Publishing Company; he and Leita separated around 1934, when the address appears in the city directory under her name alone. August passed away in 1941, at which time he was living with his sister at 309 Devine St.⁶

Leita remained at 118 Florida after separating from her husband and lived there until c. 1946. It was home to a number of residents in quick succession from 1948 to 1960, when it was purchased by Josephine Guerra (alternately Josefina Reyna⁷), the applicant's great grandmother. Josephine worked as an item finisher at Finesilver Manufacturing, a San Antonio clothing manufacturer founded in 1897.⁸

When Josephine passed away, ownership of the structure changed hands but stayed within the family. The applicant purchased the home from her family in 2012⁹ and has undertaken a number of restoration projects to remove insensitive treatments and repair deteriorating materials. Of particular impact is the removal of cast stone cladding previously added to the clapboard siding on the walls of the front porch.

3. Architectural Description

118 Florida is located at the center of the south side of Florida Street, a one-way street that runs east to west. The block is bounded to the north by Florida St, to the east by S Presa St, to the south by W Carolina St, and to the west by S St. Mary's St. The area is a mix of single-family homes, businesses, and churches. There is a small public park across the street from the east end of the block called Florida Park. Setbacks are deep, approximately 15-20 feet from the right-of-way. The sidewalk abuts a concrete curb; when present, driveways on the block have solid concrete aprons leading to concrete or gravel ribbon drives. Homes have concrete sidewalks leading through gates of chain-link fences.

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⁵ "Real Daughters of Republic In Fiesta Parade." *San Antonio Light*, Sunday, 16 April 1939, Part Three, p. 4.

⁶ "August Small Rites Thursday." *San Antonio Express*, Thursday Morning, 3 July 1941, p. 3.

⁷ Confirmed by her great grandson Arthur Giron via phone call with staff, 27 March 2019.

⁸ Handbook of Texas Online: Clothing Manufacture. Texas State Historical Association. Accessed 26 March 2019. tshaonline.org.

⁹ Special Warranty Gift Deed, Gloria Alma Martinez and Carmen G. Gonzales (Grantors) to Veronica Giron (Grantee), 10 September 2012.



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

stairs. A gravel ribbon drive runs along the east side of the house leading to a detached two-car garage with front-facing gable.

The north and primary elevation has a gable at the west edge with decorative shingles and round decorative element centered in the peak. A dormer with one-over-one wood window is centered on the roof. The porch is inset under a metal canopy, accessed by steps on the east edge and on the north edge in line with the front door. The original columns have been replaced by wrought-iron columns with a curled organic design. There are two doors at the corner on the west and south walls. East of the door on the south wall is a single one-over-one wood window. Centered below the gable on the projection is a single fixed one-over-one wood window with a geometric design in the top sash.

The east façade has a gable at the north end with a single one-over-one wood window centered on the elevation; there are no decorative shingles in the gable. South of the gabled section, reading south to north, the elevation has three taller one-over-one wood windows followed by shorter one-over-one wood window.

The south and rear elevation features both a gabled roof form near the west edge as well as a hipped roof form over a projection at the east edge. The gable does not have decorative shingles; the eaves from the central pyramid roof form cuts across the bottom of the gable and intersects with the projection. A pair of ganged one-over-one wood windows is located just left of center below the gable, and there is a modern door centered on the elevation. The projection has a single one-over-one wood window. An elevated wood deck with stairs is present, running from about the center of the ganged windows to the projection. There is a plywood shed structure attached to this elevation that houses the water heater.

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Character-defining features include:

- Standing seam metal roof
- Wood clapboard siding
- Decorative shingles in the front gable
- Geometric tracery in front fixed window
- One-over-one wood windows
- Ribbon drive

4. Landmark Criteria

The property meets the following criterion under UDC 35-607(b):

- **3: Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the community, county, state, or nation;** The structure's first resident, Leita Small, was one of the first custodians of the Alamo while it was under the management of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.
- **5: Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials;** The structure is an example of Folk Victorian architecture.

1901 S. ALAMO ST, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78204

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- **9: Its character as a geographically definable area possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of historically, architecturally or culturally significant sites, buildings, objects or structures united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development;** The structure is part of the S Presa St/S St. Mary's neighborhood conservation district (NCD-1), identified by staff as eligible for local historic district designation.
- **13: It bears an important and significant relationship to other distinctive structures, sites, or areas, either as an important collection of properties or architectural style or craftsmanship with few intrusions, or by contributing to the overall character of the area according to the plan based on architectural, historic or cultural motif;** The structure is surrounded by two historic districts and is included in an NCD and contributes to an understanding of the development patterns and architectural styles found in this part of San Antonio.

5. Staff Recommendation

A property must meet at least three of the 16 criteria used to evaluate eligibility for landmark designation, and this assessment determines that 118 Florida St meets this threshold. Therefore, staff recommends a finding of historic significance for the property at 118 Florida St. Further research may reveal additional significance associated with this property.



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Photos provided by applicant.

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S E E U O I U M E

LABOR ST. N. CAROLINA ST. E



To Whom it May Concern,

For over 60 years, my family has lived in San Antonio, Texas at 118 Florida Street. The [100] block of Florida Street between South St. Mary's and South Presa was previously called Gemblar. In addition, the current street number is 118 (Florida St.) but, was originally 112 (The house at 112 Gemblar on the 1912 map, is on the same lot and has the same footprint as the house at 118 Gemblar on the 1951 map). Conferring to the San Antonio's Tax Assessor, our house was built in 1916. However, according to the Sanborn Map (1912), our house was built prior to 1908. With the help of the San Antonio Conservation Society's librarian, Ms. Beth Standifird, our house [Folk-Victorian style] might be dated as early as 1906. According to the 1907-1908 City Directory (page 571), a resident named, A. Small occupied our home in 1907. He was a firefighter at The Duerler Manufacturing Co.

My great grandmother purchased the house in the mid-1950's. When she became ill and passed away, we moved in to care for my great grandfather. After his passing we purchased the home from our family and cared for it since. Throughout the years my family made various restorations to the house. We completely rebuilt the foundation, updated the electrical system and replaced the asphalt shingles with a complete standing seam metal roof. We kept the original sash windows and fixed the weights that go along the side of them. We recently painted the trim and restored the three dormers of the house and installed insulation. The next project that desperately needs attention is the front porch. The porch is deteriorating with every passing day. Our home's beauty and history are overshadowed by the front porch, which has become an eye sore. We want to remove the existing metal railings and refabricate the wooden columns to match the original design.

I attached vintage photos of my family in and around the house at 118 Florida St. We are excited to uncover more history and information of our home. I am also including a picture of Porfirio Diaz, the President of Mexico, my mother's uncle who lived here was an officer of his army. I hope that you receive this letter with the same excitement that we have and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind Regards,

Bryan Giron

SCANNED

Special Warranty Gift Deed



Date: September 10, 2012

Grantor: Gloria Alma Martinez; and Carmen G. Gonzalez

Grantor's Mailing Address: Gloria Alma Martinez
8015 Forest Bridge, Live Oak, TX 78233, Bexar County
Carmen G. Gonzalez
9622 Hidden Plains, San Antonio, TX 78250, Bexar County

Grantee: Veronica Giron

Grantee's Mailing Address: Veronica Giron
118 Florida St.
San Antonio, TX 78210, Bexar County

Consideration: Love of, and affection for, Grantee.

Property (including any improvements):

Lot 13, Block 31, New City Block 2992, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Reservations from Conveyance: None
Exceptions to Conveyance and Warranty: None

Grantor, for the Consideration and subject to the Reservations from Conveyance and the Exceptions to Conveyance and Warranty, grants, gives, and conveys to Grantee the Property, together with all and singular the rights and appurtenances thereto in any way belonging, to have and to hold it to Grantee and Grantee's heirs, successors, and assigns forever. Grantor binds Grantor and Grantor's heirs and successors to warrant and forever defend all and singular the Property to Grantee and Grantee's heirs, successors, and assigns against every person whomsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same or any part thereof when the claim is by, through, or under Grantor but not otherwise, except as to the Reservations from Conveyance and the Exceptions to Conveyance and Warranty.

This conveyance is intended to include any property interests obtained by after-acquired title.

When the context requires, singular nouns and pronouns include the plural.

Gloria Alma Martinez



Special Warranty Gift Deed

Date: November 10, 2014

Grantor: Sylvia Angelica Ramirez

Grantor's Mailing Address: Sylvia Angelica Ramirez
243 Simon St., San Antonio, TX 78204

Grantee: Veronica Giron

Grantee's Mailing Address: Veronica Giron
118 Florida St., San Antonio, TX 78210

Consideration: Love of, and affection for, Grantee.

Property (including any improvements):

Lot 13, Block 31, New City Block 2992, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

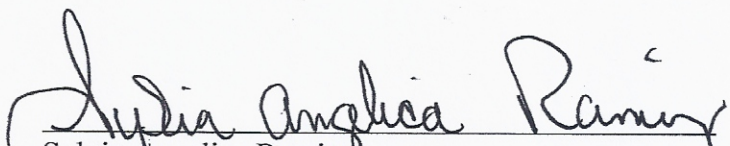
Reservations from Conveyance: None

Exceptions to Conveyance and Warranty: None

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This conveyance is intended to include any property interests obtained by after-acquired title.

When the context requires, singular nouns and pronouns include the plural.


Sylvia Angelica Ramirez

118 Florida St | Photos Submitted by Applicant



118 Florida St | Historic Photos Submitted by Applicant

