



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION COMMISSION ACTION

This is not a Certificate of Appropriateness and cannot be used to acquire permits

March 3, 2021

HDRC CASE NO: 2021-070
ADDRESS: 1109 W CRAIG PLACE
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 1850 BLK 42 LOTS 41, 42 & 43
APPLICANT: Emily and Juan Chavez - 1109 W Craig Pl
OWNER: Emily and Juan Chavez - 1109 W Craig Pl

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Finding of Historic Significance for the property located at 1109 W Craig Pl.

FINDINGS:

- a. The request for landmark designation was initiated by the property owner.
- b. **HISTORIC CONTEXT:** The property at 1109 W Craig Pl is a single-story Craftsman-style residence with rear detached garage built in 1919 by the John J. Kuntz Lumber Company for Oscar and Mary Thomas. It is located in the Beacon Hill neighborhood conservation district (NCD-5) of City Council District 1. Emily Tarango-Chavez and Juan Chavez currently own the property. Beacon Hill is one of several unique neighborhoods that evolved during San Antonio's first great expansion, starting in the 1850s until the Great Depression. By 1890, electric trolleys that carried passengers to San Pedro Springs Park had influenced the development of the city's first new subdivisions to the north, including Beacon Hill. The Thomases enlisted the Kuntz Lumber Co. to build their Craftsman-style home one block west of the corner of W Craig Pl and Michigan Avenue. Popular in the United States from 1905 through 1930, Craftsman homes are exemplified by low-pitched, gabled roofs with wide eaves, as seen on the subject structure. Dr Carmen Tafolla and Dr. Ernesto Marraquin Bernal bought the property in 2010. Dr Tafolla is an internationally-acclaimed writer of more than 30 books and is "published in more than 200 anthologies, magazines, journals, textbooks and readers." In 2012, then-Mayor Julián Castro named Dr Tafolla San Antonio's first poet laureate; she served until 2014. In 2015, the 84th Texas Legislature named her the Texas State Poet Laureate. The applicant reports that the detached garage near the northeast corner of the property was transformed into Dr Tafolla's studio while she and her husband Dr Bernal owned the property. Dr Bernal wrote "the first scholarly research on the Latino gifted child in the U.S.," and "his continued research and pioneering publications in this area helped change the field of education." He and Dr Tafolla founded a bilingual school for gifted children called Camino, and he taught at universities in Texas, California, and Arizona.
- c. **SITE CONTEXT:** The property at 1109 W Craig Pl is a single-story Craftsman-style residence with rear detached garage built in 1919. It is located in the Beacon Hill neighborhood conservation district (NCD-5) of City Council District 1. It sits on the north side of W Craig Pl, one parcel west of the intersection with Michigan Ave. The block is bounded to the south by W Craig Pl, the east by Michigan Ave, the north by W Woodlawn, and the west by Fredericksburg Rd; it is one block east of I-10. The property has a full-width concrete driveway leading from the street to the detached garage along the east edge of the parcel. A concrete sidewalk leads from the street to the front steps of the residence. The grassy easement is no more than 6' wide, with a divorced concrete sidewalk. The property has several old-growth trees and other large vegetation, including two crepe myrtles in the easement flanking the path between the street and front porch and large sago palms around the front steps. The parcel is largely covered in grass. Craftsman is the dominant building style along the block.
- d. **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** The primary structure is a single-story Craftsman with clapboard siding above the continuous sill line and wider wood siding below for the battered foundation. The complex composition

shingle roof has intersecting gables that create a short hip near the rear and also a flat roof over the rear mass. The separate extended roof over the front porch is also cross-gabled. The battered columns and knee walls along the front steps of the front porch are brick; the columns have a simple pattern near the top of each. The porch is enclosed by a short wood balustrade. One-over-one wood windows are found on all elevations and appear as single windows, ganged pairs, or ganged stretches of three or four. There is an unpainted brick chimney on the west elevation near the southwest corner of the house. The detached garage is primarily clad in the same clapboard siding as the primary structure and has a smaller battered foundation clad in wider wood siding. The composition shingle roof has wide eaves with exposed rafter tails. The automobile-sized door on the rear (alley side) has been closed with what appears to be plywood. Character-defining features of 1109 W Craig Pl include clapboard siding above the sill line; a continuous sill line (except for along the front porch); a complex composition shingle roof with intersecting gables that create a short hip near the rear and also a flat roof over the rear mass; a separate extended and cross-gabled roof over the front porch; one-over-one wood windows; unpainted brick chimney; decorative stickwork in the front gable; triangular knee braces where present; battered brick columns and knee walls along the front stairs; wood balustrade enclosing front porch; clapboard siding on detached garage; and exposed rafter tails and wide eaves on detached garage.

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; from 2010 to 2018, 1109 W Craig Pl was home of Dr Carmen Tafolla and Dr Ernesto Bernal, prominent San Antonio writers and educators. Dr Tafolla was the city's first poet laureate in 2012 and the Texas State Poet Laureate from 2015-16. Dr Bernal was a pioneer in the field of the gifted Latinx child and taught at universities across the Southwest.

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 property is an example of an elaborated Craftsman-style residence that retains its historic and character-defining features.

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 property is located in the Beacon Hill neighborhood conservation district (NCD-5). Staff also finds Beacon Hill to be an eligible local historic district; were the neighborhood to pursue designation, 1109 W Craig Pl would be considered contributing.

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 1109 W Craig Pl to the Zoning Commission and to the City Council based on findings a through e.

COMMISSION ACTION:

Approved as submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Shanon Shea Miller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shanon" being more prominent than the last name "Miller".

Shanon Shea Miller
Historic Preservation Officer