



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF ZONING

Request:

The Office of Historic Preservation requests a change of zoning to add “HL” Historic Landmark designation to 1109 W Craig Place and to waive all related fees. *OHP staff recommends approval.*

Case Comments:

March 3, 2021, the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) agreed with the applicant’s request for a Finding of Historic Significance and supported the designation of the property as a local landmark.

Case History:

May 4, 2021	Zoning Commission hearing
March 3, 2021	Historic & Design Review Commission (HDRC) hearing
February 3, 2021	Application for Historic Landmark Designation submitted to OHP

Applicable Citations:

Note: In accordance with the process for designation of a historic landmark, as outlined in Section 35-607 of the UDC, properties must meet three of sixteen criteria. This property meets three Criteria for Evaluation.

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;**
 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 of Fact:

- 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,

1901 S. ALAMO ST, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78204

210.207.0035 • Fax: 210.207.0199 • info@sapreservation.com • www.sapreservation.com



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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.

1901 S. ALAMO ST, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78204

210.207.0035 • Fax: 210.207.0199 • info@sapreservation.com • www.sapreservation.com



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- 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.

ATTACHMENTS:

HDRC recommendation

HDRC published exhibits

Conservation Society of San Antonio Letter of Support for Designation