



# 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**

April 17, 2024

**HDCR CASE NO:** 2024-104  
**ADDRESS:** 139 PALO BLANCO ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 6514 BLK 3 LOT 3, W 20 FT OF 4 & W 60 FT OF E 145 FT OF 15  
**APPLICANT:** Lydia Cantu - 2617 E 3RD AVE  
**OWNER:** Lydia Cantu - 2617 E 3RD AVE

#### REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting Historic Landmark Designation for the property at 139 Palo Blanco Street.

#### FINDINGS:

a. The request for landmark designation was initiated by the property owner.

b. **HISTORIC CONTEXT:** The property at 139 Palo Blanco Street is a one-story vernacular residence with Craftsman style influence located in the Mission Grove Addition in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood of City Council District 3. Emiliano Villarreal & Lydia Carolina Cantu currently own the property. The subject property was built circa 1922. The address first appeared in the 1924 City Directory as the home of Buford L. and Izola Mabery. Mr. Mabery worked as a vulcanizer for the Swinebrood Auto Supply Company and later as a clerk for the Reliable Tire Company. Mrs. Mabery was a hemstitcher for The Fair. In the 1922 City Directory, the property was listed as 147 Palo Blanco Street. The Mission Grove Addition was platted in 1922 and developed through the mid-1920s. In 1926, it was the site of what became known as the "Back Yard Oil Boom," when several residents discovered shallow oil fields on their properties. The story was quite a sensation at the time, drawing the attention of spectators, speculators, and developers.

The subject property is located just outside the eastern boundary of the northern section of the Mission Historic District, along Kalteyer Street, but it is within the Mission Concepcion Protection Overlay District (MPOD) and the World Heritage Buffer Zone. It is three blocks south of Mission Concepcion, one block east of Concepcion Park and the Mission Concepcion Sports Complex, and two blocks north of the Riverside Golf Course. It is roughly one mile south of Roosevelt Park, across the IH-10 expressway. The boundaries of the Mission Historic District were designed primarily to include the lower four missions in the San Antonio area (Listed from north to south: Concepcion, San Jose, San Juan Capistrano, and Espada), their acequias and fields, and secondarily the significant preserved historic and prehistoric sites in the area. These boundaries represent an area less impacted than most areas of San Antonio by urban development. However, the eastern boundary of the northern section of the Mission Historic District divides the historical Mission Grove Addition neighborhood in half along Kalteyer Street, so properties on the 200 block of Palo Blanco Street are within the historic district, while properties on the 100 block are outside the historic district and therefore do not benefit from the protections offered by this designation.

c. **SITE CONTEXT:** The subject property is a south-facing house, situated near the southwest corner of a block bound to the north by Benita Street, the east by Roosevelt Avenue, the south by Palo Blanco Street, and the west by Kalteyer Street. The block includes other one-story Craftsman cottages, as well as Mission revival and minimal traditional residences. Based on images on Google Street View, the front yard was enclosed by a chain-link fence as recently as 2018, with swinging chain-link gates for access to the asphalt ribbon driveway and concrete paver sidewalk leading up to the concrete porch. The sidewalk has been removed and the chain-link fencing has been replaced by a boundary of three-foot high wooden posts with three rows of wide-spaced horizontal wood fence planks, painted white. The backyard is enclosed by vertical wooden fencing, painted white.

d. **ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:** The subject property is a one-story vernacular residence with Craftsman style influence, which has a side-gabled roof with wide, overhanging eaves and a cross-gabled portico on the left side covering the half-width front porch. The portico is supported by two pairs of four-by-four square wooden columns, with each pair joined by vertical arrays of 4" x

24" horizontal wooden planks spaced 2" apart and painted white. Two concrete steps lead up to the concrete front porch, and three concrete steps lead up to the front door. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Based on images on Google Street View, there was green vinyl siding and red-brick veneer skirting as recently as 2018, which has been replaced by wooden clapboard siding.

e. **EVALUATION:** In order to be eligible for historic landmark designation, properties shall meet at least three (3) of the 16 criteria listed. The applicant submitted that the property meets the following criteria, consistent with UDC sec. 35-607(b):

2. Its location as a site of a significant local, county, state, or national event; for its association with "Back Yard Oil Boom" of 1926.

11. It is distinctive in character, interest or value; strongly exemplifies the cultural, economic, social, ethnic or historical heritage of San Antonio, Texas or the United States; as an example of a vernacular home in a working class neighborhood developed in the 1920s, a period of large growth in San Antonio's population.

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; as one of the earliest homes in the Mission Grove Addition neighborhood.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of a Historic Landmark Designation of 139 Palo Blanco Street based on findings a through e.

**COMMISSION ACTION:**

Approved as submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shanon Shea Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Shanon Shea Miller**  
**Historic Preservation Officer**