



Mandeville Historic Preservation District Survey

[Document subtitle]

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Introduction

The City of Mandeville retained Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, LLC (Row 10) for the purposes of resurveying the Mandeville Historic Preservation District, a local historic district. The survey documented those buildings at least 45 years old using the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office (LA SHPO)'s Louisiana Historic Resource Inventory (LHRI) form. Survey was conducted in May 2023. The survey recorded 524 buildings and one cemetery.

The survey effort was funded by a grant from the LA SHPO office.

This report documents this survey effort and its findings along with recommendations regarding the National Register of Historic Places eligibility for select properties.

Project Background

Project Objectives

In 2022, the City of Mandeville sought to update their inventory data for the Mandeville Historic Preservation District as the forms provide key information for the Mandeville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to assess potential projects and changes to properties within the boundaries of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District. The last survey of the district occurred in 2015. The new survey would also document any buildings that had reached fifty years of age since that last survey, thus making them subject to HPC review. The forms would also document changes to the buildings since the previous survey.

Previous Survey Efforts

The Mandeville Historic Preservation District had been surveyed previously in 1999, 2009, and 2015.

The LA SHPO's HP Cultural Resources Map contains many survey forms within the district from 1999, but the purpose of the survey was not identified. This survey used the LA SHPO's LHRI form of that period.

The 2009 survey had been undertaken by Louisiana historian and author Sally Reeves. The purpose of the survey was to document buildings constructed before 1941 and was not a comprehensive survey of the entire district; Reeves surveyed approximately 424 properties on a project-specific form and does not appear to have used the LHRI form.

The 2015 survey was undertaken by CoxMcLain Environmental Consulting. This survey documented the Mandeville Historic Preservation District, was conducted as part of a grant effort, and used the existing LA SHPO standing structure survey form of that period. The CoxMcLain survey documented 595 properties.

Area Surveyed

The survey area was limited to the current boundaries of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District (see Figure 1) in Mandeville, Louisiana; the district encompasses those properties between the Lake Pontchartrain lakefront, Jackson Avenue, Florida Street, and Galvez Street.

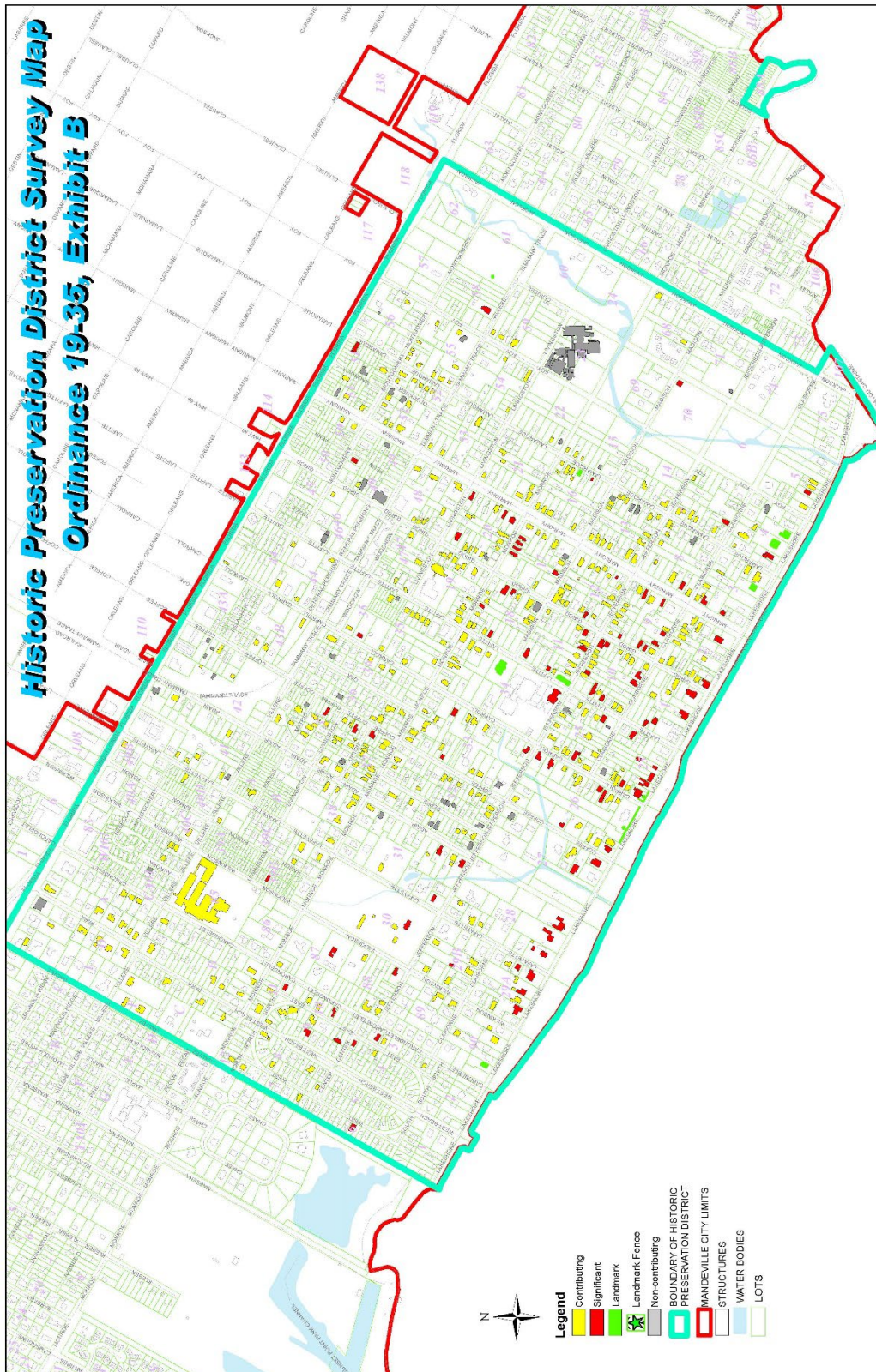


Figure 1: Map of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District

Brief History of Mandeville

The area that would become the Mandeville Historic Preservation District was first settled by Native American tribes, including the Acolapissa and Choctaw.¹ France, Great Britain, and Spain traded control of the property through the eighteenth century. Loyalists with allegiance to Great Britain relocated to the area before and during the American Revolution, encouraging further development in the area.² Great Britain transferred this land, known as the Florida Parishes, to Spain. Turmoil followed, including the temporary creation of the Republic of West Florida in 1810, before the land was taken over by the United States.³

Mandeville is closely associated with Bernard Xavier de Marigny de Mandeville. Marigny belonged to a wealthy New Orleans family; he inherited significant tracts of land in New Orleans, which became the Faubourg Marigny, and property on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, known as Fontainebleau. Marigny took a portion of his lands and subdivided them, creating the town of Mandeville in 1834.⁴

Marigny developed Mandeville during a period of increased steamboat traffic between Mandeville and New Orleans, allowing people to easily travel across Lake Pontchartrain and visit the newly constructed hotel and casino.⁵ The numerous steamboats also encouraged wealthy New Orleanians to build summer homes in Mandeville as a way to escape the stifling heat of the city, enjoy the cooler weather along Lake Pontchartrain, and avoid the almost annual yellow fever outbreaks.⁶

Financial panics and the Civil War slowed Mandeville's growth, but ship traffic picked up in the 1870s and 1880s, transferring goods and people across Lake Pontchartrain. Mandeville once again became a summer destination to escape the worst of the Louisiana heat. Hotels, resorts, and restaurants, as well as the Mandeville Yacht Club, opened throughout Mandeville. The rise of the lumber industry brought the railroad to Mandeville and further encouraged growth.⁷

The spread of the automobile combined with the closure of the ferry and steamers across Lake Pontchartrain encouraged New Orleanians to travel elsewhere during the summer.⁸ Mandeville growth stagnated until the construction of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway in 1956 and its expansion in 1969 made Mandeville and St. Tammany Parish ripe for suburban growth.⁹

¹ "History," City of Mandeville, n.d. Available online at <https://www.cityofmandeville.com/community/page/history> (accessed 22 May 2024).

² Anita R. Campeau and Donald J. Sharp. *The History of Mandeville: From the American Revolution to Bernard de Marigny de Mandeville* (New Orleans, LA: Cornerstone Book Publishers, 2014), p. 6.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 88, 100.

⁴ Benjamin Groth, "Bernard de Marigny de Mandeville," 64 Parishes, 2023. Available online at <https://64parishes.org/entry/bernard-de-marigny-de-mandeville> (accessed 23 May 2024).

⁵ Frederick Ellis, *St. Tammany Parish: L'Autre Côté du Lac* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 1981), p. 111.

⁶ "History," City of Mandeville, n.d.

⁷ Ellis, p. 163-164, 234-235; "History," City of Mandeville, n.d.

⁸ Karen Kingsley, "Mandeville," 64 Parishes, 2023. Available online at <https://64parishes.org/entry/mandeville> (accessed 23 May 2024).

⁹ Kelly Sellers Wittie, "Lake Pontchartrain Causeway and Southern Toll Plaza" Data Pages, *Historic American Engineering Record*, HAER LA-21, 2010. Available online at <https://www.loc.gov/item/la0640/> (accessed 28 May 2024).



Figure 2: Moore House at 1717 Lakeshore Drive, individually listed in the NRHP.

Characteristics of Mandeville Historic Preservation District

The buildings of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District conform to the city grid as initially developed by Marigny in 1834. The grid is not uniform; blocks are interrupted by natural features, such as Little Bayou Castine, or historic use, such as the Mandeville Cemetery. City blocks are not of uniform size as many streets do not continuously run through the district.

Lakeshore Drive serves as major thoroughfare for the district; many of the landmark properties for the district, such as the Moore House (figure 2), Flagstaff and the Original Yacht Club, are located along Lakeshore Drive. Away from the lakefront, many of the residential buildings are smaller and more modest. Sited on smaller parcels of land than the properties along Lakeshore Drive, these buildings tend to exhibit modest examples of typical architectural styles of Southeast Louisiana during the periods of growth of Mandeville (figure 3).

The Mandeville Historic Preservation District contains several commercial areas, notably Girod Street and Florida Street. Girod Street has many buildings that contribute to the historic district, both as purpose-built commercial buildings and historic buildings converted to commercial use over the years (figure 4). Florida Street contains more modern, commercial buildings; most of these building were excluded from the survey effort given their age.



Figure 3: View of intersection of Coffee and Jefferson Streets.



Figure 4: View of Jefferson Street at Girod Street.

Background Research

Prior to the commencement of survey, historians and architectural historians with Row 10 who meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualification Standards* conducted background research. Previous survey efforts were obtained from the LA SHPO's Historic Preservation (HP) Cultural Resources Map and the City of Mandeville files. Historians researched the development of the survey area and the Mandeville community at the Mandeville Branch of the St. Tammany Parish public library, online repositories, and the Center for Southeast Louisiana studies at Southeastern Louisiana University.

Survey Methodology

The survey of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District was undertaken by historians and architectural historians who meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualification Standards* for Architectural History and History as described in 36 CFR 61.

All survey was conducted from the right-of-way.

Buildings less than approximately 45 years of age were not included in the survey effort.

Surveyors used the Fulcrum app containing the project database to conduct the survey. Row 10 developed a project-specific database based on the LHRI form to gather data, including location data for population of GIS databases. These fields included street address, parish, National Register eligibility, building type, building style, and date of construction. Fields with a drop down menu on the LHRI form were transcribed into the project-specific database.

At the request of the MPC, additional fields were added into the survey database to address specific changes to the buildings. These additional fields were in addition to the categories required by the LHRI forms. Supplemental fields included questions regarding if façade door(s) and windows were replacements or if the building appeared to have been elevated. For this survey, doors and windows were considered historic if the feature appeared to retain historic features and characteristics in keeping with the surrounding building as could be determined from the right-of-way. A building was determined to be elevated if the building had been raised a height atypical of its age, particularly in relation to the adjacent buildings, and if the foundation appeared to be incongruent with the age of the building, such as concrete piers on a Queen Anne-style shotgun.

All photographs were taken with digital cameras. All photographs met the photographic requirements of the LDHP as outlined in *Louisiana Historic Resource Inventory Form Guidelines & Instructions* from June 2021.

Several buildings feature plaques listing the building's name and construction date. These plaques were installed by the Old Mandeville Historic Association, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the history and cultural heritage of Mandeville. Row 10 included this information in the survey and noted the data as sourced from the plaque at the individual building.

The scope of work for this project did not include re-evaluating individual properties for contributing or significant status as related to the local preservation district; Row 10 adopted the findings of the 2015 survey effort completed by CoxMcLain to include the information on the forms at the request of the MPC.

Field Survey

The survey documented 522 buildings and one cemetery. The results of the survey reflect the change over time that occurred in Mandeville in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as reflected within the boundaries of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District.

As surveyors assessed buildings at least 45 years or older, the disbursement of the surveyed buildings within the district reflects the development of the district over time. More buildings were surveyed along Lakeshore Drive and the southern portion of the district than along the modern development of Florida Street. The blocks between Villere Street and Florida Street were some of the later areas to be developed in Mandeville, as reflected in the density of survey in those areas.

For the following results, the data for the Mandeville Cemetery were removed as it is an outlier in regard to the rest of the survey effort. The analysis below is based on a survey of 522 buildings.

Featured Building Types

Most of the buildings (246 buildings or 47.1 percent) were classified as “wood frame vernacular.” Vernacular architecture refers to buildings often constructed without the involvement of a professional architect and often reflects local building needs and traditions.

Forty-nine buildings (or 9.4 percent) of the surveyed buildings were classified as “ranch” (figure 5). Popular in the mid-twentieth century, these ranch buildings exhibit the typical characteristics of this popular building type, including the asymmetrical façade, broad one-story construction, and incorporated garage or carport. As typical with ranch houses of this period, these buildings no longer used the typical pier foundations commonly found across southeast Louisiana and embraced the concrete slab foundation.

Type vs. Style

A building’s type is the basic shape and form of the building.
A building’s architectural style is the decorative features and elements added to the exterior.



Figure 6: Ranch house at 634 Carroll Street.



Figure 5: Craftsman-style bungalow at 219 Marigny Avenue.

Surveyors identified forty-five buildings (or 8.6 percent) as “bungalow”-type buildings (figure 6). Constructed in the early twentieth century and often paired with the Craftsman architectural style, these bungalows feature the deep porches, low pitched roofs, and one to one-and-a-half stories common to the building type. The deep porches and economical construction of these buildings likely made them appealing as summer homes in Mandeville.



Figure 7: Creole cottage at 1735 Claiborne Street.

Forty buildings (or 7.7 percent) are “Creole cottage” (figure 7). These Creole cottages are some of the oldest buildings in the district; twelve of the buildings predate the Civil War and reflect Mandeville’s rise in popularity among wealthy New Orleans families. The Mandeville Creole cottages possess the symmetrical façade, side gable roofs, and French doors typical of the building type.

Featured Architectural Styles

Surveyors determined the majority of the buildings (333 buildings or 63.8 percent) as “No Style” (figure 8). Many of these buildings likely had limited architectural details at the time of construction, but accumulated loss of architectural details over time, such as the replacement of a Craftsman-style door, also contributed to the number of No Style buildings.

In parallel with the leading building types of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District, “Craftsman” (57 buildings or 10.9 percent) and “Ranch” (37 buildings or 7 percent) were the other leading architectural styles of the district. The Craftsman style in Mandeville features typical characteristics of the style, notably truncated columns on brick piers at porches, exposed rafter tails, and substantial dormers on side gable roofs. The Ranch-style buildings in Mandeville have the low pitched roofs, a primary entrance located off-center in the facade, and a large picture window typical of the style.



Figure 8: Example of a "No Style" building, addressed at 540 Lafitte Street.

Results and Recommendations

The survey documented the historic buildings of the Mandeville Historic Preservation District, completing the primary objective of the survey.

Many residential buildings within the Mandeville Historic Preservation District have been substantially elevated, a typical modification found in southeast Louisiana following flood and hurricane events. While the elevation efforts alter the general viewsheds and streetscape of the district, the historic character of the individual buildings generally appears to remain intact. However, any potential NRHP listings will have to take in to account the impact of any changes in building elevation.

National Register of Historic Places Recommendations

Mandeville NRHP Historic District: Further survey is required to determine if a NRHP-eligible historic district overlaps with the current boundaries of the local historic district. As this survey effort was limited to only those buildings over 45 years old, new construction was not included. As the NRHP requires addressing every building within a proposed historic district, the newer construction must be surveyed to full inform a potential NRHP nomination as the quantity of new construction and heavily modified historic buildings may render the district ineligible for listing in the NRHP.

In addition, the above assumes a period of significance ending approximately 50 years ago. A reduced period of significance would impact the contributing/non-contributing buildings within a potential district.

Recreation Multiple Property Documentation and Associated Listings: Mandeville has a rich history as a summer escape and recreation destination. The extant building stock retains many reminders of this history, including summer cottages, hotels, and a former yacht club. A historic context focused on the history of Mandeville as a recreation destination would delineate the significance of recreation to

Mandeville's history, identify historic building types associated with this theme, and provide a framework for individual listing of select properties in the NRHP.



Figure 9: Jean Baptiste Lang House.

Potential candidates for listing in the NRHP under a possible recreation historic context include:

- Jean Baptiste Lang House (605 Carroll Street)(figure 9): Example of nineteenth century summer home for wealthy New Orleanians. Possibly also individually eligible (see below).
- Original Yacht Club (1635 Lakeshore Drive): Used as a yacht club from circa 1898 to 1903, this building is now a private home.
- Colomes-Hestrest Cottage (219 Lafitte Street): Summer retreat for wealthy New Orleans family.
- The Allenton Hotel (347 Girod Street): Former hotel that also had a dance hall and dining room.

Potential Individual Listings in the NRHP: The following buildings maybe eligible for individual listing in the NRHP; further research and investigation is warranted:

- Old Jail (1910 Madison Street)(figure 10): Former city jail, constructed ca. 1938. Possibly eligible under Criterion A at the local level for its association with Mandeville history under the themes of *Government* and/or *Law*.



Figure 10: Old Jail.

- School House / Town Hall (1923 Jefferson Street): Former school house and town hall that now serves the Mandeville Police. Constructed circa 1899. Possibly eligible under Criterion A at the local level for its association with Mandeville history under the themes of *Education* and/or *Government*.
- Buck's Tavern / Ruby's Roadhouse (840 Lamarque): Early twentieth century social hall for the Mandeville African-American community. Possibly eligible under Criterion A at the local level under the themes of *Performing Arts*, *Recreation*, and/or *Ethnic History*. The building may also be eligible as part of the *African American Experience in Louisiana* historic context developed by the LA SHPO in 2012.
- Jean Baptiste Lang House (605 Carroll Street): Example of a "Anglo-Creole" house, constructed in 1852. While the integrity of location has been compromised as the house was relocated to current property from Lakeshore Drive following damage during Hurricane Katrina, the property and restored. Possibly eligible under Criterion A at the local level under the theme of *Recreation* and/or Criterion C at the local level as an example of Anglo-Creole architecture in Mandeville.
- Maestri Complex (310 Lafayette Street): Early twentieth century complex (house plus dependencies) that served as a summer residence for former New Orleans mayor Robert Maestri. Possibly eligible under Criterion A at the local level under the theme of *Recreation* and/or Criterion B for its association with Maestri.
- Musician's Recreation Home (145 Coffee Street): A former retreat for musicians as well as a place to stay during gigs in the area. Currently a private residence. Possibly eligible under Criterion A at the local level under the themes of *Performing Arts* and/or *Recreation*.
- The St. Tammany Bank Building (201 Carroll Street): Former bank building, now commercial space. Possibly eligible under Criterion A at the local level under the themes of *Community Development* and/or *Economics*. Further investigation may support listing under Criterion C: Architecture as well.