

Louisiana National Register Review Committee Meeting

July 24, 2014 1:30pm
Capitol Park Welcome Center
702 North River Road
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Minutes

Chairwoman Dr. Rebecca Saunders called the July 24, 2014 regular meeting of the National Register Review Committee to order at 1:33 p.m. In addition to Dr. Saunders, members present included John Sykes, Mrs. Sue Turner, Mrs. Peggy Lowe, Tarah Arcuri, Sam Kincade, Lynn Lewis, and Mrs. Martha Salomon. This was the first meeting for both Ms. Arcuri and Mr. Kincade. The other two newly appointed members, Dr. Robert Carriker and Kelly Rich, were unable to attend. Also missing were Turry Flucker and Dr. Matthew Savage.

Dr. Saunders asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mayor Lewis so moved, with Mr. Sykes seconding. This motion passed unanimously.

Deputy Assistant Secretary, Phil Boggan, welcome the audience and Committee members. Mr. Boggan updated everyone on how historic preservation fared during the legislative session as well as the exciting news that Poverty Point was recently named a World Heritage Site.

National Register Coordinator Jessica Richardson then introduced all Review Committee members present to the audience and mentioned that four new committee members have been appointed, two of which were at the meeting that day.

Dr. Saunders asked for a motion to approve the minutes of April's meeting. Mayor Lewis so moved, with Ms. Saloman seconding. This motion passed unanimously.

Under New Business, the Committee considered five National Register nominations and one National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form.

Shreveport Commercial Historic District Additional Documentation, Boundary Increase, and Boundary Decrease; Caddo Parish

Presented by Donna Fricker, nomination preparer

This submission will replace the existing National Register documentation on the Shreveport Commercial Historic District, listed on the Register in March 1982 and updated and expanded in 1996 (the latter accepted by the National Park Service 5/16/97). Its goals are to expand the district where warranted (based on the present National Register fifty year cutoff); decrease the boundaries where buildings have been lost since the 1996 update; provide up-to-date descriptive information (including the first building-by-building inventory for the district); and update and expand the statement of significance. The boundaries proposed in this submission encompass 236 buildings and structures, with contributing elements ranging from circa 1870 through 1964, except for three buildings dating from 1968. These three buildings are being counted as contributing because they reflect the design ethos of a significant component of the district and they are almost fifty years old.

The Downtown Shreveport Historic District is of statewide architectural significance (Criterion C). Outside of New Orleans, the city easily has the state's most architecturally impressive downtown. It achieves this distinction because of the number and overall quality of major buildings in a variety of architectural styles, from Italianate to Mid-Century Modern, as detailed below. The period of significance under Criterion C ranges from c.1870 (the date of the earliest building) to 1964 (the present fifty year cutoff). As noted in Part 7, there are three buildings from 1968 being counted as contributing under Criterion C because they are only four years shy of the 50 year cutoff, and most importantly, they reflect the design ethos of an important component of the district.

The district is of local significance under Criterion A in the area of commerce because it was a major focus of wholesale commerce for a region known historically and today as the Ark-La-Tex (Arkansas-Louisiana-Texas); a major focus of retail commerce for northwestern Louisiana; and the epicenter of oil and gas-related commerce for the Ark-La-Tex. An important component of the district's commercial significance is its unusually large number of surviving auto-related buildings. The period of significance under commerce is also c.1870 to 1964. The end of downtown Shreveport's commercial pre-eminence corresponds roughly to the present fifty year cutoff of 1964 so that date will be used as the ending date of the period of significance under commerce. The oil and gas industry continued to dominate the local economy (and downtown remained the focus of oil-related commerce) up to and past the fifty year cutoff.

Dr. Saunders asked if there were any questions or comments from the audience or review committee. Liz Swaine, director of the Shreveport Downtown Development Association spoke in favor of the nomination. Mr. Lane Callaway, of the Shreveport Historic Preservation Commission also spoke in favor of the nomination, but also asked that the nomination be delayed per the mayor's request. Review committee members asked for specific reasons to delay the nomination, but were not given any specifics. After some discussion, Mr. Sykes moved that the nomination not be delayed. This was seconded by Ms. Arcuri. A vote was taken and there were seven yeas and one nay, from Mayor Lynn Lewis. Next, Mr. Kincade moved that the nomination be recommended to the State Historic Preservation Officer. Ms. Saloman seconded. The motion passed with seven yeas, and one nay, from Mayor Lewis.

St. Augustine Catholic Church and Cemetery, Natchitoches Parish

Presented by Laura Ewen Blokker, Southeast Preservation, nomination preparer

St. Augustine Catholic Church and Cemetery is composed of approximately 57 acres extending back from Hwy 484 and Cane River Lake on Isle Brevelle, south of Natchez, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. The property includes four contributing buildings: the church, rectory, hall, and convent, plus one contributing site, a cemetery. While the period of significance for the nomination runs up to the present in order to acknowledge the continued traditional cultural use of the site, the historic contributing resources represent only those features built between 1829 and 1975, concluding with the construction of the replacement parish hall as a pivotal element in the social activities of the site. The church, rectory, and convent were constructed in the early twentieth century of different styles – Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne, and Craftsman – but are made visually cohesive via their white asbestos shingle cladding and terracotta colored metal and asphalt roofs. The hall, which dates to the early 1970s, is a non-descript, one-story, metal-clad facility that sits low on the site such that the older buildings are more prominent. Behind the church is a large cemetery featuring grave markers, tombs, and four mausoleums dating from the 1830s to the present. Flat open fields and mature trees define the pastoral setting of the site. St. Augustine Catholic Church and Cemetery retains a very high level of integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. It also maintains good integrity of workmanship, materials, and design. Even as the physical appearance of the buildings and cemetery has evolved with continuing use, the site would be recognizable to someone from the historic period.

St. Augustine Catholic Church and Cemetery in the Natchez vicinity of Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana is significant at the local level as a traditional cultural property under Criterion A: Social History and Ethnic History for its association with the ethnic, social, and religious life of the Cane River Creole People. Its enduring significance lies in its role as the cultural center of the Cane River Creole community of Isle Brevelle. Its story is that of the multicultural and multiracial society that was born on this continent even before the founding of this country. For nearly two-centuries, St. Augustine has been the locus of gathering, celebration, and final rest for this distinct community. Every year Cane River Creoles converge from points across the country to this spot that is the heart of their ancestral and cultural home. The period of significance is 1829-present and includes buildings constructed in the late 19th-early 20th century buildings as well as a hall

Lowe asked if the hall was contributing. Ms. Blokker explained it was and this was confirmed by Ms. Richardson. It was explained that with a Traditional Cultural Property, contributing resources can be less than fifty years old with the right justification. Mr. Sykes asked about the period of the significance of the district, which extends to the present. Again, it was explained that this is another place that TCP nominations are different as the site is a TCP because it is continually used up to today.

Dr. Saunders asked if there were any questions from the audience. Ms. Richardson added that she had received a letter of support for the nomination from Senator Mary Landrieu. Mr. Mark Guidry, president of the St. Augustine's historic society, and Fr. Thomas Paul were in attendance. Father Guidry told the story of the portrait of Augustin Metoyer and how it was retrieved from an auction. Mr. Kincade added that he had heard that story and had recently visited St. Augustine and found it to be a wonderful place.

Mr. Sykes then moved that the property be recommended to the State Historic Preservation Officer and Mayor Lewis seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Brumfield Homestead, Washington Parish

Presented by Cecily Bateman, property owner and nomination preparer

The Brumfield Homestead, once that of Thomas Colter Brumfield, is located on T.C. Brumfield Road in Washington Parish, Louisiana, approximately five miles northeast of Franklinton, about ten miles south of the Mississippi state line. The property, homesteaded by Thomas Colter's father, Thomas Hezekiah Brumfield, in 1893 is an exceptional intact example of an early Washington Parish farmstead and remains in the hands of the original family. A rarity in Washington Parish, it has maintained the representative structures of a farm which operated from 1887 to 1975. The nomination includes seven contributing buildings, including a farmhouse and six vernacular styled outbuildings. The sixty-five acre property is bounded by a paved road to the north, agricultural fields to the west (7.26 acre pasture) and east (4.5 acre pasture), and piney woods to the south. With only minor alterations occurring over the past 121 years, the property's contributing resources retain a high degree of integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design, materials, and workmanship and remain eligible for listing in the National Register.

The Brumfield Homestead is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criteria A and C. The Brumfields and their forebears were some of the earliest settlers and were instrumental in the development of Washington Parish. Under Criterion A, the Brumfield homestead is significant in the area of agriculture as an exceptionally intact farmstead, rare in its area, which reflects local and regional farming in Washington Parish in the late 19th century and for three quarters of the 20th century. Architecturally, under Criterion C, the Brumfield homestead is significant as a lasting, complete collection of resources that includes several representative types of agricultural buildings, in addition to showcasing vernacular design, materials, and workmanship reflective of the folk architecture, including that of the Upland South culture, in the Florida Parishes of Louisiana. The unaltered outbuildings offer a sense of time and place, revealing the homestead's humble beginning. In particular, the single pen log cabin built around 1888 and used first as a separate kitchen for an earlier home and later as a cotton house, is an exemplary example of extant log construction in Washington Parish. With its historic integrity intact, it is a surviving testament on its original homestead to the humble beginnings of these settlers and also to the longevity of the log cabin itself. In addition, the Brumfield farmhouse, with its original design, materials, and workmanship, is noteworthy as an example of folk vernacular architecture and a settler's rural residence built by its owner and his father according to local standards.

Dr. Saunders asked if there were any questions or comments from the audience or the review committee. There were none from the audience. Mr. Sykes asked for more information about the land patent for the property and Ms. Bateman provided some more background. Ms. Richardson added that the site really is a great example of an intact farmstead and was impressed with it when she visited.

Mrs. Turner moved that the property be recommended and Ms. Saloman seconded that the candidate be recommended to the SHPO, which passed unanimously.

A break followed the Brumfield Homestead discussion.

Edgewood Park Historic District, Orleans Parish

Presented by Gwen Jones and Gail Lazaras (FEMA), nomination preparers

The Edgewood Park Historic District, located northeast of downtown New Orleans, was platted in 1909 as a middle class suburban neighborhood planned around a streetcar line. It is situated in the "Gentilly" area, so

called because it abuts the Gentilly Ridge, geographically one of the highest points in this low-lying, flood-prone city. Edgewood Park was primarily developed in the early to mid-twentieth century and is mostly residential with some institutional and commercial buildings scattered throughout the district. Located along the district's main thoroughfares are several community institutions including Capdau Elementary School (currently vacant), St. James Major Catholic Church and Elementary School, and Bethel Lutheran Church. The neighborhood's residential architecture represents the popular trends of the period combined with local, traditional housing types. The Craftsman style is the most prominent in the district, with strong concentrations of Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival. Many houses feature a mixture of two or more styles for a decidedly eclectic fusion of styles. Traditional housing types, uniquely adapted to New Orleans, are also represented in the district. Shotgun houses and bungalows dominate the neighborhood and are often combined with raised basements. The houses are typically one to one-and-one-half stories and feature wood weatherboard or stucco siding, brick or rusticated concrete piers, and asphalt or Spanish tile roofs. Brick veneer denotes many houses built in the 1940s and later. The streets in the district are characterized by long, narrow lots with uniform setbacks, which influenced the design and massing of the houses. It is not uncommon to see ranches sited perpendicular to the street or camelbacks built to accommodate additional living space. Alterations in the district typically include replaced windows, doors, and siding, additions, and infilled porches or garages. Despite these modifications, the district retains historic integrity as a whole and remains eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Edgewood Park, located centrally between downtown New Orleans and Lake Pontchartrain, is eligible under Criterion A (Community Planning and Development) and C (Architecture), at the local level, as an early twentieth century New Orleans streetcar suburb, associated with the development of suburban housing in New Orleans throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the outward growth of the city, and the iconic streetcar system. Many neighborhoods in New Orleans may be considered early suburbs: Carrollton and Broadmoor are most certainly streetcar suburbs, while Pontchartrain Park and Lake Vista are clearly commuter suburbs with curvilinear roadways and post-war ranches. However, Edgewood Park is a unique example that represents all three eras of suburban development, essentially encapsulating early twentieth-century architectural features that embody the history of residential suburban development in New Orleans. While the Edgewood Park plat is not in keeping with the more traditional layouts of later suburban types, its eclectic architectural styles provide evidence of its continued popularity. The construction of two-tract driveways, detached garages, and the adaptation of traditional housing types to incorporate ground floor garages demonstrate Edgewood's Park association with the automobile era of suburban development. The later development of Piedmont, Clermont and Fairmont Drives, and the proliferation of mid-twentieth century architectural styles, as well as the reorientation of these avenues away from a walking oriented neighborhood exhibits Edgewood Park's continuing significance as a post-war commuter suburb in New Orleans. Edgewood Park's period of significance, from 1909 to 1963, encompasses the full range of development of the neighborhood -- from the date of the original plat and the introduction of the streetcar into the Gentilly area, to the beginning of construction of I-10 through the southeastern edge of the neighborhood.

Dr. Saunders asked if there were any questions or comments from the audience or the review committee. Mr. Sykes asked about the notification process and Ms. Richardson explained that a newspaper announcement was done as well as a public meeting held with FEMA and the Edgewood Park Neighborhood Association. Ms. Richardson also added that she received a letter from about twenty of the property owners in support of the nomination.

Mr. Kincade then moved that the candidate be recommended to the SHPO and Ms. Saloman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

USHA-Funded Public Housing in Louisiana, 1935-50 Multiple Property Documentation Form
Presented by Katy Coyle, R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Document Preparer

Prior to the presentation, Ms. Richardson discussed that this type of form is used to discuss a theme found at several different properties. Each contains a theme, geographic area, and time period. This is not voted on like a normal nomination, but rather, is a cover document for all eligible properties that fall under this theme, including the next item on the agenda, Iberville Public Housing Development. She advised the Review

Committee that they can certainly ask questions about it, but that it will not be voted on and after its presentation, we would move right into the Iberville presentation.

Pre-World War II public housing developments in Louisiana constitute solid examples of cities' localized response to a national social movement. These developments displayed the flexibility of a national program when applied to meet the specific needs of low income residents across Louisiana. The variability of this loosely assembled program can be seen in the differing building types, site plans, and locations. The lessons learned by implementing these developments ultimately shaped the national public housing standards that guided public housing developments across the country for years following the completion of Louisiana's public housing developments.

Regardless of whether they are high-density or low-density housing developments, this United States Housing Authority (USHA)-funded Public Housing in Louisiana, 1935-1950 Multiple Property Submission could include two different property types: historic districts or individual buildings.

Dr. Saunders added that this was a very interesting nomination to read and had never heard of the PWA prior to reading this. Mr. Sykes asked where Clarksdale, a development in Baton Rouge, was located and it was found out that it is located near Southern University. There were no further questions from the audience or Review Committee and the Iberville presentation then began.

Iberville Public Housing Development, Orleans Parish

Presented by Katy Coyle and Jill Adams, nomination preparers

The Iberville Public Housing Development is located on a 23-acre site adjacent to the French Quarter, a National Historic Landmark and National Register of Historic Places Historic District, and Tremé, a local historic district. The boundaries of the Iberville Public Housing Development are North Villere Street to the northwest, Conti and Saint Louis Streets to the northeast, Iberville Street to the southwest, and Tremé and Basin Streets to the southeast. Constructed in 1940, the district includes 15 three-story buildings and an ornate one-story former administration building. Typical for urban public housing in New Orleans, the 16 extant buildings have brick exteriors, tile roofs, chimneys, and galleries with iron columns and decorative cast iron railing. While the overall site has experienced alterations and extensive demolition, the property retains the historic character of a USHA-funded housing development in Louisiana.

Due to the pressing need to provide low-income housing during the Great Depression, President Roosevelt signed the United States Housing Act of 1937, also known as the Wagner-Steagall Act. The Housing Act established the United States Housing Administration (USHA), which provided funding to local housing authorities nationwide. Built in 1941, the Iberville Public Housing Development was the third of six low-rent public housing developments in New Orleans funded by the Wagner-Steagall Act. Iberville is an exceptional example of non-military urban public housing in Louisiana. The remaining structures of the Iberville Public Housing Development are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a district under the USHA-Funded Public Housing in Louisiana, 1935-1950 multiple property listing at the state level. The Iberville Public Housing Development has direct associations with the historic context, *United States Housing Authority (USHA)-funded Public Housing in Louisiana, 1935-1950*, developed as part of the MPS and meets the registration requirements of Property Subtype—High-Density Urban Housing Developments under Historic Districts found in Section F of the MPS Cover. The Iberville Public Housing Development is eligible under Criterion A as an example of the USHA-funded urban housing development in Louisiana during World War II. The period of significance for the district is 1940 to 1950 in association with the MPS.

Dr. Saunders asked if there were any questions or comments from the audience or the review committee. Mr. Sykes asked about the floor plans for each building and Ms. Adams discussed that they really varied, but consisted of one, two, and three bedroom units, set up in varying ways in each building type. Ms. Lowe asked about the next phase for Iberville and what the redevelopment plans were. Mr. Josh Collen, of HRI, stood and answered that it will be a mixed use development with the Iberville buildings being rehabilitated and new construction going up on the rest of the site. There were no further questions.

Mayor Lewis moved that the candidate be recommend to the SHPO, and Mr. Sykes seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Jessica Richardson had a few short announcements. Of the eight nominations sent up to NPS from the April meeting, 7 have been listed. One, the Pythian Temple, was sent back as there were integrity issues on the interior of the building. However, it will be seen again soon as there is an update for the Lower Central Business District in the works. She reminded the Review Committee that she will be sending them all ethics information as this has to be completed prior to the end of the year.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:51p.m.