

Louisiana National Register Review Committee Meeting

August 17, 2017, 1:00pm
Capitol Park Welcome Center
702 N. River Rd
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Minutes

Vice-chairman John Sykes called the August 17, 2017, regular meeting of the National Register Review Committee to order at 1:03 p.m. In addition to Mr. Sykes, members present included Martha Saloman, Dr. Rebecca Saunders, Turry Fluker, Dr. Matthew Savage and Tarah Acuri. Lynn Lewis and Peggy Lower were unable to attend.

Mr. Sykes asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Dr. Saunders so moved and Dr. Savage seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Nicole Hobson-Morris, Executive Director of the Division of Historic Preservation welcomed the audience and committee members to the meeting and also introduced all Review Committee members present to the audience. Mrs. Hobson-Morris also gave a quick overview of what occurs at the review committee meeting and stated the nomination would then be provided to the Preservation Officer with their recommendation, then forwarded to the Keeper of the Register for a final determination. Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator introduced the review committee members and stated that three more members were on their way – Kelly Rich, Mrs. Sue Turner, and Dr. Robert Carriker.

Mr. Sykes asked for a motion to approve the minutes from April's meeting. Dr. Saunders so moved and Dr. Savage seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Under New Business, 5 new nominations were presented to the committee.

Franklin Foundation Hospital, St. Mary Parish

Presented by Harriet Swift, nomination preparer

The Franklin Foundation Hospital, constructed between 1951 and 1953, and expanded in 1966 and 1985, is located less than half a mile north of Bayou Teche, the waterway that has defined Franklin for its entire history. The facility, now vacant, occupies 7.5 acres on a large, tree-shaded block with the main entrance facing south toward Hospital Avenue. The red-brick hospital complex contains the original one-story 1953 facility and the three-story 1960s expansion inserted into the initial "H" footprint. The entrance pavilion and black plate glass tower are situated at the apex of the curving driveway giving the blended buildings a strong visual identity. The south-facing facade of the three-story block adjacent to the glass wall is stucco and stone, with a yellow-beige cast, further accenting the entrance and adding emphasis with its contrast to the uniform red-brick cladding of the rest of the complex. The campus is ringed with live oaks and mature crepe myrtles, which soften but do not obscure the clean, sharp-edged International style design of the hospital. The complex retains the hallmarks of its first iteration - the one-story 1953 hospital with flat roofs, evenly spaced bands of metal windows, and avoidance of ornamentation. The interior of the hospital has not been altered since it closed more than 10 years ago. While there were reworkings of spaces and renovations over the decades, many of the interiors still possess details such as solid wood doors, tile wainscoting, wood cabinetry, and metal casings. The building is substantially intact from its period of significance, 1951-1967. The additions post-1967 (the 50-year guideline for National Register buildings) were compatible and do not affect the hospital complex's overall integrity. The location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association have not been diminished. The Franklin Foundation Hospital is an important visual representation of the evolution of a mid-century Hill-Burton hospital and is thus eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Franklin Foundation Hospital is locally significant under the National Register Criterion A for Health Care. The hospital was a direct consequence of the 1946 Hill-Burton Hospital Construction Act, the far-reaching federal legislation that sponsored hospital construction and health clinics in under-served areas, particularly in rural communities and small towns. The Franklin hospital was one of the first built in Louisiana under the Hill-Burton

program and continued to use the program in its expansions and direction until its demise in the 1970s. The Hill-Burton program was a major landmark in U.S. health care history. Between 1947 and 1970, 5,677 hospitals were built under the Hill-Burton auspices, half of those in communities with populations less than 10,000. The program set nationwide standards for hospitals and health clinics, later adding nursing homes, chronic disease hospitals, mental health, and rehabilitation facilities. Southern states benefited from the program more than any other region with their heavily rural populations and low per-capita incomes. The Franklin hospital was constructed and expanded during the peak of the Hill-Burton era and embodies the progressive goals of the program, both in the approaches to health care and its physical expression in a new, modern design. The building's International Style design and aesthetics carried through its expansions and alterations, which add to its historic importance by conveying the rapid changes and growth of health care in the 1950s and 1960s. Many Hill-Burton hospitals and buildings have been heavily altered as well as abandoned. The Franklin Foundation Hospital is an important example of a rapidly disappearing era of American health care and will be a meaningful addition to the National Register of Historic Places.

Vann Joines with Gulf Coast Housing Partnership, who is helping the owner with the nomination, was in attendance and added that the local historic district supports the nomination. Dr. Saunders asked what the plan is for the building. Mr. Joines stated that it is owned by an attorney from New Orleans who purchased it so that it wouldn't be torn down. The idea is perhaps to do elderly housing or something in the healthcare realm.

Dr. Saunders moved that the property be recommended to the State Historic Preservation Officer and Turry Flucker seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Downtown New Iberia Commercial Historic District, Iberia Parish
Presented by Jane Braud and Paul Allain, nomination preparers

The Downtown New Iberia Commercial Historic District is located along Bayou Teche in Iberia Parish and is bounded by Jefferson Street to the north, Fulton Street and Main Street to the east, Weeks Street to the south, and St. Peter Street to the west. The proposed district is the city of New Iberia's historic core and is 68.8 acres. It includes 120 buildings, of which 81 are contributing to the district with 7 of these buildings previously listed individually on the National Register and 39 are non-contributing, and 1 site. The buildings range from late 19th century to mid-century modern architecture and include a variety of commercial functions. The proposed district is recognizable as a cohesive grouping of historic buildings and retains its historic integrity as the commercial center for the city of New Iberia and the surrounding region. The district retains both its architectural and historic identity to qualify for the National Register under Criterion A as a center of commerce, recreation, and entertainment for the city of New Iberia and the surrounding rural parts of the parish. The district is an important representative of a late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century townscape.

The Downtown New Iberia Commercial Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of commerce and entertainment/recreation because it is the commercial and entertainment center of the city and surrounding area. The downtown area provided goods, services, and entertainment to the city of New Iberia and the Iberia Parish. The approximate 9 block grouping contained all essential retail, entertainment, governmental, and transportation related uses within walking distance. The proposed period of significance is 1870-1967. The dates for period of significance were chosen because construction of some of the earliest buildings in the district began in the 1870's marking the beginning of the district's emergence. Both the fire of 1899 and the downtown revitalization project in 1974 named Operation Impact removed significant architectural structures, which were either modernized or torn down to make way for downtown parking facilities. While the downtown revitalization project took place in 1974, the end of the period of significance is the current 50 year cutoff, 1967. Downtown New Iberia's Commercial Historic District continues to attract investors and visitors alike and is a place where culture and entertainment is flourishing.

Fran Thibodeaux, Executive Director of the Iberia Parish Convention and Visitor's Bureau, spoke about the work that the Main Street program has done in New Iberia. Ryan Baudoin with the local historic district and the vice-president of the chamber of commerce spoke in full support of the district. Lastly, Mayor Freddie DeCourt spoke in support of the district.

Dr. Savage moved that the property be recommended to the State Historic Preservation Officer and Martha Saloman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Texaco Service Station, Orleans Parish

Presented by Beth Jacob, nomination preparer

The one-story concrete block and stucco building at 3060 St. Claude Avenue in New Orleans was constructed in 1949 as a Texaco-branded service station. The building occupies a prominent corner site at the intersection of St. Claude Avenue and Clouet Street, and lies within the boundaries of (but not within the period of significance of) the Bywater Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. The building is rectangular in form, with two service bays, an office/storage room, two bathrooms accessed from the exterior, and a projecting canopy. The Moderne-style service station was built according to a prototype developed by the industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague for Texaco in the mid-1930s. Despite minor alterations to the façade, resulting from Texaco's periodic efforts to modernize its service stations, the building retains many character-defining features of its initial Walter Dorwin Teague design, making it eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the mid-1930s, the industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague developed a series of prototypes for the Texas Company's Texaco-branded service stations. Between 1936 and 1964, the Texas Company constructed over 10,000 such stations, however most have since been demolished, replaced, or altered beyond recognition. The Texaco service station located at 3060 St. Claude Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana is locally significant under Criterion C, in the area of architecture, as a rare surviving intact example of a Teague-designed Texaco service station in Orleans Parish. The period of significance is 1949, reflecting the building's construction date.

Dr. Savage asked what the plan for the building is. Ms. Jacob stated that the owner is looking into a bar and restaurant. Mr. Flucker asked if this building was for certain a Teague design. Ms. Jacob replied that it is. Dr. Savage asked if there are others left in New Orleans. Ms. Jacob stated that she found 3 that she knows are Teague designs. Of these, 1 is a Domino's pizza and another was altered to the new design standards for Texaco and is not recognizable. John Sykes asked if this is the first Teague designed gas station listed in Louisiana. Jessica Richardson responded that as far as she knows, yes. Ms. Jacob added that she found two listed in the country as Teague designs.

Dr. Savage moved that the property be recommended to the SHPO and Kelly Rich seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Woodland Plantation, St. John the Baptist Parish

Presented by Gabrielle Begue, nomination preparer

Woodland Plantation is located at 1128 LA Highway 628 on a 3.61-acre property in LaPlace, St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana. The buildings and structures on the site include a French Creole plantation house constructed c. 1793 and remodeled in three phases during the 19th century, a carriage house (c.1900), a shed (c. 1840s), a cistern base, and a shed/stable, which is non-contributing. The property has been vacant for about 10 years. Historically a sugar plantation occupying an estimated 2,000 acres, the bulk of the acreage was subdivided and sold off in 1923, spurring the growth of modern-day LaPlace. The property is oriented southwest to face the Mississippi River and is bounded by residences on either side and by railroad tracks to the rear. Despite these changes in setting, the property possesses a high degree of integrity and thus retains eligibility for listing in the National Register.

Woodland Plantation is significant at the state level under Criterion B for its association with jazz pioneer Edward "Kid" Ory, who was born at the plantation in 1886 and spent the first 23 years of his life there working and developing his musical career. The property is also significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a rare surviving example of bousillage construction in St. John the Baptist Parish, and it is notable in particular for its three distinct phases of the technique ranging from c. 1793 through c. 1840s. The period of significance under Criterion B is 1886-1910, representing the years that Kid Ory spent growing up and developing his music career at Woodland before leaving the plantation for New Orleans. The period of

significance under Criterion C is c. 1793, when the original 2 room core of the plantation was constructed, to c. 1840 to represent the three phases of bousillage construction at Woodland.

Tarah Arcuri asked what the owner's current plan is. Ms. Begue stated that he is still trying to figure it out, but is looking at a rental residential type of thing. He is also looking into farming and perhaps using the house as an events space. John Sykes asked if the fire screen is stenciled. Ms. Begue added that no, it's just a shadow from the old screen.

Turkey Flucker then moved that the property be recommended to the SHPO and Tarah Arcuri seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Como Plantation, West Feliciana Parish

Presented by Paul Smith, nomination preparer

Situated on a bluff at the edge of the Tunica Hills of West Feliciana Parish overlooking a scenic bend of the Mississippi River, Como Plantation is the only south Louisiana plantation house that retains its original relationship with the river. It does not have a modern flood protection levee between it and the river. Built in 1890, the house is a two-story wood frame building on brick piers with a front gable roof. The footprint of the structure is a square central massing with porches projecting over the front (south) and rear (north). At either side (east and west) are two-two-story polygonal bays. Over the years, alterations have been made to the building with the earliest probably occurring c. 1935 when the style of the front porch of the house was altered for stylistic reasons. The original columns were replaced with Neo-Classical fluted columns and the full length second floor gallery was replaced with a central second floor Juliette balcony. In 1984, additional alterations were made by a previous owner including the rebuilding of a two-story bay on the west elevation and the beginnings of an attempt to rebuild the electrical system of the house. In the 1990's, the rear double galleries collapsed. In addition to the house, there are three other contributing buildings: a chapel, a commissary, and an outhouse; two contributing structures: a cistern base and cattle dipping vat; and seven non-contributing buildings that include six non-historic buildings and one altered historic building. Even though the house has been altered some, it and the other buildings and structures on the site retain sufficient historic integrity to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places including integrity of location, setting, overall design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Como Plantation is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A: Commerce for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. At a time in history when this region was an important source of agricultural products both locally, nationally, and internationally, transportation and communication were essential. During this time, Como Plantation was an important hub of communication and trade for the distribution of agricultural products to markets, the receipt of essential goods to sustain the greater community and the movement of people and information to and from the area. As the location of an important river landing as well as William Edenborn's Louisiana Railway and Navigation Co.'s (LRN RR) Brandon station and Post Office, Como Plantation played an essential role in the development and sustenance of the local economy and culture.

Mrs. Turner asked about the distance of the railroad and Mr. Smith stated that it was a significant line between St. Francisville and Woodville, Mississippi. Mrs. Turner asked if people who lived around Como flooded. Mr. Smith stated that around 1854, they had a small levee constructed, but that overall, the Tunica Hills have protected the area from flooding. Mrs. Turner asked what the plan is now. Charlie Cole, the owner, was in attendance and stated the proposed use if for a Christian retreat modeled after Manresa. Mrs. Turner stated that the whole time she has known Como, it was virtually uninhabited. She asked about the access to the site and if people will come and stay on site. Mr. Cole stated that access is via a 4.5 mile gravel road and that retreatants will be housed over time in cabins and six bedrooms in the main house. Dr. Saunders asked if the cabins will affect the integrity of the site. Jessica Richardson stated that they won't as they will be located further up in the hills in a wooded area and won't be visible from the main house and historic core.

Dr. Saunders moved that the property be recommended to the SHPO and Tarah Arcuri seconded. Turkey Flucker and John Sykes opposed the nomination. The motion passed with seven yeas.

John Sykes discussed the loss of former review committee member, Dan Michel, who recently passed away and how our condolences are with his family.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.