

NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING – MINUTES
Thursday, April 3, 2025 - 11:00 AM
State Library of Louisiana
701 N 4th Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dr. Robert Carriker called the April 3, 2025, regular meeting of the National Register Review Committee to order at 11:02 AM. In addition to Dr. Carriker, members present included Dr. Fallon Aidoo, Guy Carwile, Turry Flucker, Martha Salomon, Dr. Rebecca Saunders, and Dr. Matthew Savage.

Dr. Carriker then asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Rebecca Saunders so moved, and Turry Flucker seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Bailey Hall welcomed the audience and committee members. Carrie Broussard (Interim State Historic Preservation Officer) was in attendance. Division of Historic Preservation staff in attendance included Bailey Hall (National Register Coordinator) and Elaina Stuntz (student intern).

Dr. Carriker asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2024 meeting. Rebecca Saunders so moved, and Turry Flucker seconded. The motion passed with one abstention from Fallon Aidoo.

After this item, seven nominations were presented to the committee.

Oak Grove Historic District, West Carroll Parish

Presented by Jessica Richardson, nomination preparer

The Oak Grove Historic District is a commercial district within the Town of Oak Grove in West Carroll Parish. There are a small number of residences included in the district boundaries with other more distinct residential areas to the north and south. The district contains 49 resources, of which 35 are contributing buildings and 14 are non-contributing buildings. There is one existing individual listing within the district – the Fiske Theatre (listed in 2014). The district boundary is roughly bounded by E. Jefferson Street to the north, N. Johnson Street to the east, Marietta Street to the south, and N. Front Street to the west. The main thoroughfare is E. Main Street with intersecting north/south streets of Jarson, Briggs, Horner, Koerner, and Johnson Street. The district features a variety of architectural styles with most being classified as “Other” or “Commercial Style.” The district retains many historic resources from all eras of Oak Grove’s history since it was founded in 1906 and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Oak Grove Historic District is eligible under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and at the local level. Officially incorporated in 1909, to take advantage of the newly-built rail line, Oak Grove developed over the last 120 years with steady growth related to the area’s agricultural economy. Extant historic buildings in the adjacent blocks north and south of Main Street showcase a thriving small town downtown with a variety of businesses including banks, specialty stores, the parish courthouse, and a movie theatre. Oak Grove has been significant to the development and growth of West Carroll Parish since it was formed in 1909. Because of its location along a rail line, it has been an important center for exporting the area’s agricultural goods such as sweet potatoes, cotton, soybeans, and other vegetables. While West Carroll Parish suffered declining populations over the 20th century, Oak Grove actually grew and remained a fixture in the parish. Because of its location far enough away from any major interstates, the historic downtown core of Oak Grove has survived and continues to be significant to West Carroll parish as a whole. The period of significance for the district is 1907, the age of the oldest extant resource, and continues through 1975, the current 50-year guideline.

Dr. Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural description and general proofreading. Dr. Fallon Aidoo asked for clarification on the period of significance and construction dates in relation to different commercial industries that developed within the community. She also recommended including census records that may help reflect some of this information.

Dr. Carriker opened to public comments. No comments were made.

Martha Salomon then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Fallon Aidoo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Oleander Hotel, Jefferson Parish

Presented by Allyson Hinz, nomination preparer

The Oleander Hotel, located at 166-176 Ludwig Lane in Grand Isle, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, is locally significant under Criterion A and significant at the state level under Criterion C. The hotel fits within a period of significance starting in 1929, when it opened as a brand-new modern hotel, extending to 1974. For the community of Grand Isle, this era represents economic recovery and transformation, moving from hurricane devastation to becoming a popular tourist destination. The hotel stands as a tangible representation of success for John Ludwig, a prominent leader and figure for Grand Isle from the late 19th to early 20th century. Through his innovative agricultural practices and business ventures, Ludwig brought prosperity to the island and its community. At the height of his success, he commissioned the construction of the Oleander Hotel, a new and modern establishment. Architecturally, the hotel stands out as a rare example of coastal vernacular architecture from the late 1920s, reflecting building adaptations on the island that began in 1915 following a series of devastating tropical storms and the construction of the U.S. Coast Guard Station in 1919, which set a precedent for future resilient buildings in Grand Isle.

The hotel features common Louisiana Coastal Vernacular elements, such as a moderately steep roof, elevation on concrete piers as a precaution against frequent flooding, an abundance of windows on all sides for ventilation, and a primary façade facing the ocean to catch sea breezes. Although the original double enclosed gallery and porch that once fronted the hotel have been lost due to storm damage, the building remains the sole survivor of hotel and resort buildings on Grand Isle from this era. Despite some physical alterations, the Oleander Hotel retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical and architectural significance—an architectural style now scarce due to frequent strong tropical storms in the area. The Oleander Hotel serves as a unique and preserved snapshot of its time, specific to Louisiana Gulf Coast architecture. It illustrates both the challenges posed by natural forces and the community's adaptive responses, highlighting the evolution of coastal vernacular practices on Grand Isle.

Dr. Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile asked for clarification on the future use of the building. Ms. Hinz explained the many ways the building will serve as a tourism headquarters for the town. Carwile offered suggestions on the architectural descriptions. Turry Flucker asked for clarification on the significance of the artist culture surrounding the building's history. Ms. Hinz explained the island became a place for artist inspiration with the Hotel being the hub for activity. Fallon Aidoo added further clarification on the categories of different populations that would've participated in other places like Grand Isle as an added comparative context.

Dr. Carriker opened to public comments. TJ Augustine, partial owner, spoke in support of the nomination as an effort to highlight the historic buildings' significance in serving the community of Grand Isle and explained the future sale of the property to a non-profit organization with plans to restore the building.

Rebecca Saunders then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Turry Flucker seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ville Platte Post Office, Evangeline Parish

Presented by Michael Ball, nomination preparer

This property of approximately 0.44 acres is situated along W. Main Street (LA-167), the central artery of the town of Ville Platte. The building is currently vacant, surrounded by moderate plant growth. A chain-link fence encloses the property on three sides and a paved parking lot wraps around the building from the southwest to the southeast. The Ville Platte Post Office building was constructed as a WPA project in 1937 in the PWA/WPA

Colonial Revival architectural style. It served as Ville Platte's first federal post office building from its construction until 1974, when it was converted to the local branch of the parish public library system. The building is a single-story building of approximately 4,790 square feet, with a rear two-story mezzanine section that is accessed by a side entrance. It features an asphalt shingle gabled roof over the publicly accessible portion with two large skylights and a weathervane, structural red brick walls on piers, and 12-over-12 windows on the front elevation. The rear portion of the building has a flat roof. Overall, the building is in very good condition. Masonry, concrete elements, and the gabled roof are all intact. There is some minor deterioration at exterior trim including peeling paint and wood rot. The building is mostly unaltered from its historic condition, except for the open-air loading dock in the rear, which has been enclosed with a contrasting material (wood siding). All interior wood panel doors on both floors of the building appear original, with wood casing also intact. Exterior openings appear to be intact and original, except for the historic front doors on the W. Main St. face, which have been replaced with glazed aluminum storefront doors. Screens have been installed over some windows. The building was converted into the Ville Platte branch of the Evangeline Parish Library in 1974, which entailed minor modifications as described below, but these left the historic integrity of the building virtually fully intact.

Ville Platte Post Office is a locally significant example of a series of standard, easily extendable plans for U.S. Post Office buildings developed for smaller communities as a project of the U.S. Government's Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the New Deal of the 1930s. The building was constructed in 1937 in the PWA/WPA Colonial Revival style. As such, applicable criteria include A (Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and C (Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction). Applicable areas of significance include Architecture, Community Planning and Development, and Politics/Government, as elaborated below. The building's period of significance (1937–1974) spans the years it served as the first U.S. Post Office building for the Acadiana community of Ville Platte.

Dr. Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Fallon Aidoo asked for clarification if the historic flooring is present under the current carpet. Nikki Beeson, owner, clarified that the historic flooring does exist as proven by exploratory demolition in certain areas. Guy Carwile made suggestions on the architectural description of the building. Matthew Savage recommended adding additional information on the architect's other public works projects and how they compare to this. He also recommended further highlighting the building's importance as part of the larger WPA Post Office movement in rural areas.

Dr. Carriker opened to public comments. Nikki Beeson, owner, spoke in support of the nomination as an effort to highlight the historic buildings' significance in serving the community of Ville Platte and explained the future use of the building as a multi-functional community space.

Rebecca Saunders then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Turry Flucker seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Citizens Bank, Iberia Parish

Presented by Elaina Stuntz, student worker

The Citizens' Bank building located at 1320-24 Main Street in downtown Jeanerette was built by Dr. C. A. McGowen in 1898.¹ The building is masonry construction, two stories high, one room wide and approximately three rooms deep. Having recently been incorporated as a town twenty years earlier, Jeanerette was still emerging as commercial hub in the late 1890s. The construction of Citizens' Bank not only provided a much-needed local banking system, it was also a symbol of confidence in the town's future. Today, the Citizens Bank building still stands strong and is one of the few prominent masonry buildings remaining on Main Street. Citizens Bank was built in the Italian Renaissance style and includes many significant features such as segmental arch windows, decorative terra cotta keystones.² Fluted casings, pressed tin finishes, and bank vault exist at the interior. This level of architectural integrity is growing increasingly rare in the town of Jeanerette.

The Citizens Bank building is closely associated with broad trends of development in Jeanerette within the context of architecture and commerce. Today, Jeanerette's Main Street is not what it once was, with many of its historic masonry buildings either demolished or unrecognizable. The Citizens Bank building retains a remarkable amount of its character defining features. The front façade's exposed brick, with its thin mortar joints, decorative coursework, and intricate arches clearly possess high artistic value, and embodies the distinct characteristics of late nineteenth century Italian Renaissance style masonry architecture. The building's interior historic integrity remains intact with virtually no changes to its layout and finishes such as pressed tin, fluted wainscoting, and wood flooring remaining intact. Citizens Bank Building is associated with the Reconstruction and post- Reconstruction era trend of establishment of local banks in small Louisiana towns. These financial centers were crucial to the economic recovery of these communities after the devastation of the Civil War. Although the bank was dissolved in 1915, the Citizens Bank building continued to contribute to commerce of the town and housed such businesses as insurance agencies, a telephone exchange, and doctors' offices until circa 1960.

Dr. Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Fallon Aidoo asked for clarification on the uniqueness of the architecture for the small town. Aidoo asked, why is this building in this specific location or town rather than another town or another location within this town? Referring back to the nomination, Ms. Hall explained that this was part of a banking movement to bring banks to rural areas to create access to banks. Martha Salomon asked for clarification on the continuous awning on the commercial buildings present on the Sanborn maps and clarified that this awning is no longer present on the remaining buildings in the town. Aidoo added a follow up point to add clarification to the nomination on whether the bank served consumers vs commercial banking. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural description. Turry Flucker asked what the future use of the property will be. Ms. Hall explained that it was unknown at this time.

Dr. Carriker opened to public comments. No public comments were made.

Rebecca Saunders then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Martha Salomon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Rayne Historic District, Acadia Parish

Presented by Jessica Richardson, nomination preparer

The Rayne Historic District is a commercial and residential district within the City of Rayne in Acadia Parish. The district contains 204 resources, of which 149 are contributing buildings, 44 are non-contributing buildings, 2 are contributing sites, 5 are contributing structures, and 2 are non-contributing structures. The structures are all found at the water and electric plant. There are two existing individual listings within the district – the Joseph D. Bernard House (listed in 2001) and the Emile L. Daboval, Jr. Residence (listed in 2023). The district boundary is roughly bounded by Clegg Street (east), Edwards Street (north), Parkerson Street (west), Arenas Street (west), Bernard Street (south), Gabriel's Alley (east), Perrodin Street (south), 4th street (west), West South 1st Street (south), and the railroad tracks (north). Rayne was platted in 1880 after Dr. William Cunningham purchase 1,157 acres of land adjacent to the Louisiana Western Railroad and had it subdivided into lots. The main commercial thoroughfares are Adams Avenue (north/south), Louisiana Avenue (east/west north of the railroad tracks), and Texas Avenue/American Legion Drive (east/west south of the railroad tracks). Adjacent to these main roads are gridded streets with fairly regular blocks that house smaller commercial buildings and residences. The district features a variety of architectural styles with the majority coming in the form of early 20th century styles such as Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and mid-20th century modern styles. The district retains many historic resources from all eras of Rayne's history since it was founded in 1880 and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Rayne Historic District is eligible under Criterion A in the area of Commerce and Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the local level. Founded in 1880 to take advantage of the rail line, Rayne developed over the last 140 years with several economic booms, during the first decades of the 1900s, the 1950s, and the late 1960s into the 1970s. These phases led to the construction of a variety of commercial and residential buildings throughout the town, many of which are still extant to tell the story of Rayne. The City of Rayne has

been significant to the commercial development of Acadia Parish from the beginning, serving as an important center of export for agricultural goods, most famously frogs. As the town grew, it remained significant within the agricultural field and also became important as a center for the oil and gas industries. As the railroad became less popular for transporting goods, Rayne was fortunate to be along the new Interstate 10, which further helped Rayne to grow as the second largest city in Acadia Parish (behind Crowley). With this growth, the city's historic resources reflect the popular architectural trends, with some very highly detailed examples. The period of significance for the district begins in 1882, the age of the oldest extant resource, and continues through 1974, the current 50-year guideline.

Dr. Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Turry Flucker asked for clarification on the historical and specific significance of the frogs. Flucker also asked for clarification on the other potential districts including a potential African American historic district. Ms. Richardson clarified that research is still ongoing but visually clarified with a map on the proposed area in review. Fallon Aidoo clarified the timeline between the land disbursement and the frog industry. Richardson explained the land was only purchased after the railroad was developed and the frog industry came after with no prior settlement areas before the railroad. Carwile added minor suggestions to the architectural descriptions for some resources.

Dr. Carriker opened to public comment. No public comments were made.

Fallon Aidoo then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Martha Salomon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Hickory Hill Plantation, East Feliciana Parish

Presented by Elaina Stuntz, nomination preparer

Hickory Hill Plantation is a rectangular brick residential two-story building located in Jackson, East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana. Hickory Hill was built in approximately 1810 as a Federal style residence. By 1815, Hickory Hill was expanded and transitioned into an Early Classical Revival style. The parish of East Feliciana is known for its rich and densely forested rural landscapes. Hickory Hill is set back approximately 300 feet from the rural highway with a gravel driveway and brick walkway leading to the main entrance. The building is isolated in an area of the previously mentioned densely wooded forests of East Feliciana Parish. Hickory Hill has kept the original appearance of the 1812-1815 renovation for nearly 200 years. The alterations greatly contributed to Hickory Hill's appearance and provided some of the most architecturally significant features, such as the enclosed porch, four doric columns, and a semicircular sunburst window on the third floor. The only other resources on the property are two modern sheds at the rear of the house. These resources are insignificant and not included in the resource count.

As the only Early Classical Revival style residence in East Feliciana, Hickory Hill Plantation is an excellent architectural representation of early Louisiana history. Hickory Hill is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture at the local level for its blend of Federal and Early Classical Revival styles. The period of significance begins in 1810 with the construction of the original house and ends in 1815 with the construction of the front and rear additions that shifted the home into the Early Classical Revival style. The nearest identical residential design to Hickory Hill is in Natchez, Mississippi. Hickory Hill remained in the original family for generations and has remained mostly unaltered since 1815 and thus retains its historic integrity.

Dr. Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile made suggestions to correct the architectural description. Fallon Aidoo clarified that the nomination's focus is on the architectural significance of the house and suggested changing the name of the nomination to include the word "house" since the rest of the plantation history is not being nominated. Turry Flucker expressed concern over not including the history of the entire plantation and felt this leaves a hole in the argument for significance. Ms. Hall clarified that the focus of the nomination is the architectural significance and that is what is being reviewed at this time, but asked the committee for clarification on a potential Criterion A argument. A later nomination addition would be recommended. Aidoo agreed that it would be appropriate to explore depending on the

availability of resources to tell the story in the requirements of National Register criteria or even as an independent research endeavor to understand the full significance of this resource. Rebecca Saunders asked for clarification on the period of significance being tied to the construction date only as a Criterion C justification.

Dr. Carriker opened the discussion to public comments. No comments were made.

Guy Carwile then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Rebecca Saunders seconded. The motion passed with two opposed from Turry Flucker and Matthew Savage.

Wooddale Tower, East Baton Rouge Parish
Presented by Tiffany Bell, nomination preparer

1885 Wooddale Boulevard is a 12-story International Style office tower in the Lobdell-Wooddale commercial corridor of Baton Rouge. It is located roughly 5 miles east of the historic downtown center. It is situated between two wide, busy thoroughfares—Wooddale Boulevard and Lobdell Boulevard—that connect to primary local highways that feed the surrounding suburbs toward Baton Rouge. The approach to the high-rise is along an angled driveway from the wide Wooddale Boulevard. The entrance offers a view of the 12-story rectangular tower with an articulated center entrance, as well as the single-story wings on each side of the tower. The driveway leads to parking in front and around the sides and rear of the building in the wrap-around large surface parking lot. Known as Wooddale Tower, it was constructed at a cost of \$2,100,000 in 1969.¹ The building was designed by Lewis P. Manson & Associates and constructed by Collins Construction Co., Inc., both local companies.² A masonry and suspended steel frame building with a large aluminum, glass, and porcelain curtain wall, it was purpose built as an office building addition to the industrial-commercial corridor on the outskirts of Baton Rouge. Wooddale Tower is a distinct example of a suburban International Style commercial tower building, and its contributing elements remain to convey significance under Criteria C. Despite minimal alterations and additions over time, the resource retains integrity of materials, workmanship, design, location and feeling, and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Wooddale Tower is of local significance under Criterion C in the area of architecture. It is significant because it is an excellent example of a post-war International Style office tower in Baton Rouge. It is a later-style International modular grid skyscraper that relied upon post-war technology to be built. In Louisiana, early-style International buildings were built well into the 1960s, so it is an important and rare example of the later, skyscraper International Style.¹⁶ The later style is exhibited at Wooddale Tower by the “exposed skeleton look,” glass-and-panel curtain wall, and the use of both smooth panels and textured aggregate stucco panels. The building was constructed in an area considered the periphery of Baton Rouge commerce at the time. This is consistent with both local and national trends at the time. Economic growth and the accessibility of the automobile were some of the reasons why many companies moved their offices out of downtown and into the periphery.¹⁷ This allowed for a larger campus with a designated “sea of parking,” as the parking lot at 1885 Wooddale was described in an advertisement in 1969.¹⁸ “[O]ften, the buildings themselves acted as prominent advertisements for the firms they housed... designed specifically to attract attention and foster a reputation as forward-thinking and modern.”¹⁹ This was exhibited through both materials and design of the building. The period of significance for the building is 1969, the construction date.

Dr. Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile made suggestions to the architectural description of the resource. Fallon Aidoo added additional comments about the defining features of the International Style of architecture present on the resource. Martha Salomon asked for clarification on the specific construction of the scissor stairs as well as the fireproofing within the building. Owner, Michael Tubre, explained they were gypsum walls separating the stairs from the lobby areas and fireproofing is present.

Dr. Carriker opened to public comments. Michael Tubre, owner, expressed support for the nomination and explained the future use of the building will be affordable housing for seniors.

Guy Carwile then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Fallon Aidoo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Laura Blokker, the SHPO's hired consultant for the development of the new Comprehensive State plan, addressed the committee members. She outlined her approach to creating a plan that not only defines the purpose of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) but also actively involves citizens, organizations, and agencies from across the state. Blokker emphasized the importance of engaging a broad range of stakeholders in the process to ensure a well-rounded and inclusive vision for the future of historic preservation in the state. During the discussion, Blokker and the committee identified key gaps in the state's current historic preservation efforts, particularly in the areas of outreach and community engagement. They focused on strategies to enhance communication and collaboration between the SHPO and various communities, with a particular emphasis on National Register nominations. The committee explored potential methods to bridge these gaps, ensuring that underserved or underrepresented communities are included in the preservation process and have the support they need to engage with National Register efforts. Additionally, the committee addressed the need for increased education regarding the various economic funding opportunities available to support preservation projects. Blokker highlighted several funding programs, such as federal tax incentives, state grants, and private sector funding sources, which can help communities and organizations access the financial resources required to successfully preserve historic properties. The group discussed how better educating stakeholders on these opportunities, including eligibility criteria and application processes, could further support preservation efforts statewide and encourage broader participation in historic preservation initiatives.

Closing Announcements:

Ms. Hall announced that five committee members are up for reappointment in July and asked that those members relay whether or not they would like to continue to serve on the committee. Ms. Hall also announced the retirement of two Office of Cultural Development staff members. Maida Owens, Director of Folklife, will retire in May 2025 and Dr. Chip McGimsey, State Archaeologist and Director for the Division of Archaeology will retire in June 2025. Hall also announce the next National Register Review Committee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, July 31, 2025.

Adjournment: 2:37 PM