

NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING – MINUTES
Thursday, August 4, 2022 - 11:00 AM
State Library of Louisiana
701 N 4th Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dr. Robert Carriker called the August 4, 2022, regular meeting of the National Register Review Committee to order at 11:05 AM. In addition to Dr. Carriker, members present included Dr. Fallon Aidoo, Peggy Lowe, Martha Salomon, Dr. Rebecca Saunders, and John Sykes.

Division of Historic Preservation staff in attendance included Krystal Cox (Architectural Historian) and Emily Ardoin (NR Coordinator).

Emily Ardoin welcomed the audience and committee members. Dr. Carriker then asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Sykes so moved, and Ms. Salomon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Carriker asked for a motion to approve the minutes from June's meeting. Ms. Lowe so moved, and Mr. Sykes seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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

New Roads Commercial Historic District, Point Coupee Parish
Presented by Edward J. Cazayoux, nomination preparer

New Roads, located on the north end of the 22-mile oxbow lake known as False River, serves as the parish seat for Pointe Coupée Parish, Louisiana. The commercial downtown area, which encompasses approximately 12 blocks, comprises the specified Historic District. In the early 19th century, development began in this core section of what would become New Roads, with the building of a church in 1823. By 1848, following construction of the Parish Courthouse, settlers established a commercial area within the new town. The two main roads through the section consisted of a main street running parallel to False River (named Main Street) and a "new road" or *chemin neuf* running perpendicular to Main Street to an older settlement, a fort, on the Mississippi River. This road is now named New Roads Street. The district centers on these streets and contains contributing buildings constructed between 1850 and 1972. These primarily consist of one- and two-story commercial buildings interspersed with civic buildings and small residences.

The New Roads Historic District is significant in the area of commerce under Criterion A for its role in the economic development of the city and parish and the fact that it serves as the governmental seat of Pointe Coupée Parish. The period of significance starts in 1850, the date of the oldest extant building in the district, and ends in 1972, the fifty-year cut-off. The area encompassed in this commercial district was first settled at the end of the 18th century; it includes the *chemin neuf* from the Pointe Coupée Fort, better known as the Pointe Coupée Coast, along the Mississippi River to *Fausse Rivière* or False River. This area was reinforced in 1822 with the subdivision of land where the new road met the banks of False River. The commercial development occurred along the banks of False River and the new road that ran perpendicular to False River.

All commerce took place in this area on the banks of False River, except for some industrial and warehouse development along the railroad line, which lies approximately seven blocks north of the commercial corridor in the heart of town. Other commercial or industrial establishments such as lumber mills, moss gins, cotton gins, and facilities where workers produced bricks, pecans, cotton seed oil, and agriculture crops operated outside the boundaries of the Historic District. Agriculture served as the main economic base of the parish. However, the 1850 census also lists attorneys, bakers, bar keepers, bricklayers, carpenters, clerks, coopers, grocers, laborers, merchants, physicians, professors, shoemakers, tailors, and tutors as other businesses that existed in the area.

Dr. Saunders suggested adding a reference to more recent scholarship concerning the burial site of Hernando de Soto. Dr. Carriker asked Mr. Cazayoux for more information on how he became involved in writing this nomination. Mr. Cazayoux responded that he first became interested because he owned a property in the district he hoped to rehabilitate. Dr. Aidoo asked about future expansion of the district. Mr. Cazayoux and Ms. Ardoin explained that the scope of this nomination was purposefully limited to the commercial area only. However, other large residential areas near downtown New Roads were eligible for listing if someone wanted to expand the district or create a new district. Those areas would have to be surveyed since they were not surveyed during this nomination. Dr. Aidoo also asked if another commercial district in New Roads existed for free people of color and African Americans. Ms. Ardoin said there was such an area north of New Roads Street close to the railroad tracks that should be researched further to see if it could be eligible for National Register listing.

Mr. Sykes then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Dr. Saunders seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Kisatchie School, Natchitoches Parish

Presented by Katy Coyle, nomination preparer

The former Kisatchie School served as the primary provider of elementary and high school education for the community of Kisatchie from 1922 until 1962. It sits near the intersection of Highways 117 and 118 across from Hollis Booty Road. The school was built circa 1920 and remodeled in 1931 to provide more space and correct structural issues. The changes made in 1931 included applying stucco to the exterior and constructing a large, decorative entry displaying a restrained example of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. Changes to the building's exterior since 1931 are limited to boarded windows and doors, weather damage, and some vandalism. The property also includes a gym (contributing), boiler room (contributing), metal fire station (non-contributing), and water tank (non-contributing). The contributing buildings retain a high degree of integrity in the interior and exterior despite decades of intermittent vacancies. For these reasons, the former Kisatchie School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Kisatchie School is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Education as an example of the School Consolidation Movement and public education in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. The school served as the primary provider of elementary and high school education for the white children in the rural community of Kisatchie from 1922 until 1962. Additionally, the building is locally eligible under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a notable example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in northwest Louisiana. Although the building has been largely unused for decades and has been a target of vandalism, the Kisatchie School retains a significant degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The period of significance is 1922-1962 when the building was in operation as a school.

Dr. Saunders asked for clarification on the condition of the gym, stating that it appeared to be in better condition than the school. Ms. Coyle confirmed that it was in better condition, having been constructed later than the school. Mr. Sykes asked about the existence of a Rosenwald School in Natchitoches Parish he found listed in the Rosenwald School Database called the Parish Training School. Ms. Coyle confirmed the existence of this school. Dr. Carriker asked about the building's uses since it stopped functioning as a school. Ms. Coyle said ownership was transferred to the Kisatchie Community Center (KCC), and the building had been used by it, a fellowship society, and a Boy Scout Troop Headquarters. Dr. Saunders asked about its proposed new use, which is undetermined, but the KCC is hiring a firm to conduct a feasibility study to determine the best use for the building. Dr. Aidoo asked for clarification on the building's period of significance, why it was closed in 1962, and if local efforts were undertaken to keep the school open when it was proposed to be closed in 1962. Ms. Coyle said that no good reason was given for why the school was closed that year but that transportation may have been an issue. She added that some citizens had written letters to the editors of local newspapers that the closing of the Kisatchie School was a loss to the community but, overall, pushback from the community was weak.

Dr. Saunders then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Dr. Aidoo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The committee paused for a lunch break at 11:33 AM. Dr. Carriker called the meeting back to order at 11:44 AM.

Louis and Marie Amelia Arceneaux House, Lafayette Parish

Presented by Emily Ardoin, co-nomination preparer

The Louis and Marie Amelia Arceneaux House (hereafter called the Arceneaux House) is a 1.5-story cottage of bousillage construction located at the northwest edge of Lafayette, Louisiana; portions of the property are located in the cities of Lafayette and Carencro. It was originally built in the early 19th century as a Creole cottage on a Spanish land grant to the east of its present location by about 5 miles, near the upper Vermilion River. The exact construction date is unknown; family history dates it to approximately 1800, and other sources date it to the 1830s or as late as 1840. The house was moved to its current location around 1838. Around 1877, the house was extensively renovated in the Greek Revival style by Louis J. Arceneaux, who inherited the house. Significant changes included reorienting the house so that the former rear became the front, adding a center hall, enclosing both galleries, and adding a Greek Revival temple-front porch. Family history and architectural evidence suggest that the house was one of two built around the same time and originally identical. The other house, which did not receive a Greek Revival renovation, is now located at the Vermilionville Historic Village in Lafayette and is open to the public as a museum (Beau Bassin House; also called the Arceneaux House in some sources). Since its historic renovation, the Arceneaux House has had a rear addition and minor alterations but retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Integrity of setting has been impacted by subdivision of the property, subsequent development, and loss of outbuildings near the house. Two surviving outbuildings on the reduced property are classified as contributing buildings. Overall, the property has sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register. Despite diminished integrity of setting and a rear addition, the house retains a good degree of integrity and remains eligible for listing in the National Register.

The Louis J. and Marie Amelia Arceneaux House is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a rare and unique example of a historic adaptation of a French Creole cottage to a Greek Revival center hall cottage. While some Louisiana French Creole houses underwent later modifications of existing porch elements to reflect later popular styles or were built with these details as the stylistic periods overlapped, the Arceneaux House received an entirely new temple-front porch and central hall. Despite these alterations, the house retains many of its original French Creole features, and architectural evidence of the changes remains visible in many areas. The adaptation can be further studied because of the existence of the Beaubassin House, built by another member of the Arceneaux family around the same time and reportedly originally identical to this one. The Beaubassin House did not receive a Greek Revival renovation and is now preserved as part of the Vermilionville Historic Village. While the Beau Bassin House is not eligible for listing in the National Register due to its new location and setting, it adds significance since it allows for a direct comparison of the two. The Arceneaux House is also significant because it retains its bousillage construction, an important and rare surviving construction technique in the region.

Dr. Aidoo asked for clarification on the property's boundaries and what they include. Ms. Ardoin stated that the historic Arceneaux property had been subdivided and reduced in size and that this more current parcel was the property being nominated. She said it includes the Arceneaux House and its immediate surroundings, including some outbuildings and one oak tree. Dr. Carriker asked where this house and its "sister house" currently located in Vermilionville were situated in relation to one another historically. Ms. Ardoin stated she was unsure, but they were on adjacent properties. She wasn't sure how large the properties were, however, they were all part of the same land grant; therefore, they would have been relatively close to one another. Dr. Saunders asked for clarification about the exterior siding on bousillage houses. Ms. Ardoin said bousillage houses often featured either wood siding or plaster.

Ms. Ardoin said that Lafayette Certified Local Government (CLG) recommended the Arceneaux house be nominated under both Criteria C, Architecture, and B for its association with the Arceneaux Family. DHP staff did not recommend nominating this property under Criterion B because not enough research had been done as part of the nomination to demonstrate Louis J. Arceneaux's significance, specifically. Although Louis Pierre Arceneaux's significance in Lafayette is well-established, Louis J. Arceneaux was his descendent, and the house is directly associated with him, not Louis Pierre. Dr. Aidoo asked for clarification that the house had been moved from its original location on Louis Pierre's land, which is what had directly associated it with the historic figure. Ms. Ardoin confirmed this was correct. Dr. Aidoo also asked how many Greek Revival or other popular American architectural style adaptations of French Creole buildings have been added to the National Register and how many more were up for consideration. Ms. Ardoin said she could not give her a number immediately but that surveys had been conducted years before, and Greek Revival and French Creole styles are common in Louisiana. Several early National Register nominations addressed these types of buildings. Ms. Ardoin said nominating these types of buildings is less common now that so many of them have already been nominated.

Ms. Lowe then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Dr. Aidoo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

John S. Hunt House, Jackson Parish

Presented by Krystal Cox, nomination preparer

The John S. Hunt House sits on a wooded lot at the corner of South 1st and Hunt Streets in Hodge, Jackson Parish, directly next to what is now called the WestRock Plant. The one-story, simply-styled dwelling cannot be seen clearly from the street because numerous trees obscure it. Constructed in 1916, the house served as the primary residence of John S. Hunt, one of the founders of the Hodge-Hunt Lumber Mill. Later, as the mill expanded, changed owners, and produced other goods besides lumber, the house served as the residence of two plant managers. The building occupies the primary corner of a neighborhood consisting of modest dwellings, most or all of which the Hodge Mill's leadership constructed for its workers. The John S. Hunt House remains recognizable from the period of significance, despite being covered in composite siding, which obscures the historic wood siding underneath and undergoing other minor renovations.

The John S. Hunt house is locally significant under Criterion B in the area of Industry as the building most directly associated with Hodge-Hunt Lumber Company's founders in the company town they founded. The 1916-1930 period of significance includes much of the operation of the Hodge-Hunt lumber mill and the beginnings of the Southern Advance Bag & Paper mill, which was a precursor to the current iteration of the mill that remains the primary economic driver of the area. The lumber mill created the town of Hodge, which did not exist before the partners decided this area would serve as an ideal location for timber processing. Their vision and efforts led to the creation of an entire community that is still extant today. The financial impact of the Hodge-Hunt Lumber Company remains in effect, as evidenced by the paper mill that employs hundreds of Louisiana citizens and serves as a significant economic driver in the state. This impact results directly from the enterprise the Huie-Hodge and Hodge-Hunt partners created.

The John S. Hunt House served initially as the living quarters for one of the founders of Hodge's lumber mill and, later, as a house for a couple of the later plant's employees and managers. It is arguably the most intact building associated with the original business and the only dwelling remaining that has a direct link to the historic lumber mill's principles. The current mill, which has changed a great deal over time, dominates the landscape here, while a five-block residential area consisting of modest one-story houses sits to the south. This residential area consists primarily of historic modest "mill houses" laid in neat rows that the original lumber company constructed for its workers. The Hunt House sits at the primary corner of this neighborhood, closest to the plant, facing the main highway, US-167. The mill houses sit behind and to the south of it. Although the Hunt house is a somewhat plainly styled single-story building, it is arguably the grandest of the dwellings in this neighborhood. It features centered brick entry steps leading to a wide porch that wraps the building, large paired windows, a centered entry composed of French and multi-lite doors, and a roof supported by simple classical columns. Although some of the mill houses share a few of its features, they present as functional

buildings. By contrast, the John S. Hunt house, built for one of the mill's founders, presents an image of comfort and leisure.

Ms. Cox and Ms. Ardoin stated during the presentation that they are seeking National Register Committee input on whether Exploration and Settlement should be added as an area of significance to the nomination. After the presentation concluded, Ms. Lowe did ask Ms. Ardoin to explain. Ms. Ardoin said she realized after the meeting agenda had been released that Exploration and Settlement may apply in this case even though the beginning of the period of significance was 15 years after Hodge and the lumber mill were established.

Mr. Sykes asked for clarification on the hall's layout, commenting that it was substantial. Ms. Cox agreed, stating she considered it more of a double parlor. Dr. Aidoo asked if any other buildings in the Jonesboro-Hodge area were listed in the National Register. Ms. Cox answered that she wasn't sure but asked if Ms. Ardoin knew. Ms. Ardoin said she was looking it up in the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation's National Register Database. She stated that no listed properties existed in Hodge, but five properties in Jackson Parish were listed (two churches, a theater, and two houses). Ms. Lowe asked whether worker housing associated with the mill was extant, how many were left, and if the potential existed to nominate it later. Ms. Ardoin said there might be an eligible district in Hodge under Criterion A, but more research would be required. Ms. Cox said several houses were left, but they had been altered; however, the alterations were paid for and undertaken by the plant owners in the mid-20th century, so if a district was created with an expanded period of significance, the houses might still be eligible. Ms. Salomon asked if this property was associated with Hodges Gardens in Florien. Ms. Cox said she wasn't sure, but Mr. Sykes said he didn't think it was because of a slight variation in the names. Dr. Aidoo asked if Mr. Hodge had a residence in Hodge or if only Mr. Hunt did. Ms. Cox said only Mr. Hunt lived in Hodge.

Dr. Aidoo then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO with the addition of Exploration and Settlement as an area of significance, and Ms. Salomon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Ms. Ardoin announced that the next National Register Review Committee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, December 1. She also announced she was leaving her position as National Register Coordinator and moving out of state to accept a new job. She stated that the coordinator position would be announced, and the new staff member would be present at the December meeting.

Adjournment: 12:52 PM.