

The Kleinert Terrace Historic District is a moderately sized twentieth century urban neighborhood encompassing some 60 acres. Within the boundaries are 182 resources, 80% of which are contributing elements. With the exception of four apartment buildings, all of the contributing elements are one and two story residences. (Two of the contributing buildings, the Manship and Pecue houses, are already listed on the Register.) Contributing elements range in date from 1927, the year the first homes were built, to 1947, the fifty year cutoff. Architectural and documentary evidence shows that homes continued to be built on undeveloped lots within the subdivision as late as the 1960s and 1970s. Although Kleinert Terrace is the area's historic name, the subdivision is part of a larger neighborhood known as the Garden District by local residents and city officials. The Garden District is comprised of three early twentieth century subdivisions, Roseland Terrace, Drehr Place and Kleinert Terrace. The earliest, Roseland Terrace, was listed on the Register in 1982. The Drehr Place Historic District was listed in November 1997.

METHODOLOGY

This project began in late 1996 when a member of the Garden District Civic Association requested that the Division of Historic Preservation consider Drehr Place and Kleinert Terrace for the Register. At that time the National Register staff evaluated both areas by driving and walking through the neighborhoods and found that they were viable candidates. After completion of the Drehr Place nomination, and with the endorsement of the City of Baton Rouge and the Civic Association, the National Register staff began work on Kleinert Terrace in the fall of 1997. The district's easily accessible location near downtown Baton Rouge made the completion of field work convenient. During the equivalent of six working days (spread over the month of October), staff mapped the buildings by style and status as contributing and noncontributing elements, defined the district's boundaries, and completed photography of the area. The results of this survey will be discussed below.

GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The Kleinert Terrace Historic District is situated in the south central portion of Baton Rouge on flat terrain about two miles from the Mississippi River and perhaps two-and-one-half miles from the city's central business district. It lies below (south of) and adjacent to the Roseland Terrace and Drehr Place subdivisions. As platted in 1927, the boundaries of the Kleinert Terrace subdivision (see attached map) are Myrtle Avenue on the north, Broussard Street on the south, and an alley (formerly known as Antonio but now called Arlington Street) on the east. The area's curving western boundary follows Perkins Road to its intersection with Myrtle. The resulting subdivision contains sixteen blocks of varying sizes. Taken together, these blocks form a wide but shallow rectangle with a point extending from its northwest corner. Because half of block twelve and all of the smaller blocks fourteen and fifteen did not develop until after the fifty year cutoff, these areas are being excluded from this submission, per National Register guidelines (see attached map). Buildings located in these areas consist of one story, slab-on-grade, ranch style houses dating from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Despite the curving shape of its western boundary, Kleinert Terrace's streets are laid out in a typical, perpendicular grid pattern whose major streets run from west to east. However, the method of subdividing the blocks into lots is somewhat unusual. Although most of each block is filled by long and narrow lots designed to host houses facing north or south, each block's eastern and western ends feature irregular shaped parcels for house sites facing east and west along the subdivision's north-to-south running cross streets (see attached map). The irregular shaped parcels resulted in small squares at each corner (see map). The intended use of these small areas is unknown. They do not appear on the landscape today.

Purchasers of Kleinert Terrace home sites sometimes obtained more than one lot on which to place their residences. For this reason, the neighborhood contains houses and plots of various

sizes, including one, eight-lot "estate." The west-to-east running Kleinert and Terrace avenues (both containing landscaped medians or neutral grounds) serve as the neighborhood's grandest boulevards, and it is here that the majority of the district's landmark houses are found. The neighborhood features mature plantings of trees and other vegetation, including large live oaks which, in some places, form canopies over the streets. Also of interest is the subdivision's system of alleyways running through the interior of each block. These continue the pattern of development found in the adjacent Roseland Terrace and Drehr Place subdivisions, established in 1911 and 1921, respectively.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Deeds associated with the sale of property in the adjacent Drehr Place neighborhood indicate that the land which would become known as Kleinert Terrace was legally recognized as the "Kleinert Tract" until May 1927, when a plat map for a new subdivision was filed with the East Baton Rouge Parish Clerk of Court. The neighborhood was apparently named after its two principal streets -- Kleinert and Terrace avenues. According to local residents, construction of homes had begun on the neighborhood's west side before the end of the year. Development appears to have continued at a steady pace, generally moving from west to east. However, as mentioned previously, some lots within the subdivision's core and an additional cluster on the area's eastern end remained vacant until the 1960s and 1970s. Even now a few vacant lots survive, usually serving as side yards.

STYLES

The above mentioned survey of the neighborhood revealed the following breakdown of buildings:

| <u>Style</u> | <u>Number</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Colonial Revival | 46 | 26% |
| English Cottage | 31 | 17% |
| Other Styles | 33 | 18% |
| No Style | 34 | 19% |
| Non-Contributing | 38 | 20% |

A brief discussion of each category follows.

Colonial Revival (26%)

This broad ranging category includes Colonial Revival houses in a variety of interpretations and one, two-story apartment building. Examples are found in brick, stucco, and frame construction. They include substantial two-story brick or stucco residences articulated in the Federal style; brick, stucco and frame houses displaying Georgian massing and Classical door surrounds; and Cape Cod cottages. There are also a number of dwellings whose only Colonial feature is a door surround superimposed upon a facade which otherwise displays no style. Porches are found in the form of projecting temple front porticoes (6 examples), oval or rectangular entrance porticoes (7 examples, one featuring an Oriental-looking roof level balustrade), and Mount Vernon style galleries (5 examples). Five houses incorporate colossal columns or piers into their porches, thirteen have elliptical or semi-circular fanlights above their front doors, one displays bas relief Adamesque motifs within the pediment of its portico, and one residence has a gambrel roof. Several of the Colonial Revival examples are described within the landmarks section of this submission.

English Cottage (17%)

The early twentieth century English Cottage style was part of a larger movement based upon a revived interest in the historic buildings of England (as well as an overall interest in the architecture of the past). In the Kleinert Terrace Historic District, this interest is reflected in an important collection of houses featuring steep frontal gables (a few with cat slide roofs), arched openings, prominent facade or side chimneys, and (in six cases) half-timbering. The examples range from several large two-story half-timbered houses (called "Stockbroker Tudor" style at the time of their construction) to small cottages sheathed in brick, stucco, or wood. Although a few are very restrained examples, the majority of homes in this collection are strong statements of this popular picturesque style. Several will be found described within the landmarks section.

Other Styles (18%)

This classification contains two sub-categories: 1) eclectic houses and 2) homes which are clear examples of a particular style but do not exist in numbers large enough to justify being assigned their own individual categories. Examples of the latter include four bungalows, one restrained Modernistic style design, one twentieth century interpretation of the Creole raised plantation house, one Renaissance Revival style mansion, and one two-story apartment building featuring Tudor style arches on its lower gallery. Eclectic houses are those featuring a mix of stylistic motifs. Of special interest within this sub-category are eight houses which combine Georgian massing with French style metal hoods above their main entrances. Several houses within this group also have Colonial Revival door surrounds.

No Style (19%)

This classification refers to 34 contributing elements which do not make a stylistic statement -- in short, unstyled buildings. For the most part, the category consists of one- and two-story unstyled houses from the 1930s and 1940s. Of special interest within this group are five, two-story, "L" shaped houses, two of which also feature balconies on their facades. There is also one home mounted upon a raised basement in the New Orleans manner. Two of the historic district's apartment buildings also fall within this category. Unstyled historic buildings are common in many residential neighborhoods and are certainly worthy contributing elements of the Kleinert Terrace Historic District. These buildings significantly enhance the district's identity as a historic twentieth century residential area and help it to exhibit the full range of archetypes typically found in this type of neighborhood. In short, they enhance the district's authenticity. In addition, they support the overall character of the district in areas such as massing, fenestration pattern, facades enlivened by front facing gables and dormers, and systems of porches and columns.

Non-Contributing Elements (20%)

This category includes buildings within the neighborhood which are not yet 50 years old or historic buildings which have been altered to the extent that their historic character has been lost. The vast majority are less than fifty years old -- mainly 1950s and 1960s slab-on-grade ranch houses. In terms of height, only three or four of the non-contributing elements are two stories high, and their visual impact is somewhat negated by the lush vegetation surrounding them.

ASSESSMENT OF INTEGRITY

In addition to the comments made above about the nature of non-contributing elements, it should be noted that a non-contributing rate of 20% is low for a Register district in Louisiana, even by New Orleans standards. In terms of alterations to historic buildings, each structure was evaluated by the National Register staff and a judgment call was made on contributing vs. noncontributing

status based upon the severity of the alterations. It should be stressed that there were actually few instances of serious alterations to historic residences. In addition to having a low non-contributing rate, the district has very well preserved historic buildings.

LANDMARKS SAMPLING

- 1) 1104 Park Blvd. This stucco-covered example of the English Cottage style has particularly picturesque massing. It features steeply pitched gables, a frontal chimney made of stone, arched openings at the entrance, and diamond pattern windows.
- 2) 1103 Park Blvd. This two-story Colonial Revival style apartment building is distinguished by a monumental projecting portico with colossal pillars. It also features a corner entrance with a semi-circular fanlight surmounted by a heavy hood mold rising from corbelled blocks. The building's rear entrance features an elliptical transom and sidelights.
- 3) 2260 Myrtle Avenue. Known as the Pecue House, this English Cottage style dwelling was listed on the National Register in 1994. The moderately sized brick building features extremely steep gables, one of which culminates in a cat slide roof. The facade also includes an arched entrance distinguished by voussoirs, a triple window surmounted by a hood mold, and bas relief decorative panels.
- 4) 2651 Kleinert Avenue. This large two-story stucco house is also an example of the English Cottage style. It features steeply pitched gables, a projecting window suggestive of an oriel, and a small amount of half-timbering.
- 5) 2553 Kleinert Avenue. This two level, stucco, Colonial Revival home is distinguished by a projecting two-story portico. The portico features colossal Corinthian columns, a full entablature with a paneled frieze, a pediment with a raking cornice, and a tympanum filled by bas relief decoration in the Adam style.
- 6) 2355 Kleinert Avenue. This brick Colonial Revival house features colossal pillars, a Mount Vernon style porch, and an entrance framed by an elliptical transom and accompanying sidelights. Wooden panels below the sills distinguish the facade's first floor windows.
- 7) 2250 Kleinert Avenue. Added to the National Register in 1980, the Manship House is the district's only real mansion. An example of the Renaissance Revival style, the house features a facade with projecting and receding planes, two cast iron balconies (one of which is supported by large brackets), large windows surmounted by semicircular arches whose tympanums display acanthus leaf ornamentation, and a tripped roof with overhanging eaves.
- 8) 2285 Kleinert Avenue. This two-story brick home is a Colonial Revival interpretation of the Federal style. In addition to a symmetrical facade, it features an entrance enlivened by a rectangular portico whose four fluted columns support an entablature surmounted by an Oriental-looking balustrade. The entrance door itself is framed by an elliptical transom and accompanying sidelights.
- 9) 2277 Kleinert Avenue. This home is similar to the Pecue House in that both are dominated by steep gables, cat slide roofs, and arched entrances distinguished by voussoirs. However, this English Cottage style house is fully two-stories tall and exhibits a stucco veneer.
- 10) 2305 Kleinert Avenue. Another example of the English Cottage style, this two-story house is composed of a brick lower floor and a stuccoed second level. The building's predominant feature is the half-timbering which distinguishes the stuccoed facade. Part of the second

floor is cantilevered out from the home's main mass in the manner of medieval English houses. The facade's two doors are in the shape of Tudor arches.

- 11) 2120 Terrace Avenue. This two-story brick structure is a restrained example of the Modernistic taste. Among its interesting features are an entrance surrounded by corbelled bands of brick and a one-story wing featuring panels in which three rows of bricks are set at an angle to form a decorative motif.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Buildings in the district are sheathed in one of three materials: 1) wood, 2) brick veneer, or 3) stucco veneer. The majority are roofed with asphalt shingles, although a few display asbestos shingles or wooden shakes. One house is covered by a metal roof.

CONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS

Taken together, the buildings in Kleinert Terrace illustrate the appearance of an historic twentieth century suburb. Any 50+ year old structure which has not been severely altered is considered a contributing element for purposes of this application. Contributing buildings range in date from 1927, when the first houses are known to have been built, to 1947, the fifty year cutoff. It is known that construction of houses in Kleinert Terrace continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s and, in a few cases, into the 1970s.

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Significant dates | 1927 |
| Architect/Builder | N/A |
| Criterion C | |

The Kleinert Terrace Historic District is locally significant in the area of architecture because it is a well preserved, representative historic twentieth century neighborhood within the context of Baton Rouge. It is locally significant in the area of community development and planning because it helps tell the story of the early twentieth century growth and development of Baton Rouge.

Architecture

Kleinert Terrace is architecturally significant because the neighborhood is, in effect, a window into the past, allowing people to view and understand the appearance of a period neighborhood. Stylistically, the subdivision illustrates very well the eclecticism of the early twentieth century. The Colonial Revival style appears in the greatest number and exhibits a wide variety of examples. Another popular style found within the district is the English Cottage mode, which is represented by examples of both the "Stockbroker Tudor" and smaller cottage types. Sprinkled into this already rich mixture are a few examples in more "exotic" designs such as the Renaissance Revival, Modernistic and Neo-Creole styles. In addition, there are four bungalows and a number of eclectic houses which feature a mixture of styles.

The Colonial Revival category accounts for over one-fourth of the district's contributing elements (46 houses). Examples range from grand two story houses reflective of the Georgian and Federal styles, to Cape Cod cottages, to houses with handsome porticoes (six of which are pedimented), to a gambrel roofed house, to interpretations of the Mount Vernon look. In terms of

size, they range from what many would call mansions (although moderate sized ones, such as landmarks 5, 6, and 8) to small cottages.

Kleinert Terrace is also an excellent reflection of the popularity of the English Cottage style. The neighborhood has 31 houses which are members of this family, all located in a concentrated area. The picturesque English look was quite popular for residences in early twentieth century America, whether they be baronial halls or cozy cottages of the type found in Kleinert Terrace. At the up-market end were the so-called "Stockbroker Tudor" houses (examples of which include landmarks 4 and 10). These multi-story, half-timbered dwellings suggested stability and prosperity and would be considered mansions, albeit small ones, by some. For middle class America, the English Cottage style was popularized through mail order house catalogs and magazines, with specific models being advertised with evocative names such as "The Devonshire," "The Sussex," and "The Dover." The style as a whole was referred to at the time as "old English" and "Quaint English Cottage Style." As explained in Part 7, Kleinert Terrace's collection contains well-developed examples ranging from the half-timbered "mini-mansions" mentioned above to small cottages. All feature steeply pitched gables and arched openings; the majority feature frontal chimneys as well.

In addition to houses in the Colonial Revival and English Cottage styles, several houses in other styles add architectural interest and distinction to the Kleinert Terrace Historic District. Of special note in this regard is the Manship House, a finely articulated Renaissance Revival style residence which ranks as the subdivision's only true mansion. Also of interest is a restrained example of the Modernistic style -- a mode which was never widely accepted for houses because it failed to fit the "cozy cottage" domestic ideal. This is particularly true in conservative areas such as the Deep South. Hence, it is surprising to see such a house in Kleinert Terrace tucked in amongst more traditional residences. In addition to adding variety to the district's stylistic mix, the appearance of a twentieth-century interpretation of the Creole raised plantation house adds an unexpected element of surprise to the streetscape. Its presence indicates the longevity and strength of this colonial building tradition in the Baton Rouge area.

Finally, it should again be emphasized that Kleinert Terrace is impressive in terms of integrity. Only 20% of its resources are non-contributing, and contributing elements are very well preserved.

Community Planning and Development

Kleinert Terrace is of local significance in the area of community planning and development because it illustrates the early twentieth century expansion of Baton Rouge eastward from the Mississippi River. Although Baton Rouge is a very old community, having been settled in the colonial period, it remained relatively small until the early twentieth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, the city extended only a few blocks in (east) from the Mississippi River. The town experienced considerable growth and prosperity in the early twentieth century due to various factors, the most important being the arrival and expansion of the petrochemical industry (most notably, a huge Standard Oil plant). The city's population more than doubled between 1910 and 1930 (14,897 to 30,279), and Baton Rouge surpassed Shreveport as Louisiana's second largest city. All of this growth created a need for additional housing. Although Roseland Terrace, the first subdivision, was established in 1911, a July 1919 article in the local paper noted an "acute" shortage of homes in the city. It estimated that three or four hundred more were needed. Drehr Place (1921) was presumably a response to this need, as was College Town (1923), a South Baton Rouge subdivision founded to accommodate those working at the new and larger LSU campus. However, at least one family who moved to Baton Rouge in 1925 could not find a home and was forced to live in a hotel for two years until the father, a builder, constructed several homes in Kleinert Terrace.

Kleinert Terrace is also a fine representative example of the type of bedroom suburb which sprang up around major eastern cities in the early years of the twentieth century. These neighborhoods were designed to give working men in the cities a more rural domestic life. Kleinert

Terrace exemplifies the early-twentieth century "garden suburb" with its small lots, liberal planting of trees along streets, and rear alleyways. In addition, the subdivision is more attractive than most because utility poles were deliberately placed (and are still located) along the rear alleyways. Thus its bucolic atmosphere is preserved and enhanced.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Building Homes," Baton Rouge *State-Times*, July 4, 1919 (copy in Drehr Place National Register file).

Deed of sale, Julius B. Kugler to Alvin L. Drehr, July 3, 1919; copy in Drehr Place National Register file.

Interview with Ruth Herman and Mona Herman Terry, long-time Kleinert Terrace residents, October 19, 1997, Baton Rouge.

Plat map of Kleinert Terrace, May 2, 1927; copy in Kleinert Terrace National Register file.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Baton Rouge, 1946.

Site visits by National Register staff.