

# LANDMARKS' PRESERVATION



## THE JOURNAL OF THE LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY

### What's the Future of the Carrollton Courthouse?

Sandra Stokes



Nearly 100 citizens gathered on July 29 at a public forum hosted by Louisiana Landmarks Society to share their ideas about the future of the Carrollton Courthouse – demonstrating just how much the building means to the community. Ideas included an expanded public library, a new City Archives to replace the overwhelmed existing facility, a museum of some type, a local campus for a French university, expansion for Tulane University, a community center, and more. Many talked of the need for public green space that could be achieved by removing the “temporary” buildings which have lined the property for decades.

The forum, moderated by Walter Gallas, Louisiana Landmarks Society's executive director, included presentations by Carrollton neighbor Drew Ward, speaking on the site's rich history; architect Peter Trapolin, discussing the potentials for the site “only limited by your imagination”; Krystal Cox of the State Historic Preservation Office explaining the types of historic rehabilitation tax credits available for the building; and Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) representatives Woody Koppel and Stan Smith. School Superintendent Dr. Henderson Lewis, Jr. was also in attendance. OPSB owns the property.

The overwhelming theme from subsequent public comment was for some sort of public use at the site, continuing its rich history of serving the community. Mr. Smith, OPSB's chief financial officer, explained the state statutes which govern the sale of surplus property by the school board. While no definite date for sale has been set, an earlier date was shelved at preservationists' requests in order to allow time for community input and to help identify possible new owners.



Column detail of Carrollton Courthouse

Options for the School Board include selling or leasing the site to a governmental entity or selling it at public auction. Currently, with no protections in place, preservationists fear the worse-case scenario of demolition. Responding to a request from Louisiana Landmarks Society at the forum, Koppel and Smith committed to considering attaching a preservation easement requirement to the sale of the building, which would at least provide minimum protection against demolition by a future owner.

Louisiana Landmarks Society announced on June 24 the naming of the Carrollton Courthouse to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places, garnering national attention. The courthouse was named to Landmark's own 2015 list of New Orleans' Nine Most Endangered Sites.

Ideas and comments from the forum were recorded and will be compiled and submitted to city officials and the school board. Follow our advocacy efforts and get involved at: [www.SaveCarrolltonCourthouse.com](http://www.SaveCarrolltonCourthouse.com).

Submit ideas for uses and to help identify potential owners. Sign the on-line petition, pick up a yard sign from the Pitot House, and stay engaged with Louisiana Landmarks Society as we continue to advocate for the preservation of the Carrollton Courthouse.

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Hilary Somerville Irvin,  
Editor

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### SAVE THE DATES!

Save Our Cemeteries Reception  
Thursday, October 1  
6:00—8:00 pm

Fête du Jardin Fundraiser  
Sunday, October 25  
4:00—7:00 pm

Marché du Fête  
Saturday, December 5  
10:00—3:00 pm

For more information visit:  
[LouisianaLandmarks.org](http://LouisianaLandmarks.org)

## A Message from the President Stephen Chauvin



The 12<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Bernard of Chartres is credited with saying, "If we see further than our predecessors, it is not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are borne aloft on their gigantic stature... We are standing on the shoulders of giants." It is good to reflect upon this statement, as I assume the responsibility of president of Louisiana Landmarks Society, for I believe that we should acknowledge with gratitude the giants upon whose shoulders we stand.

With this in mind, allow me to praise our immediate past president and my good friend, Casey Stuart, for his tireless and unselfish work building Louisiana Landmarks Society (along with our director, Walter Gallas, and our advocacy chair, Sandra Stokes) into the premier voice advocating for the preservation of our historic resources. Under Casey's tenure as president many wonderful elements have been set into place that will

strengthen our organization now and into the future. Along with past president Susan Kierr, he is directly responsible for the development of our excellent board and helping bring in our newest members Louis McFaul, Jerry Pepper, Jay Seastrunk and Justin Stone. For this I am very grateful. But it is Casey's gift as historian and intriguing storyteller that I most admire. It is impossible to spend time with Casey without him generously sharing his passionate love and knowledge of the architecture, history and culture of our great city. He is an inspirational goodwill ambassador for our historic city and I look forward to his continued generosity and wise counsel as ex officio.

As I write this letter, I have just learned of the passing of one of our city's giants in historic preservation, Howard M. Schmalz. Howard was a past board member of the Louisiana Landmarks Society and the recipient of our society's most prestigious award, the Harnett T. Kane Preservation Award, which he received with his wife Lydia in 1995. Those of us who love the unique historic architecture and scale of our city owe a great debt to the dedicated efforts of preservationists such as Howard and Lydia. It is through work such as theirs that New Orleans remains, after almost 300 years, one of the most well known and beautifully historic cities of America and the world.

Unfortunately not everyone recognizes what makes New Orleans unique, and therefore the work to preserve our historic resources is a constant and recurring task. As many of you are aware, the Carrollton Courthouse, c.1855, was one of our organizations earliest preservation efforts in the 1950s, but now more than 60 years later we find that this grand building and site are again threatened. This time we have been joined in our effort to save the Carrollton Courthouse by the National Trust for Historic Preservation that has named it one of "America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places" of 2015, but in 1952, it was only through the dedicated efforts of the Louisiana Landmarks Society's founding members such as Martha G. Robinson, Samuel Wilson, Jr., Harnett T. Kane, Charles "Pie" Dufour and other giants of our community that the Carrollton Courthouse was saved from demolition. As the Louisiana Landmarks Society celebrates its 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, please consider actively joining us and supporting us in preserving New Orleans for the next 300 years....and become a giant for future generations to stand upon.

Stephen



**Sunday, October 25**

**4:00—7:00 pm at the Pitot House**

Louisiana Landmarks Society is celebrating our 65 years of preservation advocacy, education, and stewardship! As part of our fall fundraiser, the Fête du Jardin, we are saluting those who have demonstrated lifetime contributions to preservation—our Harnett Kane recipients.

Please join us for this afternoon garden party complete with great people, New Orleans cuisine, drinks and music—all for a good cause.

For more information see our website:  
[www.louisianalandmarks.org/events](http://www.louisianalandmarks.org/events).

# Advocacy Updates

Sandra Stokes and Hilary Somerville Irvin

## 518 Eleonore Street

Thanks to the cooperative efforts of



518 Eleonore Street

owner Dr. Craig Ledet, Councilmember Susan Guidry and the Audubon Riverside Neighborhood Association, this circa 1860 Greek revival cottage, a 2015 New Orleans 9, will be saved and incorporated into the owner's renovation as a one-family residence rather than demolished to be replaced with a new structure. The Landmarks Advocacy Committee wrote letters and spoke against the demolition of 518 Eleonore Street at the May 18 meeting of the Neighborhood Conservation District Advisory Committee. After the motion for demolition was deferred by the Council on June 18 due to great advocacy efforts by Landmarks, Councilmember Guidry contacted us asking for a recommendation for a structural engineer who would be willing to assist in a walk-through of the building. At Landmarks' request, engineer Ashton Avegno generously attended the site visit with Ledet and Guidry.

At the July 9 City Council meeting, Councilmember Guidry moved to deny the demolition of the original house, but to approve the removal of the later rear additions. The entire exterior envelope and the existing roof line of the original cottage will be retained with new construction at the

rear. Responding to Marilyn Feldmeir's request (a leader of the Audubon Riverside neighborhood advocacy efforts), a proviso was added that the house be properly braced and weathertight to secure it during the demolitions at the rear. This is a big New Orleans 9 win!

## Sexton Cottages



Lafayette Cemetery No. 2, minus sexton cottage

Listed on the New Orleans 9 in 2012, the sexton cottages in New Orleans' publicly-owned Lafayette Cemeteries No. 1 and No. 2 sadly but expectedly did not escape the wrecking ball. (See *Sexton in the City*, Landmarks Preservation, Summer 2014).

Representatives from Louisiana Landmarks Society, the Foundation for Historical Louisiana and Save Our Cemeteries visited the city's four publicly-owned cemeteries to review the work proposed by the city as part of a multi-million dollar renovation project and learned that these two cottages in the Lafayette cemeteries, deemed beyond repair, were slated for demolition.

Because federal funds were to be used for replacing the cottages, the required Section 106 historic preservation consultation process was initiated by FEMA. A year and a half of negotiations with the city attempted to work out the legalities that would enable the city to accept donated architectural services which would have... (continued on p.7)

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## Here Yesterday, Gone Today: *Demolition Derby in Uptown New Orleans*

Hilary Somerville Irvin



1128 Constantinople (left) demolished in 2015 along with its neighbor at 1112 Constantinople demolished in 2013 made way for new construction (right).

While maneuvering chaotic road conditions, drivers in uptown riverside New Orleans might be surprised to find seemingly sudden changes in the streetscape. New, two-story structures designed in vaguely historic styles have popped up to replace more humble dwellings. This trend has accelerated in post-Katrina years, fueled by the increasing demand for real estate in these old neighborhoods.

At first, these developer-built single-family homes, which often fetch prices close to a million dollars, replaced unarguably non-contributing buildings, frequently 1960s slab-construction ranch houses. Recent developments, however, have created tension between preservationists and property owners, as well as among neighbors.

A new ominous pattern seems to be emerging in which clearly contributing historic structures--often in deteriorated conditions--are the subject of demolition applications. In recent weeks, the following historic structures are among those proposed for demolition by their owners: 918 Soniat Street, an Eastlake cottage that likely

incorporates Civil-War-era structures at the rear; 1020-22 and 1032 Upperline Street, circa 1891 cottages; 5922 Patton Street, also circa 1890--all planned to be replaced by new, "old-style" two-story dwellings; and 5019 Annunciation, a side gallery cottage, with no stated post-demolition redevelopment plans.

These applications are acted upon first by the Neighborhood Conservation District Advisory Committee (NCDAC), which only makes a recommendation to the City Council. The NCDAC was created by City Council in September 2014 as an advisory body to consider demolitions in the historic core not under the jurisdiction of either the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) or Vieux Carré Commission (VCC). It replaced the Neighborhood Conservation District Committee, a quasi-judicial board charged directly with issuing demolition permits. The aim in the creation of NCDAC, spearheaded by Councilmember Stacy Head, was to retain an additional level of scrutiny in the current demolition frenzy.

The system, however, is clearly still

flawed and needs refinement. NCDAC meets every two weeks with agendas not available to the public until a few days before a scheduled meeting. Typically, residents do not receive information about pending hearings; and, if they do, there usually is not enough time to explore alternative solutions. Both the NCDAC and City Council approved the demolition of 918 Soniat with little neighborhood input against or for-- but there is some hope that the owner/contractor may revise his proposal voluntarily to incorporate portions of the historic building. The City Council has voted to study expansion of the jurisdiction of the Historic District Landmark Commission to include Uptown and some of Mid-City.

In a letter to NCDAC objecting to the demolition of the Upperline Street cottages, Danielle del Sol, editor of Preservation Resource Center's (PRC) *Preservation in Print*, quoted Councilmember Stacy Head speaking at the PRC's 2015 annual meeting as she characterized the demolition of historic structures and construction of lot-filling new homes in Uptown, as "death by a thousand cuts."



## 2015 Pitot-Shepherd Family Reunion

Louisiana Landmarks Society was proud to host this year's Pitot-Shepherd Family Reunion on Saturday, July 25. The Pitot-Shepherd family celebrated 5 generations and 6 branches of their family tree while relaxing and connecting on the grounds of the Pitot House. Landmarks board members and staff helped to organize this event and guided family members in tours of their ancestor's home. A good time was had as we came together in history and family.

*Pictured to the left: 5 generations and 6 branches of the Pitot-Shepherd Family*

## Landmarking Children's Hospital: Continuing Efforts in Process

Sandra Stokes

Louisiana Landmarks Society's (LLS) request to nominate the old Maritime Hospital at State Street and Tchoupitoulas for landmarking study came before the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) on March 19, 2015. Two days prior to the hearing, representatives of both LLS's Advocacy Committee and Children's Hospital (LCMC) met to discuss the nomination. LCMC presented their new master plan, which calls for the demolition of six historic buildings along with the masonry wall on the Henry Clay Avenue side of the campus. LCMC offered to landmark the individual buildings that would remain. The Advocacy Committee proposed acknowledging the loss of the six buildings and the wall, landmarking the remaining buildings, and landmarking the "site" as well. This concession by Landmarks Society would allow LCMC to complete their master plan as projected for the next 20 or so years, and would also provide design review by the HDLC for work on the remaining historic structures and for new construction on the campus site for decades beyond this master plan. At its meeting, the HDLC nominated the site minus the six buildings and the wall on the Henry Clay side to be studied for landmarking.

It was during the meeting with LCMC that Landmarks pointed out to the project architect that the need for a federal permit from the Corps of Engineers for work at the site would trigger the National Historic Preservation Act's (NHPA) requirement for a Section 106 review prior to demolition.

(continued on next page)



*Children's Hospital model of proposed plan including (at middle of image) a parking garage (left) and urgent care building (right)*

### James R. Logan, IV Receives Harnett Kane Award



Jim Logan, preservation activist and attorney received the Harnett T. Kane Award at the LLS annual meeting in May, recognizing his significant contributions to historic preservation.

Jim developed a specialized practice with recognized expertise in historic preservation litigation and administrative procedures involving the National Historic Preservation Act and related federal, state, and local historic preservation laws.

Jim's legal and preservation advocacy in the 1980s and 1990s targeted Canal Place, the aquarium, and the insectarium proposals.

Later, he was involved with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Southeast Louisiana (SELA) flood control project in Broadmoor and the St. Thomas housing project demolition and Walmart construction in the Lower Garden District.

Post-Katrina, Jim's focus was on the "Big Four" housing project demolitions; the abandonment of Charity Hospital and the related Lower Mid-City demolitions; the demolition of the modernist St. Frances Cabrini Church in Gentilly; and the Iberville housing project redevelopment.

He has served on numerous boards, most notably as a longtime trustee with the Louisiana Landmarks Society, including two terms as President, and has most recently returned as 1st Vice President of Landmarks.

## Landmarking Children's Hospital continued...

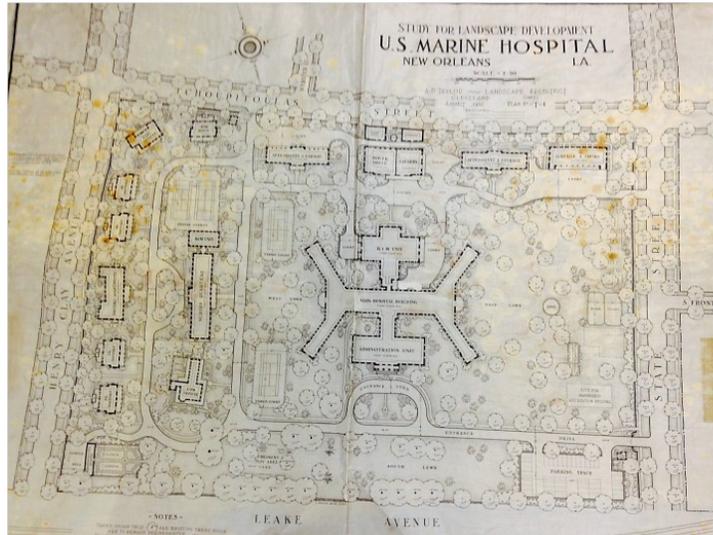
On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the Neighborhood Conservation District Advisory Committee recommended approval for the demolition of the six buildings and wall. The demolition application then went to the City Council for a hearing on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

With the proposed demolitions imminent, it became clear that the Section 106 process had seemingly been overlooked. Landmarks raised this issue with Councilmember Susan Guidry, who received confirmation from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that a Corps of Engineers permit would trigger Section 106 consultation. As a result, Guidry added a proviso to her motion approving the demolitions only after the federal process was completed, as required by law.

In a recent letter from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation concerning this issue, the Corps and stakeholders were reminded that "requirement of Section 110(k) of the NHPA prohibits a federal agency from granting a loan, loan guarantee, permit, license, or other assistance to an applicant who, with intent to avoid Section 106 of the NHPA, has intentionally significantly adversely affected an historic property to which the authorization or assistance would relate, or having legal power to prevent it, has allowed such significant adverse effect to occur." The letter continues noting "the clear intent of Section 110(k) is for agencies to provide oversight of applicants to discourage them from foiling the Section 106 process."

### Landmarking Process

The staff report presented to the HDLC at its March meeting to consider landmark study espoused the importance of the historic property saying, "A handful of these sites remain intact but none include as rich an assemblage of architecturally and socially significant structures as the former NOAH campus.



*"US Marine Hospital Study for Landscape Development, A.D. Taylor, 1929" from E. Burke's Designation Report*

The significance of the site lies not only in the structures themselves, but the grounds as well which includes many mature live oak trees. **The staff recommends that the entire site including all structures and brick perimeter wall be nominated for study as a local landmark**" (emphasis added).

The Historic District Landmarks Commission evaluates the significance of a structure based on four criteria, and can designate a site as a landmark if it meets at least one of four criteria (as established by Section 84.22 of the City Code.)

In the HDLC's May 22, 2015 Designation Report, the staff found **"that the United States Public Health Service Hospital site (excusing those buildings and structures not nominated by the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission) meets all four of the criteria"** (emphasis added).

Nevertheless, the report maintained that "once the residential structures and brick perimeter wall at the Henry Clay Avenue side of the campus are removed, the continuity, unity and integrity of the site and its landscape will be compromised." As a result, the staff recommended that only the remaining structures, not the "site," be designated as landmarks.

LLS had not anticipated that the site would not be designated, having

worked to reach a compromise with LCMC. The property, although diminished, is still a historically significant site. In fact, using the hospital's own statements, they acknowledge that "84% of the existing square footage of our State Street campus is going to be preserved or renovated and reused". They add that "Phase 1 and Phase 2 propose to build on only 11% of the site or green space of the campus."

Landmarking only the historic buildings but not the site removes design review and approval by the HDLC for new construction.

The federal Section 106 consultation process must now come into play. Here stakeholders and officials are to look at ways "to avoid, mitigate and minimize damage to historic properties." In a June 10, 2015, letter to the HDLC LCMC's attorney Justin Schmidt, stated that Section 106 is "only a vetting process" and that Children's Hospital would not be bound by the process's outcome. Contrary to Schmidt's assertion, the intent of the federal law is that good faith efforts be made by all parties to consider alternatives.

Louisiana Landmarks Society looks forward to the convening of the Section 106 consultation process.

## From the Executive Director

### Walter Gallas

It's hard to believe that it's been ten years since Hurricane Katrina. I was living in Washington, D.C., and working for the National Trust for Historic Preservation when the storm hit, and I watched the initial blows of this powerful storm in horror. Little did I know that I would soon be back in New Orleans, having left just one year before.

I have always been proud of the determination of the National Trust's leader, Richard Moe, to do whatever the organization could to ensure that the historic resources of this battered and bruised city would not be irretrievably lost. The constant fear was, that in the rush to clear the damage and debris, many redeemable buildings of New Orleans would be cleared away. And I have always felt honored that I could represent the National Trust on the ground in New Orleans for three and a half years.

I still remember vividly my visit to New Orleans only five weeks after the storm. The place felt like the wild wild West with military and police officers everywhere, and people scrambling to figure out what was going on in different neighborhoods, and what steps to take next.

Nevertheless the overall spirit of the city and its residents came through very clearly. This was a place that everyone was determined to bring back from the edge of total calamity. To the people of New Orleans there was never any question that the city would survive.

Ten years on, we are in a place that is different yet still the same. Population demographics have shifted, housing patterns are changing, and the crush of tourism has grown. Still, we remain a city with an incredibly rich and complex culture, borne out of an equally complicated history. We continue to struggle with social issues and crime. Public budgets are tight. And the historic preservation issues of past decades rear their heads again and again.

Nevertheless, we have a lot to be grateful for. As residents of this place, we are the envy of many who visit. We enjoy our city year round, and we are proud to show it off.

May the next ten years find us continuing to build a New Orleans we will all remain proud of.

## HOST YOUR EVENT AT THE PITOT HOUSE



Make Louisiana Landmarks Society's Pitot House the setting for your next event. Whether it is 20 or 300 people, the Pitot House is a unique New Orleans venue for a meeting, a corporate cocktail hour, or a romantic wedding. And your event at the Pitot House will support the worthy cause of historic preservation.

## Advocacy Update continued...

accept donated architectural services which would have resulted in two renovated historic structures. Negotiations, however, broke down over certain obligations required by the city as part of the agreement. The city then withdrew its request to use federal funds and the Section 106 process ended. As Sandra Stokes and Michael Duplantier concluded at the end of negotiations last year, "The impending destruction of the historic cottages represents not only a loss of a part of New Orleans' historic fabric, but loss of the promising precedent of an effective and consequential working relationship between preservationists and public officials."



*Corner of Esplanade and Rampart St.*

### Habana Outpost

On March 12, 2015, the City Council voted in favor of Habana Outpost by denying the appeals by a group of neighbors of City Planning Commission and Vieux Carré Commission decisions. On March 29, 2015, these neighbors filed a lawsuit challenging

the decisions; and on April 13, 2015, the suit was amended and expanded to include LLS and Vieux Carré Property Owners Residents and Associates. There were some recent filings back and forth as a result of the City failing to respond in a timely fashion, followed by the City attempting to set aside the plaintiffs' motion that the City had defaulted. This particular matter was taken up in a preliminary hearing at Civil District Court on July 17. This long contest between developer and neighborhood continues.



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## Renew Your Membership Today!

### JOIN LANDMARKS AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Your membership helps Louisiana Landmarks Society promote historic preservation through education, advocacy, and operation of the Pitot House.

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### GET INVOLVED!

As always, if any of our members have an item of interest or an idea for something they would like to see in *Préservation*, please let us know! Leave a message at the Pitot House at 504.482.0312, email [info@louisianalandmarks.org](mailto:info@louisianalandmarks.org), or email our editor Hilary Somerville Irvin at [hilaryirvin@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryirvin@gmail.com).

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer docent at the Pitot House or joining in on our advocacy and education efforts, please give us a call or email.

