

LANDMARKS' PRÉSERVATION



THE JOURNAL OF THE LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY

When Bad Things Happen to Good Neighborhoods

Sandra L. Stokes

Left: 506 Nashville Ave. Before

Right: 506 Nashville Ave. After
Purchased for \$349,000.
Illegally demolished.
Lot sale price: \$465,000



Photo from City Assessor Website



Photo by: Jay Seastrunk

It has become all too familiar in historic neighborhoods - perfectly proportioned historic homes demolished for totally out-of-scale McMansions; harmonious streetscapes marred by inappropriate new construction; or additions that look like cancerous growths on what was a perfectly fine home. Louisiana Landmarks Society recognizes the advantages of local historic districts in maintaining scale and character in neighborhoods, while providing stability and predictability. At the same time, we also understand the concerns of residents that being subject to the jurisdiction of the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) might infringe upon their personal property rights.

Most of the neighborhoods that have experienced the onslaught of out-of-scale, out-of-harmony construction didn't see it coming until it was too late. They did not have proper protections in place. But that can change in allowing at least some regulatory review with the proposed Uptown/Carrollton and Mid City/Parkview historic districts. And we also understand there can be some trade-offs regarding what is reviewable by the HDLC and what is not. We would like to offer a compromise position.

Louisiana Landmarks Society proposes limited review and regulatory authority by the HDLC so as to preserve the character and scale of the community, while allowing for minor changes without any HDLC review.

Continued on p. 6

Vol. 53, No. 3

Fall 2016

Hilary Somerville Irvin,
Editor

Inside this issue:

When Bad Things Happen to Good Neighborhoods, Sandra L. Stokes	1
Message from the President, Sandra L. Stokes	2
The Crescent and the Pearl Pitot House Exhibition	3
Short Term Rentals Carol Gniady	4
New Orleans 9 Update, Hilary Somerville Irvin	4
Design Review Needed, Hilary Somerville Irvin	5
Mourning Tour Partnership with Save Our Cemeteries	7
Message from the Executive Director, Carol Gniady	7



FÊTE DU JARDIN
AT THE PITOT HOUSE
Sunday, October 16
From 4:00—7:00 pm

With Honorary Chairs Consul Général de France
Grégor Trumel and Madame Ingrid Trumel

Join Louisiana Landmarks Society as we host our annual garden party at the Pitot House. You can purchase tickets or become a patron on our website, or by calling us at the house. Please join us for a lovely evening on Bayou St. John.

SAVE THE DATES!

The Pearl and the Crescent
Opening Reception
Wednesday, Sept. 21

Mourning Tours with
Save Our Cemeteries
Begins Friday, Oct. 7

Fête du Jardin
Sunday, October 16

Vino on the Bayou
Thursday, Nov. 10

Marché des Fêtes
Saturday, December 3

For more information visit:
LouisianaLandmarks.org
or call us: 504-482-0312



A Message from the President

Sandra L. Stokes

experience in a more progressive way. We look forward to their recommendations.

Dovetailing efforts of the Advocacy Committee, the Lecture Committee hosted a public meeting on the Master Plan amendment process with Bob Rivers, Executive Director of the City Planning Commission. And in August, Jay Brinkmann, retired Chief Economist and Senior VP of Research and Education at the Mortgage Bankers Association, spoke to a packed house on the realities of Short Term Rental economics.

The Advocacy Committee is also going strong. Working with members of the Riverfront Alliance and other neighborhood groups, and led by Michael Duplantier, we have submitted 12 pages of proposed amendments to the city's Master Plan to help guide preservation of the architecture, character and scale of our historic neighborhoods. Moreover, board member Dr. Howard Mielke has used his latest research and lead mapping of the city to propose new environmental standards for the Master Plan.

The appropriate rehabilitation of the Carrollton Courthouse is still on our front burner, as we remain hopeful of finding an end-user for the historically significant site that will allow it to continue its history of service to the community. The Advocacy Committee

stays active and engaged as we continue to advocate against Short Term Rentals ---- and add support for new Historic Districts --- issues that have long term consequences on the character and quality of our neighborhoods.

And there is so much happening this fall! The Fête du Jardin, our biggest fundraiser of the year is fast approaching. We are so pleased to have the Consul Général of France and his wife, Grégor and Ingrid Trumel, as this year's honorary chairs. We hope you will join us to celebrate with great food, wine, music and wonderful company on October 16th from 4-7pm at the Pitot House.

Back by popular demand, our Vino on the Bayou! Come sip wine and watch the sunset on the bayou on Thursday, November 10 from 5-7 pm. And of course, our Marché des Fêtes is always a highlight of the holiday season. Join Papa Noël and the Landmarks gang for shopping, crafts, music and fun on December 3.

As I said, there are lots of good things happening at Louisiana Landmarks Society. But none of this would be possible without you. We are grateful for your patronage and your support of the Pitot House and our preservation efforts. Stay tuned..... there's plenty more in store!

Sandra L. Stokes

There is energy in the air. Our new board and new Executive Director, Carol Gniady have hit the ground running - and good things are happening all around.

To start, we have divided the Pitot House Committee into two groups: the physical house and gardens and the museum and collection. The House and Garden Committee has already made great strides. We are on our way to rehabilitating an existing bathroom that has been used for storage into an ADA compliant guest bathroom. We also have plans to do a minor upgrade to the kitchen - freshening it up and making it more catering friendly. These two improvements will enhance the popularity of the Pitot House for those looking for a unique New Orleans setting for their special events. Next in our line of sight- repair and paint the pieux fence!

The second part of the Pitot House Committee is focusing on the Museum and Collection. Members are researching our history, assessing the collection with a fresh eye - and exploring new ways to interpret the museum

Inside the Pitot House with Jamie Barker



Visitors to the Pitot House are treated to more than just a beautiful setting, they get a wealth of inside information from our docents. Jamie Barker volunteers for us one day a week. She is a native New Orleanian, retired social worker and teacher, with an Education degree from UNO. She is a lifelong student of history and enjoys doing research between giving tours here at the house. "Our history is so rich, so fascinating, it made me realize why we are different from the rest of the country and why we are the way we are," she said.

Her favorite place at the house is on the front loggia, overlooking our parterre garden and the bayou. She enjoys the "cultural exchange between visitors and learning new things." Jamie has been a docent here since 2012, is a professional tour guide, and also serves Save Our Cemeteries.

Would you like to be a docent?

All you need is the desire to tell our story at our beautiful, historic Pitot House Museum.

We are currently seeking docents to volunteer on Fridays and Saturdays, 10 am - 3 pm. Split shifts are also available.

For more information, call us at (504) 482-0312.

**The Pearl and the Crescent:
Examining Similarities Between Havana and New Orleans**
Exhibition Curated by J. Marshall Brown



September 21-November 21, 2016

Opening Reception: Wednesday, September 21

5-7 pm at the Pitot House

Free and Open to the public

When Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, founded what would become the City of New Orleans in 1718, the City of Havana was already 203-years old. Though founded by rival European empires, the relationship between each city runs deeply throughout history. The interconnections forged through time are reflected on the face of each city, and in New Orleans, the most poignant evidence of the city's kinship with Havana is reflected in its architecture. *The Pearl and the Crescent: Examining Similarities Between Havana and New Orleans* looks to shed light on the architectural ancestry of each city and encourage greater awareness about the sister cities of Havana and New Orleans.

J. Marshall Brown is a Candidate for the Master of Preservation Studies degree at Tulane University. Originally from a small historic town in the Piedmont of North Carolina, a love for old buildings and old cities came naturally. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in urban planning with a special emphasis on historic preservation policy. Realizing that his true passion lies in the restoration and rehabilitation of historic structures, he returned to graduate school and found a perfect fit in the dynamic setting of New Orleans. After a recent trip to study historic preservation in Havana, he developed a keen interest in the island nation's innovative approach to historic preservation as well as the shared history between Havana and the city he now calls home – New Orleans.

PRESIDENT

Sandra L. Stokes

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

James R. Logan, IV

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Michael Duplantier

TREASURER

Louis W. McFaul

ASSISTANT TREASURER

R. Stephen Chauvin, AIA NCARB

RECORDING SECRETARY

Hilary Somerville Irvin

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Carol Allen

TRUSTEES

Charles A. (Chuck) Berg, AIA

Elizabeth M. Landis

Nathan Lott

Amanda McFillen

Howard W. Mielke

Thomas W. Milliner

Jerry Pepper

Mary Price Robinson

Jay Seastrunk

Drew Stewart

Justin Stone

EX OFFICIO

T. Casey Stuart

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Carol Gniady

HOUSE COORDINATOR

Amanda Duhon

**LOUISIANA LANDMARKS
SOCIETY & PITOT HOUSE**

1440 Moss Street

New Orleans, LA 70119

Ph. 504-482-0312

info@louisianalandmarks.org

www.louisianalandmarks.org

This newsletter is published quarterly by the Louisiana Landmarks Society, Inc., a 501(C)(3) organization, for informational purposes. Comments and letters to the editor are solicited. All rights reserved.

Short-Term Rental Realities

Carol Gniady



Louisiana Landmarks Society is for neighborhoods, and the very authenticity that makes our city unique, not to mention attractive to millions of visitors each year. Aligning with our mission to preserve our culture and neighborhoods, we oppose short-term rentals (STRs) but we've accepted those that provide extra income for homeowners: temporary rentals for short durations, like during Mardi Gras; and accessory rentals of an extra room or accessory building on the owner's property. These types of rentals have been

around for decades, and there's no going back now. Landmarks Society opposes "Principal Residential" STRs, also known as whole house rentals, and we oppose "Commercial" types which are whole house or multi-unit buildings in commercially zoned areas. Think what Freret street, Oretha Castle Haley, Magazine or other commercially zoned areas might become if STRs are allowed. With no owners on site, commercial STRs would operate as de facto hotels in mixed use and commercial areas throughout the city.

On August 22, Louisiana Landmarks sponsored a presentation on the economic realities of STRs by retired economist and Mid City resident Jay Brinkmann, who spoke for about 40 minutes to our capacity crowd. Mr. Brinkmann pointed out how STRs "inject the risks of the Tourism Industry into the heart of every impacted neighborhood," including the volatility of this industry. Brinkmann shared how in the past our tourism-driven economy was effected by the recession, hurricanes and the 9/11 terrorism attack. Brinkmann suggested that if New Orleans has thousands of houses and buildings tied up in STRs, we run the risk of investors souring on New Orleans and dumping these properties back onto the market when there's another economic downturn. This could be devastating to those of us left in the wake. And, STRs drive up property taxes when surrounding houses are bought by investors willing to pay more for houses which they will convert to STRs.

This complex issue is under the City Council's scrutiny. Last month they accepted the City Planning Commission's STR Study (amended to remove Principal Residential) and a STR ordinance is forthcoming. For more information and to see Jay Brinkmann's presentation please visit Landmarks Society's website or Facebook. Write your councilmember to oppose principal residential and commercial STRs.



UPDATES:

2552 St. Philip Street (2010 listing)

Vacant since Hurricane Katrina and owned by the City of New Orleans in 2010 when named to Landmarks' Endangered Nine, this striking 1902 Queen Anne style structure, which housed a Police Jail and Patrol Center, was a victim of extreme demolition by neglect. Three years later in 2013, the building



was auctioned to private buyers Liz and Raul Canache, whose plans to turn the property into a nine-room bed and breakfast establishment were unanimously approved by the City Planning Commission in 2015. Work has been progressing during the past year and soon the *Inn at the Old Tremé Jail* will be checking in willing occupants. Louisiana Landmarks applauds the Canache's extraordinary efforts to save one of the city's most endangered properties. Keep updated about this project at: innattheoldjail.com.

2517 Jackson Avenue (2014 listing)

Built in 1873, this masonry building was home to Wesley United Methodist Church, one of the country's oldest African-American churches and a hub of the city's civil rights movement in the 1950s. Dr. Martin Luther King spoke in Wesley's



upstairs chapel during this important decade. When named to the Landmarks' Endangered Nine in 2014, the building was vacant and its supporters were concerned that the building would be demolished for a parking lot.

Continued p. 6

Why Design Review is Needed in All Proposed New HDLC Districts

Hilary Somerville Irvin

During recent years, many historic sections of New Orleans have benefited from an increased desirability. Some of these currently are under the jurisdiction of the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC). The following examples of recent construction and modifications are a few examples in support of extending professional review by the HDLC to the proposed new Uptown/Carrollton and Mid City/Parkview historic districts. While the proposed legislation offers full review for all changes to architectural elements visible from the public right of way along the significant historic corridors of St. Charles Avenue and South Carrollton Avenue, other areas in the proposed districts would be exempt from review of such alterations that would affect the streetscape and neighborhood character. As outlined by President Sandra Stokes, Louisiana Landmarks urges that design review be included for all the proposed new districts ([Before photographs, Uptown Messenger](#)).

5428 St. Charles

Despite some public opposition, the City Council in 2011 approved the demolition of a 1928 residential building located at **5428 St. Charles**, designed by noted architect Emile Weil, to make way for a new building. On St. Charles Avenue--the street of opulent mansions--this Eclectic-style family home may be considered a fitting addition. Such a dramatic addition to one of the world's most famous streets, however, warrants public review. This would happen under the proposed legislation



5428 St. Charles, Before



5428 St. Charles, After

7901 St. Charles

Noted not only for its fine residences, St. Charles Avenue displays rich panoply of commercial structures, such as the circa 1930 Spanish revival style filling station at **7901 St. Charles**, which charmed passersby for decades. In 2015, City Council approved its demolition for the construction by a developer of a new large-scaled residential building. Design review could have improved the scale of the new building, which appears to be bursting out of its lot confines.



7901 St. Charles, Before



7901 St. Charles, After

4826 Chestnut

This uptown neighborhood is defined by modest family homes that retain an assortment of historic details. Major alterations of the millwork and fenestration patterns drastically alter the rhythm of the street. Whereas the camelback addition at **4826 Chestnut** may be deemed appropriate, design review could have helped retain the distinctive historic architectural elements of the early 20th-century cottage.



4826 Chestnut, Before



4826 Chestnut, After

8000 Hampson

Design review for changes that are visible from the street would help protect the integrity of our city's neighborhoods. Such modifications as removing the traditional façade porch, as done at **8000 Hampson**, change the visual character of the street, as well as the manner in which buildings interact with people.



8000 Hampson, Before



8000 Hampson, After

When Bad Things Happen to Good Neighbors – *Continued*

We propose that review take place only in circumstances where **major alterations** are requested --- changes that can affect the streetscape and neighborhood character.

These would include:

- Proposals for demolitions
- Demolition by neglect
- New construction
- Alteration of the roofline
- Additions visible from the street

Using these standards, most alterations -- including window or door replacements, rear additions, etc. -- would not be subject to review. And certainly, options for paint color are not subject to review and are not in any of the HDLC districts. Paint is only subject to review in the Vieux Carr . Paint color regulation is often mistakenly cited, possibly to instill fear. With this proposed compromise for only major alterations, there would be no regulatory review for light fixtures, burglar bars or anything you can't see from the street.

Left:
1817 Arts St.,
2007

Right:
1817 Arts St.,
2015

Photos by:
Karen Gadbois



Louisiana Landmarks Society does support full review for all changes to architectural elements visible from the public right of way along the significant historic corridors of St. Charles Avenue and S. Carrollton Avenue within the Carrollton/Uptown Districts. We also support expanding the proposed Mid-City Historic District Landmark (HDLC) boundary map to include the area roughly bounded by S. St. Patrick, City Park Ave, Iberville St. and I-10 / Pontchartrain Expressway due to many culturally, architecturally and archaeologically significant properties that warrant protection within these boundaries.

Creating new HDLC limited control districts would provide protections for the contextual relationship and scale within existing historic neighborhoods. Review for **major alterations** could help to ensure that the historic quality and character of these neighborhoods remain intact and contribute to increased property values. Not requiring extra review for **most changes** to homes should take the fear out of expanding the districts while still providing many benefits for the community.

Please contact the City Planning Commission at: cpcinfo@nola.gov and ask them to support the Uptown/Carrollton and Mid City/Parkview historic districts.



UPDATE: *Continued*

2517 Jackson Avenue (2014 listing) - cont'd.

Leglise Properties LLC, based in Aspen, Colorado, acquired the historic church in 2015, along with several contiguous properties— a house at 2509 Jackson Avenue and a parking lot on South Robertson Street. Development plans include making the church into a single-family home, with the adjacent lot where the house stands into a swimming pool and gardens, and the South Robertson Street lot into a driveway. As part of these plans, the owners requested demolition of the 20th-century house, which was heard at the Neighborhood Conservation District Advisory Committee at its July 18 2016 meeting. The Committee recommended 7-2 for approval of the demolition. Final approval must be given by the City Council. Although permits for foundation work and interior demolition for the church have been issued and work is ongoing, no detailed development plans have been submitted. Although preferring that the house not be demolished, Landmarks looks forward to following the progress in the continued rescue of this Central City landmark.

518 Eleonore Street (2015 listing)

In the Spring/Summer 2016 issue of *Landmarks' Pr servation*, we noted that work needed to secure and renovate this ca. 1860 Creole cottage, named to the 2015 New Orleans Nine, appeared to be stalled.

The permitted work now has begun, with the restoration of the cottage in progress, as well as the foundations for the rear additions. Landmarks is grateful for the efforts of its owner in saving this rare survivor from the antebellum period in this upriver uptown neighborhood.



From the Executive Director

Carol Gniady



Hitting the ground running is a great way to describe my first few months here. Metaphorically speaking (and inspired by the field games at the Olympics), sprints, 440's, relays, broad jumps, shot puts, and pole vaults are all aspects to winning for preservation. Being on the Landmarks Society team is exhilarating, fast-paced, multifaceted and rewarding. The team of board members who support me is impressively talented and knowledgeable about preservation matters, architecture, advocacy, organizational effectiveness, fundraising, and strategic planning. I go to them often for coaching and collaborating.

Stepping onto the field with our new board president, we

met with city council members to introduce ourselves in our new roles, discussing general matters and setting the stage for effective communications. Simultaneously, I met with executive directors and staff of other house museums, preservation organizations and neighborhood groups, exploring ways we can support each other. My game plan also includes working closely with our board members who chair and serve on committees: Advocacy, Development, Education, Finance, Fundraising, House and Garden, Lecture, Membership Museum and Collection, and Newsletter. And, working with the A-team which gets every activity off the blocks has been fantastic. Our House Coordinator, Amanda Duhon, gets our projects on track and across the finish line, our special teams maintain the many aspects of the house and museum, and our docents and volunteers round out the roster of necessary players.

My last sports analogy is that preservation advocacy is not a sprint, it's a marathon, and our team is in it to win gold.

Carol Gniady

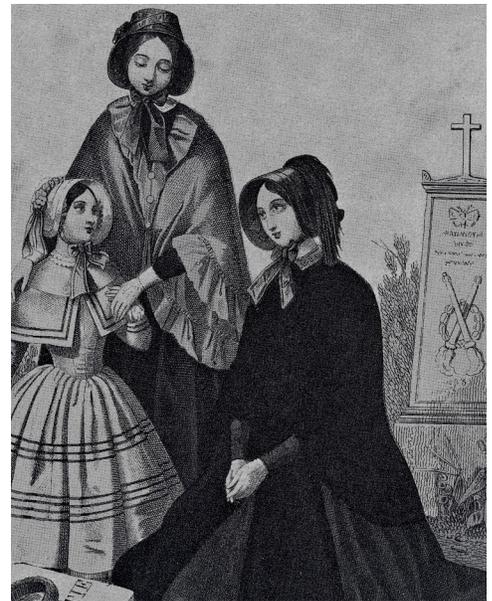
19th Century Mourning & Burial Customs Tours

Presented by Save Our Cemeteries & Louisiana Landmarks Society

FRIDAYS ONLY! 1:30-3 pm Begins Friday, October 7

The 19th Century Mourning and Burial Customs Tour brings together Save Our Cemeteries and Louisiana Landmarks Society for the fourth year of a wonderful partnership. The tour offers visitors a unique viewing of both the Pitot House and St. Louis Cemetery No. 3 by focusing on burial customs in the cemetery and mourning customs at the house.

For each tour guests will meet at the Pitot House and walk over to the cemetery on Esplanade Avenue for the Save Our Cemeteries tour. Afterwards, guests return for a tour of the Pitot House, which will be dressed in traditional 19th Century mourning décor. Conversation and light refreshments to follow.



Price: \$30 | Reservations Required
Purchase Tickets from Save Our Cemeteries
Website: www.saveourcemeteries.org



Celebrate at the Pitot House!

Enjoy the unique setting of the Pitot House on Bayou St. John for your wedding reception, next party or business meeting.

Call 504-482-0312 to schedule a site visit today!



1440 MOSS STREET
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70119

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
New Orleans, LA
Permit No. 723

Renew Your Membership Today!

**JOIN Louisiana Landmarks Society
And Make a Difference!**

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

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS		
---	\$25	Student
---	\$40	Individual
---	\$60	Household
---	\$100	Advocate
---	\$200	Business
---	\$250	Guardian
---	\$500	Protector
---	\$1000	Preserver

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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, or email our editor Hilary Somerville Irvin at hilaryirvin@gmail.com.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

