

**NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING – MINUTES**  
**Thursday, December 4, 2025 - 11:00 AM**  
**State Library of Louisiana**  
**701 N 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

Robert Carriker (chair) called the December 4, 2025, regular meeting of the National Register Review Committee to order at 11:11 AM. In addition to Carriker, members present included Fallon Samuels Aidoo, Ava Alltmont, Rebecca Blankenbaker, Guy Carwile, Keith Finley, Martha Salomon, and Marty Young.

Carriker then asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Martha Salomon so moved, and Ava Alltmont seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Carriker asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 2025 meeting. Martha Salomon so moved, and Fallon Aidoo seconded. The motion passed with one abstention from Carriker.

Bailey Hall welcomed the audience and committee members. Division of Historic Preservation staff in attendance included Andrea McCarthy (Tax Credit Program Manager) and Corey Hoover (Section 106 Reviewer and Survey Coordinator).

Carriker then announced the nomination period for vice chair was open. Martha Salomon nominated Turry Flucker to continue as vice chair which was seconded by Ava Alltmont. Dr. Carriker asked for other nominations. There were none. The nomination for Flucker to continue as chair passed unanimously.

Carriker then announced the nomination period for chair was open. Fallon Aidoo nominated Carriker to continue as chair WHICH Rebecca Blankenbaker seconded. Carriker asked for other nominations. There were none. The nomination for Carriker to continue as chair passed unanimously.

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

Houma Elks Lodge, Terrebonne Parish

Presented by Jessica Richardson, nomination preparer

The Houma Elks Lodge #1193 building was constructed in 1906 in downtown Houma, LA, at 7883 West Main Street. The building is located within the boundaries of the Houma National Register Historic District (listed in 1983, expanded and updated in 2015), which sits in the historic commercial core of Houma along Bayou Terrebonne. The building was first constructed as the Terrebonne Building and Loan in 1906, and it has been occupied by the Houma Elks Lodge #1193 since 1911. The brick building itself is two stories with simple details along the stepped cornice line, has three arch topped openings on each floor, and a simple second floor balcony. The first floor has a large open gathering space with a bar, kitchen, and bathrooms at the rear. A stair leads to the second floor, which has a gathering space at the rear and the lodge meeting room at the front. The main alteration to the building is the replacement of the windows and entry door within the existing arched opening – this occurred following damage from Hurricane Ida in 2021. The windows and doors were damaged over time, including in a recent hurricane. The Houma Elks Lodge #1193 building retains historic integrity and is easily recognizable to any former or current lodge members and is eligible for listing on the National Register. Flucker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural descriptions, further clarification on the impact of the Dixie Overland Highway, technical corrections to photographs, and general proofreading edits.

The Houma Elks Lodge #1193 is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its long-standing role as a center of civic engagement, charitable activity, and social cohesion in Houma, Louisiana. Chartered in February 1910, the lodge is part of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (BPOE), a national fraternal organization that played a vital role in shaping American civic life in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Located along Bayou Terrebonne in historic downtown Houma, the lodge has served as a gathering place for

generations of residents, not only for Elks members, but for the community at large. Its two-story building includes a social hall and lounge on the ground floor and a formal meeting room above, where members have convened for over a century to conduct lodge business and organize community initiatives. The period of significance for the lodge begins in 1910, when the lodge moved into the building, and continues through 1976, the current 50-year guideline, as the lodge has continually occupied the building and served Houma and still does. While the building is a contributing resource to the Houma National Register Historic District, this nomination seeks to recognize further the significance and impact this building and the Elks organization has had on Houma. Throughout its history, the Houma Elks Lodge #1193 has exemplified the Elks' mission to promote charity, justice, brotherly love, and fidelity. The lodge has hosted youth programs, veterans' services, scholarship initiatives, and drug awareness campaigns, reflecting the organization's commitment to public service. The lodge also holds cultural significance through its involvement in patriotic and commemorative activities within Houma. A notable example is the 1917 flag sewn by the women of the Houma Elks Lodge, which was featured in a World War I exhibit at Nicholls State University, underscoring the lodge's contributions to national efforts during wartime. The Houma Elks Lodge #1193 has remained resilient for over 100 years and continues to serve as a vital institution in Houma's social landscape. Its enduring presence and community impact make it a strong candidate for listing in the National Register under Criterion A.

Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural description of the building.

Carriker then opened to public comments. Brenda Babin, lodge board chair, offered additional history and spoke in support of the nomination.

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

#### Houma Water Tower, Terrebonne Parish

Presented by Jessica Richardson, nomination preparer

The Houma Water Tower was constructed in 1902 as part of the first public water works system for the town of Houma. It has a brick base 68' tall and 11' in diameter, which supported a steel tank that was 48' tall and had a capacity of 40,000 gallons. The tank was removed ca. 1950. It is located at the southeast corner of Wood and Roussel Streets adjacent to the Houma Fire Station, which was constructed in 1930. The tower has Gothic Revival inspired details including a tall Gothic arched doorway on the ground floor and staggered Gothic arched windows at various levels off of the interior stairwell.

The Houma Water Tower is a lovingly preserved example of Houma's earliest public water works. Prior to its construction in 1902, Houma got its water from Bayou Terrebonne and private cisterns and wells. Constructed on a tapered brick base, the 68' tower has Gothic Revival details on its entry and small window openings. The tower served the city of Houma through 1939 when WPA era improvements began to update and further develop the water system in the city. While it is no longer serving as the water source for the city of Houma, it has been an architectural and engineering landmark in the city since its construction 123 years ago. Because of this, the Houma Water Tower is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C in the area of engineering with a period of significance of 1902, the year it was constructed.

Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Fallon Aidoo suggested adding details about the significance of the topography of the lot which contributed to the significance of the engineering of the tower. Guy Carwile made suggestions on the architectural description. Martha Solomon asked for clarification on the structural integrity of the tower and Carriker echoed the same.

Carriker opened to public comments. No comments were made.

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

### Bunche Library, Acadia Parish

Presented by Denise Underwood, nomination preparer

The Bunche Library is eligible for listing for its historical significance at the local level in the areas of Education and Ethnic Heritage: Black. The Bunche Library is one of the only known examples of black libraries in the region. Sitting prominently in the primary corridor of a public housing neighborhood of Rayne, Louisiana, the freestanding Bunche Library has an air of monumentality in the predominantly black residential neighborhood. Built in 1953, the modest building was constructed as a one-room garage-style structure, with most of the materials used being wood. Although the structure needed some work due to neglect over the years, the interior has undergone no modifications during its restoration. There has been no major alteration to the front, except for the reconstruction of the original porch with in-kind materials, adding a handrail attached to the front steps and landing for safety purposes to comply with existing building code enforcement laws.

The Bunche Library is significant at the local level under Criterion A, in the areas of Education and Ethnic Heritage: Black. The library building was the site of expanded learning opportunities for Rayne, Louisiana's Black population as it was the only public library in the city dedicated to their use. Additionally, the library came to serve as a small gathering place for many facets of the community. It was also frequently used as a meeting place for the Black Girl Scout troop and others to hold meetings. Due to closure and neglect, the building required structural reinforcement but still maintained the integrity of setting, design, feeling, and association. The building's period of significance is tied to its time as a library, from its opening in 1953 to the complete desegregation and consolidation of the City of Rayne libraries in 1980.

Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural description of the building. Finley asked for clarification on any significant civil rights activities that occurred in or around the library. The preparer explained that none were documented outside of the oral histories that were provided in the nomination.

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

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

### Opelousas Historic District, St Landry Parish

Presented by Kelly Calhoun, nomination preparer

The purpose of this National Register nomination is to update the period of significance and expand the current historic district boundaries of the Opelousas Historic District listed on the National Register in 1989. The boundary increase correlates with the historic district period of significance update to 1975 updating to the present 50-year guideline and Opelousas' historical commercial expansion. Along with the update is a new inventory and a new historic district map (see next section for details). The existing National Register district includes commercial and governmental buildings generally characterized by one- and two-story commercial buildings with additional larger landmark buildings dating to the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The main thoroughfares in Opelousas are U.S. Highway 190 eastbound (East and West Vine Street) and westbound (East and West Landry Street), and U.S. Highway 182 northbound (North and South Union Street) and southbound (North and South Union Street). U.S. I-49 borders the eastern side of town, with U.S. Highways 357 (South Bullard Road) and 3043 (Grandnigo Road) to the west. Landry and Main Streets have always served as the historic commercial thoroughfares in Opelousas. In the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, commercial railroad development began on the west side of town diverting north and south followed by residential expansion. In the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, commercial and residential development continued westward following the newly constructed U.S. Highway 190.

This is a proposal to increase the boundary and period of significance for the Opelousas Historic District in St. Landry Parish, listed on the National Register in 1989 with a previous period of significance ending in 1939. This boundary increase is predicated on additional documentation to the district updating the period of significance to 1975. The existing National Register district includes commercial buildings and is generally characterized by one- and two-story commercial buildings with some larger landmark commercial buildings from the early 20th century. The proposed district expansion encompasses a broader scope along the main thoroughfares of Opelousas heavily along U.S. Highway 190 running eastbound and westbound, Main Street running southbound and Union Street running northbound, roughly capped Railroad Avenue to the west, Grolee Street to the north, Vine Street to the south, and Academy Street to the east. U.S. Highway-190, originally Landry and Vine Streets, served as the historic commercial thoroughfare in Opelousas since its establishment as part of the original U.S. highway system in 1926. As the 20th century entered the 1950s through the 1970s, commercial growth on St. Landry and Vine Streets grew north past the St. Landry Parish Courthouse. By the construction of Interstate-49 between Opelousas and the small town of Washington, LA from 1981 to 1984, businesses began moving east, adjacent to the interstate. Similarly, the removal of the historic railroad line circa 1990 means there is a logical encapsulation of the historic core of Opelousas between Interstate-49 and the railroad in terms of the period of significance of historic construction.

The Opelousas Historic District in St. Landry Parish is listed on the National Register at the local level under Criterion C for Architecture. This nomination will expand the district under Criterion A for Commerce. Downtown Opelousas is significant under Criterion A because it played an important role as a commercial center for surrounding communities during several different historical periods: first, in the antebellum era, when cotton and sugar were the primary export, and later, in the late-19th through mid-20th centuries, when a industries (particularly in sweet potato/yam and lumber) operated here. Opelousas continued to be an important provider of goods and services into the modern era when suburban development and national chains supplanted many downtowns. The period of significance spans from circa 1820, the earliest known building construction date, to 1975, the approximate end of the era associated with growth from the region's economy. These buildings are important in telling a more complete story of Opelousas' development and historic character. Many buildings within the proposed district have some alterations but retain integrity and are determined to contribute to the character of the historic district. The district has historical significance through its ties to Opelousas' commercial and transportation history, visible today by its proximity to the former railroad line, U.S. Highway-190, Interstate-49, and its many commercial buildings which were constructed to serve these interests. Transportation and commercial development is also unusual in Opelousas as it is not near a waterway and shows multiple stages of development reflecting trade and industry throughout history. Opelousas is unique in that its land-based transportation development over its inception with heightened development present in built environment. The residential areas which abut the commercial center housed the many workers who contributed to Opelousas' growth during this historical period. Both south and north of the commercial center and outside the proposed boundary, there is a high number of residential buildings that retain their architectural integrity, representing a variety of types and styles reflecting growth periods of commerce.

Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural description of the buildings and clarified some points regarding the photographs. Fallon Aidoo offered suggestions to add additional information on the significance of the post-modern trend of architecture overall and how that is reflected at the local level. She also suggested a map that depicts significant locations and events within the local context to explain why all of these resources should be included in the nomination boundaries.

Carriker then opened to public comment. Charles Marsala spoke in support of the nomination.

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

### Oak Alley Plantation, St James Parish

Presented by Gabrielle Begue, nomination preparer

Oak Alley Plantation is a former sugarcane plantation complex located in Vacherie, St. James Parish, Louisiana. Operating as a historic house museum and site since 1976, the plantation was first established c. 1820 on the Mississippi River as was typical of the state's hundreds of riverside plantations relying on the river for transport. The proposed boundaries comprise the frontmost portion of the original Oak Alley site and consist of approximately 40 acres bordered by the River Road/LA-18 and the Mississippi River to the north, Oak Alley Street to the west, Oak Alley Lane to the south, and Oak Alley Lane to the east. Within the boundaries are three contributing buildings: 1) the two-story Greek Revival peripteral "Big House" (1837-39); 2) the one-story French Creole Overseer's House (c. 1840s); and 3) the one-story French Creole Foundation Office (c. 1820s) with a c. 1910 addition. In addition, there is one non-contributing building, a one-story c. 1925 garage located east of the Big House, and one non-contributing site, a small c. 1940s cemetery located west of the Big House. The site retains its overall rural character as well as an allée of 28 live oaks lining the approach from the river to the Big House. All three contributing buildings retain a high degree of historic integrity, including their defining architectural features and their locations and spatial relationship to each other within the context of the plantation site. Minor modifications to the buildings do not significantly detract from the site's eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Big House at Oak Alley Plantation is significant under Criterion C at the state level in the area of architecture as a rare and particularly fine example of a peripteral-style plantation house with a regional blend of the French Colonial, Federal, and Greek Revival features that is unique to south Louisiana. The property's Foundation Office (c. 1820s) and Overseer's House (c. 1840s) are significant under Criterion C at the state level in the area of architecture as rare surviving examples of French Creole architecture in St. James Parish, which at one time had easily over one hundred examples. The Foundation Office and Overseer's House meet the eligibility criteria under the multiple property submission (MPS) entitled "Louisiana's French Creole Architecture." The period of significance begins in c. 1820 and ends c. 1850, encompassing the estimated construction dates of the three buildings.

Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural description of the building. He also asked for clarification as to why the original nomination did not include the existing resources that are the focus of the new proposed nomination. Allmont asked for clarification on the difference between the existing NHL designation and the new proposed NR nomination. Aidoo asked for clarification on why the period of significance does not include the entire functional use of the property. It was explained that Criterion A for Agriculture could be included as an area of significance to encompass the full period of functional significance however more research would be required to understand that context and the impact of the modern intrusions at the rear of the property.

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

Keith Finley then moved that the nomination be recommended to the SHPO, and Marty Young seconded. The motion passed with one abstention from Fallon Aidoo.

### Mollere House, Tangipahoa Parish

Presented by Bailey Hall, National Register Coordinator

The Mollere House was constructed near LA Hwy 22 in Ponchatoula, Louisiana in 1958. It is situated in a large cleared lot on a level plateau surrounded by dense woods, with quiet residential Beach Road to the East, Hwy 22 to the North, and the Tangipahoa River to the West, with the house overlooking the river. Historic aerial photographs show that the hardwood forest was left intact in the entirety of the site with the exception of the house's own footprint. It is a single-story, single-family dwelling, whose original purpose was primarily as a vacation retreat for the Mollere family. It was constructed on a concrete slab foundation and lifted onto four structural pillars that are located in the interior of the building and dually function as closets. The exterior walls are primarily formed by large sheets of glass, with masonry and wood sections for added support. The roof is a

unique design by Albert Ledner, a “space frame” created from small section lumber and metal ties, and hoisted onto wooden support posts situated in the interior of the house. Ledner designed the house in the Modern style. Influenced by Wrightian ideas, Ledner forged his own unique design philosophy, with this house being an excellent example of a transitional work from early in his career. The only major alterations to the building have been the addition of a bathroom, a bedroom, and a dining room with the existing screened footprint. Overall, it retains its character defining features and historic integrity.

The Mollere house qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria C for Architecture. The Mollere House is architecturally significant for Modernism on a local and statewide level and represents the work of a master, Albert Ledner. The house is a representative work of Ledner, who was a well-respected Louisiana architect. The Mollere House has design and engineering elements which are representative of Ledner’s unique approach to structural design and his inventive use of materials in unexpected ways. The building is well preserved, retaining its important character defining features from its year of construction in 1958.

Carriker asked committee members for questions and comments. Guy Carwile offered suggestions for the architectural description of the building. Ava Alltmont asked for clarification on the NPS return process and how/why the nomination was presented to the committee for a second time. Fallon Aidoo suggested adding a focus on the material uniqueness of the resource and how that fits into the architect’s overall portfolio allowing this to stand out among his other residential works.

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

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

Closing Announcements:

Ms. Hall announced the 2026 meeting dates: March 26, July 30, and December 3, 2026. Hall also announced the dates of the 2026 Louisiana Preservation Conference in Hammond, LA for March 26-27, 2026 and encouraged members and students to attend. At the request of the committee, Ms. Hall then listed all Louisiana nominations that were successfully listed in the National Register in 2025.

The next National Register Review Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2026.

Adjournment: 1:30 PM