



CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Historic District Landmarks Commission

Holy Cross Historic District



Designated 1990
Jurisdiction: New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission
The Holy Cross Historic District is roughly bounded by Burgundy Street, Delery Street, the Mississippi River and the Industrial Canal.

The Holy Cross Historic District represents the final eastward (downriver) expansion of the City of New Orleans on what was subdivided plantation land. Development of the area began in earnest around 1850. In 1849 the Brothers, Priests and Sisters of Holy Cross established an orphanage. In 1871, they founded a school to serve the growing population, which was a mix of various immigrant groups, native-born Americans, and included free people of color. The school would become Holy Cross High School, giving the neighborhood its current name.

The parcels created in the subdivision of land in Holy Cross were of a larger size than those found in the Marigny and Bywater. Many of the lots were used for small farms, providing produce to New Orleans’ markets into the 1940s. As a result of its lower density, Holy Cross feels more like a village on the edge of a large city. This

distinction was reinforced by the dredging of the Industrial Canal at the District’s western end from 1912-1923, separating Holy Cross from the Bywater neighborhood. The area below the canal, including Holy Cross, became known as the “Lower Ninth Ward.”

Neighborhood Landmarks include the Holy Cross School, the Romanesque Revival St. Maurice Church and two identical Doullut houses (often called the “Steamboat” houses). These houses were built to resemble high-style steamboats and were among the first Landmarks designated by the HDLC.¹

¹ Information taken from the Holy Cross National Register of Historic Places Nomination and materials of the Preservation Resource Center.



The Holy Cross School Building is an Italianate Landmark



The Romanesque Revival St. Maurice Church is a neighborhood focal point



The Doullut houses were constructed to resemble steamships

LOCAL CULTURE

- The Holy Cross School building, built in 1895, is a 3-story brick Landmark with decorative cast iron galleries
- The Romanesque Revival St. Maurice Church was constructed in the late 19th century and is a Landmark

- The two nearly identical Doullut houses, designed to resemble steamships, are the most significant residences in the District and among the first designated HDLC Landmarks



Off-street parking is provided along the side yards of many houses



On some blocks, homes are close together and adjacent to the sidewalk



This Italianate center hall features a lush garden and enclosed yard

URBAN FORM

Setting/Landscape

- Setbacks, lot coverage and the size of lots varies in different areas of the District
- Most homes are set back from the street with narrow front yards
- On some blocks, buildings are set directly on the street, very close together, with a few shallow front yards and no off-street parking
- Some of the larger parcels include substantial rear or side yards and off street parking
- On the majority of blocks, sidewalks are separated from roadways by a grass strip
- Street trees, yards with trees, shrubs and grass are prevalent, although there are no grand public squares

Massing/Form

- The majority of the buildings are residential, single story, raised above grade, and of wood construction with gabled or hipped roofs
- Some 2-story houses exist, typically in early 20th century eclectic styles

Styles/Types

- Styles commonly found in the District include Creole, Greek Revival, Italianate, Eastlake and Arts and Crafts
- 20th century eclectic buildings such as neo-classical, Colonial and Mission styles are scattered within the District with a concentration of more recent construction to the north towards Burgundy Street
- The District also includes pockets of ranch style homes and some more recent new construction
- Shotgun houses are the primary building type
- Bungalows are generally 1-story in height, with some raised several feet above grade
- Institutional buildings are typically of brick construction, or brick covered with stucco

Public Spaces

- The Holy Cross neighborhood is fortunate to have access to a walking path along the levee

Commercial/Industrial

- Commercial buildings are scattered within the District, generally located on street corners, maintaining the neighborhood's residential character

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© Prepared by Dominique M. Hawkins, AIA, LEED AP of Preservation Design Partnership, LLC in Philadelphia, PA, and Catherine E. Barrier.