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Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
Louisiana

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
Percy-Lobdell Building
Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center
Cultural Landscape Report

Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division
Interior Region 2: South Atlantic-Gulf

Percy-Lobdell Building
Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Cultural Landscape Report

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Prepared by
WLA Studio

Under the direction of
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Interior Region 2: South Atlantic – Gulf
Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division

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About the cover: The pier and boardwalk overlooking Bayou Lafourche at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center allow visitors to get close to the water's edge. Image by WLA Studio, January 2020.

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Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

Percy-Lobdell Building Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Cultural Landscape Report

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this cultural landscape report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the landscapes and historic structures of National Park Service units in the Southeast Region. A number of individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank the staff at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve for their assistance throughout the process. We hope this study will be a useful tool for park management in continuing efforts to preserve the cultural landscape and to others interested in the significance of the park's many cultural resources.

Barbara Judy,

Program Manager, Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science Division

Interior Region 2: South Atlantic – Gulf

July 2023

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Introduction

Management Summary

This Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) is for the Percy-Lobdell Building and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, a unit of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, located in downtown Thibodaux, Louisiana, on the south bank of Bayou Lafourche in Lafourche Parish. The study area for this CLR includes the entirety of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site.

The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-625) created Jean Laffite National Historical Park and Preserve (JELA). The legislation stated that the park's purpose was "to preserve… significant examples of natural and historical resources of the Mississippi Delta region and to provide for their interpretation in such a manner as to portray the development of cultural diversity in the region."[1] Public Law 100-250, passed by Congress in 1988, amended the establishing legislation to authorize the formation of several folklife centers in the region as part of JELA. The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center is one of these folklife centers.

JELA adopted a General Management Plan/ Development Concept Plan (1982 GMP) in July 1982.[2] It was amended in 1995 (1995 GMPA) to deal with several changes to the park, including the development of the folklife centers. The Acadian Unit was created to recognize "the contributions of the Acadian culture to the Mississippi Delta" according to the GMPA.[3] The Acadian Unit consists of three cultural centers in southern Louisiana. The cultural center in Thibodaux was "dedicated to the interpretation of wetlands Acadian culture."[4]

The primary historic resource on the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site is the National Register of Historic Places-listed Percy-Lobdell Building, a former wholesale grocery warehouse and distribution center constructed circa 1905-1906. The documentation for the Percy-Lobdell Building was accepted by the National Register of Historic Places on March 5, 1986. According to the National Register of Historic Places, the Percy-Lobdell Building is a contributing resource in the areas of commerce and architecture in the Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area.) The Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area includes "fifteen individual buildings ranging in date from the antebellum period through the 1920s."[5] Of those fifteen structures, the Percy-Lobdell Building is the only listed structure within the project area.

Description of Study Boundaries

The focus of this study is the Percy-Lobdell Building/Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve located at 314 St Mary St., Thibodaux, LA 70301. The north boundary of the study area is defined by Bayou Lafourche. The eastern boundary of the study area is marked by West 1st Street. St Mary Street is the southern boundary, and Art Street is the western boundary. The entire site is approximately 5 acres, mostly rectangular in shape, with a long extension of the site to the northeast along the bayou.

1. Robert W. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve* (Atlanta: Cultural Resources Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 2012), 104.
2. National Park Service, *General Management Plan/ Development Concept Plan* (New Orleans: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, 1982).
3. National Park Service, *Amendment to the General Management Plan* (New Orleans: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, 1995), 29.
4. "Amendment to the General Management Plan: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve" (National Park Service, Denver Service Center, April 1995), 46.
5. Ibid.

Historical Overview

The Lafourche subdelta, on which the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center is located, is a remarkably young landform which began its creation a mere 1,600 years ago. Historically humans have occupied the higher ground along natural levees, leaving much of the uninhabitable swampland undeveloped. Native Americans of Louisiana utilized the abundant resources created by the natural processes of the river and the resultant communities of flora and fauna. They made minor changes to the natural systems, including clearing of trees to create open spaces for small-scale agriculture, as well as the construction of earthen mounds, such as at Poverty Point and Marksville. The same areas lived in by Native Americans attracted Europeans once they arrived in the region in the late 1600s. Most colonial settlement also occurred along natural levees, where the soils were better drained than the more clayey inland soils, making the area better suited for agriculture. These European immigrants encountered a dense native bottomland hardwood forest along the natural levee and cleared the ash, oak, cottonwood, and hackberry trees to make way for their fields.[6]

By the time that Europeans established themselves in the region, the native population had dwindled, likely from diseases introduced by the early explorers. France began to develop the area in the early 1700s and by 1711 present-day Louisiana was a French colony. Almost immediately upon colonizing the area, the French enslaved people for labor, capturing Native Americans, including Chitimachas, and importing Africans from other French controlled colonies.[7]

In 1762, France ceded control of Louisiana to Spain as part of the Treaty of Fontainebleau. Spain did not take possession of the colony until 1769. The Spanish government promoted Louisiana to immigrants, inviting exiled Acadians to settle the lands along the Mississippi in the 1760s.[8] Acadians were French occupants of the New France colony in the early 1600s in present-day New Brunswick, Canada. During the French and Indian War (1756-1763), the British expelled the settlers in 1758, an event known as the "Expulsion of the Acadians." Some Acadians went to England and others to France, only to later sail back to North America to resettle in present-day Louisiana.

The first-generation of Acadians settlers in Louisiana were subsistence farmers, hunters, trappers, and fisherman. The alluvial soils provided cultivable lands attractive to the Acadian settlers, who established dispersed settlements made up of small clusters of houses and fields along the natural levees of the bayou. The French-speaking Acadians, who later came to be known as Cajuns, were characterized by their strong community ties, Catholic faith, and self-sufficient lifestyles.[9] Early Acadians rarely produced cash crops, as it was not necessary for their traditional subsistence lifestyle. In addition to French and Spanish immigrants, a myriad of other Europeans-- including English, Italians, Irish, Germans, and others-- also settled in Louisiana during this period. These groups assimilated more quickly, intermarrying and blending their cultural values in a way that differed from the more cohesive Acadian/Cajun culture.[10]

The late 1700s and early 1800s also saw an influx of investors in southern Louisiana. Enterprising capitalists came to south Louisiana seeking to build wealth by developing cash crop producing plantations, further expanding the practice of slavery in Louisiana.[11]

France reacquired Louisiana from Spain in 1800, though it did not reestablish an active government prior to 1803, the year that France sold Louisiana to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Louisiana entered the Union in 1812 as a slave state, and the sugar industry's growth depended upon a steady increase in

6. Goodspeed Publishing Company, *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana* (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1892), 240.
7. David R.M. White, *'Cultural Gumbo'? An Ethnographic Overview of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta and Selected Adjacent Areas*, (New Orleans: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, 1998), 14.
8. Christopher G. Pena, Scarred By War: Civil War in Southeast Louisiana (Bloomington: Authorhouse, 2004), 15.
9. Carl A. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877* (University Press of Mississippi,1992), 21.
10. John P. Doucet, "Genetics and Louisiana Acadian History," in *Lafourche Country III*, edited by Stephen S. Michot and John P. Doucet, (Thibodaux: Lafourche Heritage Society, 2010), 65.
11. John C. Rodrigue, "Slavery in Spanish Colonial Louisiana," *64 Parishes*, Accessed July 7, 2020, https://64parishes.org/entry/slavery-in-spanish-colonial-louisiana.

enslaved laborers. The planter class in Louisiana began to grow sugar cane because a rise in the demand for sugar, initially in Europe, increased its value as a cash crop and because technological advances allowed for large-scale commercial manufacturing.[12] Planters in Louisiana rushed to increase the number of acres devoted to sugar cane cultivation, and by 1853, they accounted for a quarter of the world's sugar production.[13]

Even though settlement of the area around Bayou Lafourche by European colonists and enslaved African people began in the mid-1700s, it was not until the 1820s-1830s that the first substantial town, Thibodaux, developed in this area of Louisiana. Through the first half of the 1800s, settlements scattered alongside the banks of Bayou Lafourche were typically small farms, on which the residents, still mostly Acadians, grew typical food crops, including corn, potatoes, onions, peas, beans, and hay.[14] The common term for these Acadians was *petit habitants,* meaning small farmers.

The town of Thibodaux, the modern-day parish seat of Lafourche Parish and the location of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, was named for the planter Henry Schuyler Thibodaux, an Acadian orphan raised by English-speaking (Anglo) Americans who acquired land in the area in the early 1800s.

In the antebellum period, the town of Thibodaux became an important commercial center along Bayou Lafourche. Bayou Lafourche provided a navigable route from Thibodaux north to the Mississippi River and south to the Gulf of Mexico. Bayou Lafourche was the center of the sugar belt between 1820 and 1860; and Thibodaux's growth as a commercial center was "directly linked to that of agriculture, principally sugar."[15] In 1846, present-day Church Street formed the boundary between the town of Thibodaux and George Seth Guion's Ridgefield Plantation. In 1846, Guion had E. D. Richardson lay out several lots west of Church Street on the edge of the town limits. Most of these lots became commercial and industrial sites. The use of land for industrial purposes in Thibodaux is indicative of the city's growth as a manufacturing town that supported local farms by fabricating agricultural equipment, such as boilers, related to sugar production.

Between 1846 and the construction of the Percy-Lobdell Building in 1905-1906, six parcels laid out by Guion (currently contained within the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit) were used by skilled tradesmen and their families as places of home and work, with a cooperage, foundry, sawmill, and other industrial production facilities located among modest residential dwellings. The parcels were bound on the west and south by city streets (St. Mary Street and Ice Street). To the east, the block was bound by a railroad line and Church Street. On the north, the block was bound by the bayou, a public road, and eventually a railroad spur track.

For a fifteen-year period between 1905 and 1920, the study area was influenced by the successful operation of the Lobdell Company, Ltd./Percy-Lobdell Company, Ltd. grocery warehousing business, owned by Peter Randolph Percy (1872-1950) and John Little Lobdell, Jr., (1848-1910). The two acquired much of the site area for their operations. There continued to be other industrial activities on the site during this period, including the Thibodaux Boiler Works foundry and machine shop owned by Ozeme Naquin, as well as railroad depots and spur tracks.

In February 1921, Interstate Wholesale Grocers, Inc. bought Percy-Lobdell Company, Limited. The Percy-Lobdell branch of Interstate Wholesale Grocers remained in operation in the building into the 1960s. In 1980, Martha Sowell Utley, a local activist and philanthropist, founded the Martha

12. Barbara Holmes, *Historic Resources Study: The Barataria Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park* (Santa Fe: Division of History, Southwest Region, National Park Service, 1986), 67.
13. Richard Follett, *The Sugar Masters: Planters and Slaves in Louisiana's Cane World, 1820-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 22.
14. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, *Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana* (New Orleans: Department of the Army, New Orleans District, 1984), 23.
15. National Register Staff Division of Historic Preservation, State of Louisiana, "National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form, Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Partial inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties)," Certified by State Historic Preservation Officer January 23, 1986, Section 8, page 3.

Sowell Utley Memorial Library Trust to fund the construction of a public library and cultural center in Thibodaux.[16] The Utley Memorial Library Trust purchased the Percy-Lobdell Building and surrounding property in 1982.[17] Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc., a non-profit community theater established in 1960, began using a portion of the building shortly after and still holds performances on site.[18] The Percy-Lobdell Building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986, and in that year, the Utley Memorial Trust donated the property to the Friends of the Library, Inc., Thibodaux Chapter, stipulating that the existing Percy-Lobdell Building be used as a library or cultural center. The Friends of the Library leased the building to the Lafourche Parish Council for twelve years for use as a library.[19]

The Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve had been authorized in 1978 as a non-contiguous collection of six separate sites in Louisiana's Mississippi Delta region. In 1985, National Park Service (NPS) staff presented a proposal to the Delta Region Preservation Commission for the creation of three Acadian Cultural Centers, including one in Thibodaux, following initiatives by state representatives and local governments.[20] While the Friends of the Library were renovating the Percy-Lobdell Building, NPS officials met with Thibodaux authorities and proposed the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center be located there. A 1988 amendment to JELA's enabling legislation authorized the creation of Acadian Cultural Centers in the region. The stated purpose of the cultural centers was to interpret the historic importance of Acadians (Cajuns).[21] The NPS signed a cooperative agreement with the Friends of the Library in February 1986, agreeing to work together on exhibits and programs in the building.[22]

In November 1988, the Friends of the Library, Inc., donated the property to the NPS as a unit of JELA, stipulating that the second floor be used as a public library for the next fifty years.[23] In 1990, the NPS began rehabilitation of the Percy-Lobdell Building and surrounding site. The NPS cleared and re-graded the site, and added a parking area, building additions including a large auditorium, walkways and boardwalk, plaza area, and landscape plantings. The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center of JELA opened in the building on November 21, 1992. The site currently houses a museum, interpretive and cultural activities, and a performance space.

The site history section of this report organizes the site into periods of development. These periods reflect general changes in occupation or land use.

These periods are:

- Native American History Prior to 1542
- Colonial Period (1542-1803)
- Early American Period and Development of Thibodaux Area (1803-1905)
- Percy-Lobdell Company Period & Twentieth Century Development of Site (1905-1982)
- Lafourche Parish Public Library Period (1982-1988)
- National Park Service Period (1988-present)

16. "Building Program for the proposed Martha Sowell Utley Memorial Library and Cultural Center" (Omega Synergistics, Inc., c.1982), 3.
17. Thurston H. G Hahn III, H*istorical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana* (New Orleans: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, 1992), 62.
18. "A Place to Call Home," Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc., accessed 16 February 2018, http://www.thibodauxplayhouse.com/a-place-to-call-home.
19. Hahn, Historical and Archeological Investigations, 62.
20. Robert W. Blythe, Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (Atlanta: National Park Service, 2012), 159-161.
21. Blythe, *Administrative History,* 157.
22. Blythe, *Administrative History*, 166.
23. Hahn, *Historical and Archeological Investigations*, 63.

Scope of Work and Methodology

The statement of work for this project was a modification of an existing project to develop two other Cultural Landscape Reports for two other units within JELA. As stated in the project's statement of work, the park and preserve wanted "additional analysis and visioning through narrative and images, to make the NPS, partners, and the community aware of what could be done to better evoke the rich history of the Percy-Lobdell site." The statement of work states that the park and preserve "seeks…to recapture the missing history of economic and cultural activities that characterized the site during the 1870s to 1930s, when Cajun culture was preeminent and a wide range of economic activities were hosted at the site."

This report is organized into five sections, Introduction, Site History, Existing Conditions, Analysis & Evaluation, and Treatment & Use. Site History provides an overview of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center's cultural landscape and regional context. Research for the site history included consultation of both primary and secondary sources of information, including documents gathered from JELA archives, Nicholls State University Archives, and other NPS sources of information including ETIC and SEAC. Existing Conditions provides an inventory and description of cultural landscape features at the preserve, including natural and cultural resources. The inventory includes information gathered during site visits by project team members in 2019 and 2020. Analysis & Evaluation uses criteria developed by The National Register of Historic Places and *The Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* to evaluate the historic integrity of existing landscape resources. Using information gathered during site documentation field work, this CLR identifies landscape characteristics and associated features that contribute to the historic significance of the site. This CLR compares the historic condition of a particular resource with its current condition to evaluate its historic integrity. Treatment & Use outlines appropriate treatment recommendations for the historic landscape, organized by landscape characteristic.

Summary of Findings

This CLR includes National Register level significance evaluation. The evaluation is partly based on existing National Register documentation for the Percy-Lobdell Building, which is included in the National Register nomination for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area. The National Register nomination states that the building is significant at the local level for Criteria A and C for its contributions to local commerce and architecture. The nomination defines the period of significance for the entire Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area as 1846-1920s. This CLR uses 1846-1921 for the evaluation of contributing and non-contributing features of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site as a whole. Based on analysis of historic conditions and changes to the landscape since the period of significance, the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center cultural landscape does not retain sufficient integrity to the period of significance to convey its historic associations. The evaluation of landscape integrity in this CLR determined that the cultural landscape as a whole does not retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. Furthermore, the cultural landscape does not retain integrity to any historic period and the only remaining historic resource on the site is the Percy-Lobdell Building. Treatment recommendations thus direct park managers to expand the site's interpretive potential and maximize its use as a cultural center as a means of communicating the history no longer visible on the site, as well as other important regional themes.

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Site History

Introduction

Please refer to Illustrations 2.1 through 2.5 on the preceding pages that illustrate the evolution of the site from 1898 to 1932.

The Percy-Lobdell Building and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, a unit of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, is located a few blocks west of downtown Thibodaux, Louisiana on the south bank of Bayou Lafourche in Lafourche Parish. This Developmental History section provides historical background and context related to the colonization of Louisiana, the development of Thibodaux and the sugar industry, and site-specific changes over time. The primary historic resource on the site is the National Register-listed Percy-Lobdell Building, a former wholesale grocery warehouse and distribution center constructed circa 1905-1906. The Percy-Lobdell Building is listed as part of a multiple resource nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the City of Thibodaux, in which the building is categorized as a contributing resource. This section also provides an overview of the site's regional context and developmental history through its acquisition by the National Park Service in 1988. The City of Thibodaux and the NPS made extensive changes to the site in the 1980s and early 1990s; and as a result, most of the historic, cultural landscape features related to previous commercial, industrial, and residential uses of the site are no longer visible.

Mississippi Deltaic Plain

The Mississippi River Delta is a dynamic river system that has changed over many thousand years. The Mississippi River watershed drains approximately 40 percent of the lower forty-eight states. Southern Louisiana, including the region around Thibodaux, was formed and continues to be shaped by the drainage of the Mississippi River. The entirety of eastern Louisiana is within the Mississippi River Delta, which contains several deltaic lobes marking the variation of the river's path (Figure 2.1).[24]

24. Thurston Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," Cultural Resource Survey (Thibodaux, LA, 1992), 9, JELA Archives.

Figure 2.1: The Mississippi Delta represents a complex of deltaic lobes, which are remnants of the changing path of the Mississippi River over millennia (Source: JELA Geologic Resources Inventory Report, 2019).

The southern Louisiana section of the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley, which consists of the present-day Mississippi Deltaic Plain, was shaped by deltaic development beginning in the Holocene period. According to a recent study of the formation of the Lafourche subdelta, "The Holocene Mississippi River Delta began to form around 5,000 [BCE] (7 ka) as the rate of sea-level rise slowed and was ultimately outpaced by the rate of sediment delivery to the basin."[25] The current Mississippi Deltaic Plain consists of six overlapping deltaic lobes, or subdeltas, beginning with the Maringouin deltaic lobe, followed by the Teche, St. Bernard, Lafourche, Plaquemines-Belize, and Atchafalaya/Wax Lake lobes. "These subdeltas delivered their sediment load to the Mississippi basin and built land through processes of progradation into bay environments, and aggradation by overbank and crevasse deposition."[26] As the main channel of the river relocates every 1,000-2,000 years, a new deltaic lobe is formed. As the river changes course, the previous deltaic lobe is gradually abandoned. These natural processes resulted in the landmass now recognized as southern Louisiana.

After deltaic lobes are abandoned, "relict distributary channels often persist as tidally active 'bayous' that also serve to drain local precipitation, but no longer feed a fluvial depocenter. This coincides with decreased freshwater flow and increasing salinity of water within the channels."[27] Bayou Lafourche is one of these relict distributary channels.

The Lafourche subdelta, on which the Wetland Acadian Center is located, is a remarkably young landform. Recent scholarship has determined that "the Lafourche subdelta became active around [400 CE] … and shared river discharge with the modern course of the Mississippi River starting at about [600 CE-1000 CE] … until the abandonment of the Lafourche distributary network at roughly [1400 CE]."[28] As described in a recent Geologic Resources Inventory report for JELA, "The Lafourche Ridge, which underlies Thibodaux and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, is composed of a natural levee deposit…of the Lafourche delta lobe. Other deposits of the delta lobe…occur north and south of the cultural center."[29] Natural levees rise between 2 to 15 feet higher than the surrounding landscape, sloping away from the waterways toward swamps that fill the interior of the region.[30] The Percy-Lobdell Building sits atop the natural levee of Bayou Lafourche.

Given the very recent creation of the Lafourche subdelta landmass, human occupation in this area has a much shorter history than more inland areas of Louisiana, which have been "inhabited by indigenous peoples since about 11500 BCE."[31] Historically, humans occupied the higher ground along natural levees including the Lafourche Ridge, and used the uninhabitable backswamps as hunting and fishing grounds. The natural levee deposits along the Lafourche Ridge created fertile and arable land. American Indians utilized the abundant resources created by the natural processes of the river and the resultant communities of flora and fauna. They made minor changes to the natural systems, including clearing of trees to create open space for small-scale agriculture.

The same areas lived in by American Indians attracted European settlers once they arrived in the region in the late 1600s. Most colonial settlement also occurred along natural levees, where the soils were better suited for agriculture. The settlers found a native bottomland hardwood forest growing thick along the upper ridges and had to

25. Jayur Madhusudan Mehta and Elizabeth L. Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," *The Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 14, no. 4 (October 2, 2019): 456, https://doi.org/10.1080/15564894.2018.1458764.
26. Mehta and Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," 456–57.
27. Mehta and Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," 457.
28. Mehta and Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," 457.
29. CA. Shupp and K. Keller Lynn, "Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve: Geologic Resources Inventory Report," Natural Resource Report (Fort Collins, Colorado: National Park Service, 2019), 19, NPS IRMA, https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2266903.
30. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, "Port Fourchon, Louisiana Feasibility Study/ Environmental Impact Study" (New Orleans, 1994), 10.
31. Mehta and Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," 457.

clear the ash, oak, cottonwood, and magnolia trees to make way for their fields.[32]

Early into European settlement, people began to institute control measures intended to curb the natural flooding processes of the Mississippi. Beginning with the construction of artificial levees around New Orleans in the early 1700s, the Mississippi Deltaic Plain became an increasingly modified landscape in the following centuries, as engineered structures along the bayous and rivers permanently altered the natural flow of water and deposition of sediment.

Bayou Lafourche

The entire region around Thibodaux is within the Lafourche Delta Complex deltaic lobe created by Mississippi River flow through the distributary channel we now call Bayou Lafourche. Bayou Lafourche bisects the City of Thibodaux and historically served as an important transportation route through the region. French settlers gave Bayou Lafourche its name. Lafourche, French for "the fork," describes the how the bayou forks into several smaller distributary channels. The 106-mile-long distributary branches off from the Mississippi River near the modern city of Donaldsonville and flows south through Thibodaux to the Gulf of Mexico. Bayou Lafourche appears to have formed via a diversion of the Mississippi River that began about 1,600 years ago.[33]

American Indian villages were commonly located where bayous split off from one another, indicating the importance of bayous for transportation and trade. In the 1800s, the bayou became an important shipping and transportation route to and from New Orleans, leading to the founding of several communities along the bayou's edge, including present-day City of Thibodaux, which is located at the divergence of two bayous— Lafourche and Terrebonne. Because the bayous were the primary route of transportation in the region into the 1800s, most properties fronted the bayou and resulted in a unique settlement pattern with long narrow lots extending away from the bayous.[34]

Residents constructed artificial levees along Bayou Lafourche as early as 1817 to protect the communities along the bayou from seasonal flooding. As adjacent communities built levees, water levels continued to rise, eventually leading to the damming of Bayou Lafourche at Donaldsonville in 1904. The initial plans for damming the bayou included a lock system to ensure continued navigability, however this was never constructed.[35] While damming the bayou prevented flooding, it restricted access to fresh drinking water for residents and turned the bayou into a stagnant, polluted waterway.[36] The dam also lowered water levels, reducing the bayou's functionality as a shipping corridor. After a 17-mile drinking water pipeline from the Mississippi River, constructed in 1930, failed to address residents' concerns, the state built a pumping station in Donaldsonville in 1952. The pumps diverted water from the Mississippi River into the bayou and allowed officials to better regulate water flow in the bayou. In 1969, a low dam was constructed across the bayou upstream from Thibodaux to allow the waterway to be used as a back-up reservoir in case of pump station failure (such as during a hurricane).[37]

Bayou Lafourche once provided a navigable route from Thibodaux north to the Mississippi River and south to the Gulf of Mexico. The developmental history of the region and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site was centered around the bayou's function as a commercial corridor. The bayou's local cultural significance remained important even as other means of transportation superseded the bayou's commercial function.

32. *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Louisiana* (Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1892), 220.
33. Mehta and Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," 457.
34. Clifton P. Theriot, *Lafourche Parish*, Images of America (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 7.
35. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 11.
36. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 11.
37. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 11.

Native American History Prior to 1600

Early Inhabitants

The earliest human settlements in the Thibodaux area were likely along the natural levees of Bayou Lafourche. Given the very recent emergence of the Lafourche subdelta landmass, evidence of early civilizations in the Lower Lafourche area begins during the Baytown/Coastal Troyville period. Earlier Paleoindian, Archaic, Tchula, and Marksville/Woodland groups may have used the area for fishing. Recent scholarship has clarified the geochronology of the Mississippi Delta:

> The Lower Lafourche subdelta hosts numerous prehistoric archaeological sites that reflect the presence of a large prehistoric civilization… Cultures relevant to the [400-1400 CE] activity of the Lafourche subdelta include Troyville [400-700 CE] Coles Creek [400-1000 CE], Plaquemine [1000-1700 CE], and Mississippian [1200-1700 CE]…Indigenous societies of the Mississippi Delta were largely hunter-fisher-gatherer societies until [1200 CE] after which introduced cultigens, like maize, became minor components of the diets of some delta foragers…Insight into the dwelling patterns of prehistoric indigenous people is limited in the Mississippi Delta because few (if any) structures or buildings have been excavated.[38]

The most recent archeological studies within the site area were conducted in 1996, at which point no Native American sites were found or known to be within the immediate vicinity.

Baytown/Coastal Troyville Period (300-700 CE)

The region's ecologically diverse landscape supplied generations of Native Americans a place in which to develop extensive cultural traditions. Baytown or Coastal Troyville period, people developed grog-tempered ceramics and specific point types. Consistent with earlier groups, their settlements were located near water, often along bayous and streams. Earthen mound building continued, as earlier groups had practiced, but became less common, leading Goodwin to describe this as a "period of decline following the Marksville ceremonial mound building."[39]

Coles Creek Period (700-1,200 CE)

Human activity in the Lower Mississippi Valley, including Bayou Lafourche, increased during the Coles Creek period. Similar to their predecessors, Coles Creek sites are typically located on higher ground along natural levees, often where distributaries split.[40] This fact would suggest that groups may have been in the vicinity of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site, as it is near the historic bifurcation of bayous Lafourche and Terrebonne. The archeological evidence of the Coles Creek culture suggests a complex social hierarchy, extensive exchange networks, and more diversified settlement patterns. Significant also during this period is the use of the bow and arrow in place of the dart and atlatl tools for hunting.[41] Evidence of their settlements also includes examples of small villages with clusters of houses. Some of the more extensive settlement sites include large ceremonial centers with platforms, mounds, and plazas. Other Cole Creek occupation sites lack some of the more complex settlement features, like mounds, but are evidenced by shell middens.[42] The mounds found in settlements were flat-topped, pyramidal, and used to support a structure. While there is no evidence that Cole Creek people practiced agriculture, Goodwin observes they occupied land that was certainly suitable for growing food.[43] [44]

Plaquemine/Mississippian Period (1,200-1,542 CE)

Mississippian or Plaquemine period peoples occupied the "Lower Mississippi River Valley from the Gulf Coast to just south of the mouth of the

38. Elizabeth L. Chamberlain et al., "A Geoarchaeological Perspective on the Challenges and Trajectories of Mississippi Delta Communities," Geomorphology 360 (July 1, 2020): 3, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geomorph.2020.107132.
39. Goodwin, *Archeological Assessment of the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park,* 44.
40. Hardy, "Trip Report Describing Activities Associated with Archeological Survey (2018)," 4.
41. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 36.
42. Goodwin, *Archeological Assessment of the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park,* 45.
43. Goodwin, *Archeological Assessment of the Barataria Unit, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park,* 7.
44. This statement is contradicted by Hahn, who states that corn found at a few Coles Creek sites suggests agricultural practices. See Hahn, *Historical and Archaeological Investigations*, 36.

Arkansas River. From west to east, sites are present in the lower Ouachita and Red River Valleys."[45] This includes the area around of the present-day Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center. Hardy describes Plaquemine ceremonial centers as having "large flat-topped earthen mounds, built in stages around an open plaza." Their houses, built on mounds, were both rectangular and circular.[46]

A recent study of the Grand Caillou earthen mound site about 30 miles south of Thibodaux found that the mound, constructed on the high ground of a natural levee, was occupied between 1000-1400 CE. The authors attribute the site to the Barataria phase of the Plaquemine culture (dating to 1200-1450 CE).[47] The occupation began a few hundred years after the formation of the landmass, when vegetation and animal communities were sufficient to support human activities; and vacated around the time that the Lafourche subdelta became an abandoned distributary. The study concludes that this occupation was closely aligned with the formation and abandonment of the subdelta, demonstrating a close relationship between these populations and river delta conditions.[48]

Prior to the arrival of European explorers and settlers, local American Indian tribes in the area included the Ouacha (or Washa), Tchauhachas (sometimes written as Chaouacha or Chawasha), and Chitimacha.[49] Additionally, the Houma tribe eventually migrated through the Bayou Lafourche area from their territory in present-day Baton Rouge.[50] Hahn states that there are no known sites related to these tribal groups near the project area, but given the proximity of the site to bayous Lafourche and Terrebonne, it is highly likely the site was used by these groups.

45. "Plaquemine Culture," 64 Parishes, Accessed July 8, 2020, https://64parishes.org/entry/plaquemine-culture.
46. Hardy, "Trip Report Describing Activities Associated with Archeological Survey (2018)," 5.
47. Mehta and Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," 453.
48. Mehta and Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," 453.
49. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 17.
50. David M. White, "'Cultural Gumbo'? An Ethnographic Overview of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta" (New Orleans: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, 1998), 13, JELA Archives.

Colonial Period (1542–1803)

Spanish and French Exploration and Colonization

European exploration of the region began with Hernando De Soto's expedition across the Southeast toward the Mississippi River. After De Soto's death in 1542, Luis Moscoso de Alvarado led the expedition down the Mississippi River, reaching its mouth in late July or early August in 1543.[51] According to Nicholas Spitzer, the Ouacha and Tchauhacha people may have been involved in an attack on members of the De Soto/Alvarado expedition.[52]

Over 100 years later, French explorer Rene-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, traveled down the Mississippi in 1682 and named the region Louisiana to honor France's King Louis XIV.[53] A few years later, in 1699, French explorer Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, traveled up the Mississippi River and recorded the first mention of Bayou Lafourche.[54] The Chitimachas tribe were located "between Bayou Lafourche, Bayou Teche, and the Gulf of Mexico" at the time of French arrival.[55] Early explorers of the region called Bayou Lafourche "La Rivière de Chetimaches" or "La Forche de Chitimaches" after the American Indian inhabitants (Figure 2.2).

The nearest Ouachas groups were located in Assumption Parish north of Thibodaux. Similar to earlier indigenous groups, the Ouacha "lived along natural levees [with a] mixed economy of hunting, gathering, and agriculture" as described by historian Michael Follet.[56] In 1699 their central village was above the Tchauhacha town on Bayou Lafourche near present-day Labadieville, 8 miles north of Thibodaux. This would place a group of Tchauhachas somewhere near present-day

51. National Park Service Southeast Regional Office, "De Soto Trail: National Historic Trail Study," 1990, 23.
52. White, "'Cultural Gumbo'? An Ethnographic Overview of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta," 69, 77.
53. Christopher G. Pena, *Scarred by War: Civil War in Southeast Louisiana* (Bloomington: Authorhouse, 2004), 14.
54. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 17.
55. White, "'Cultural Gumbo'? An Ethnographic Overview of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta," 14.
56. Michael Foret, "Native Americans of the Lafourche Country 1543-1996," in *Lafourche Country*, vol. II (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Heritage Society, 1996), 14.

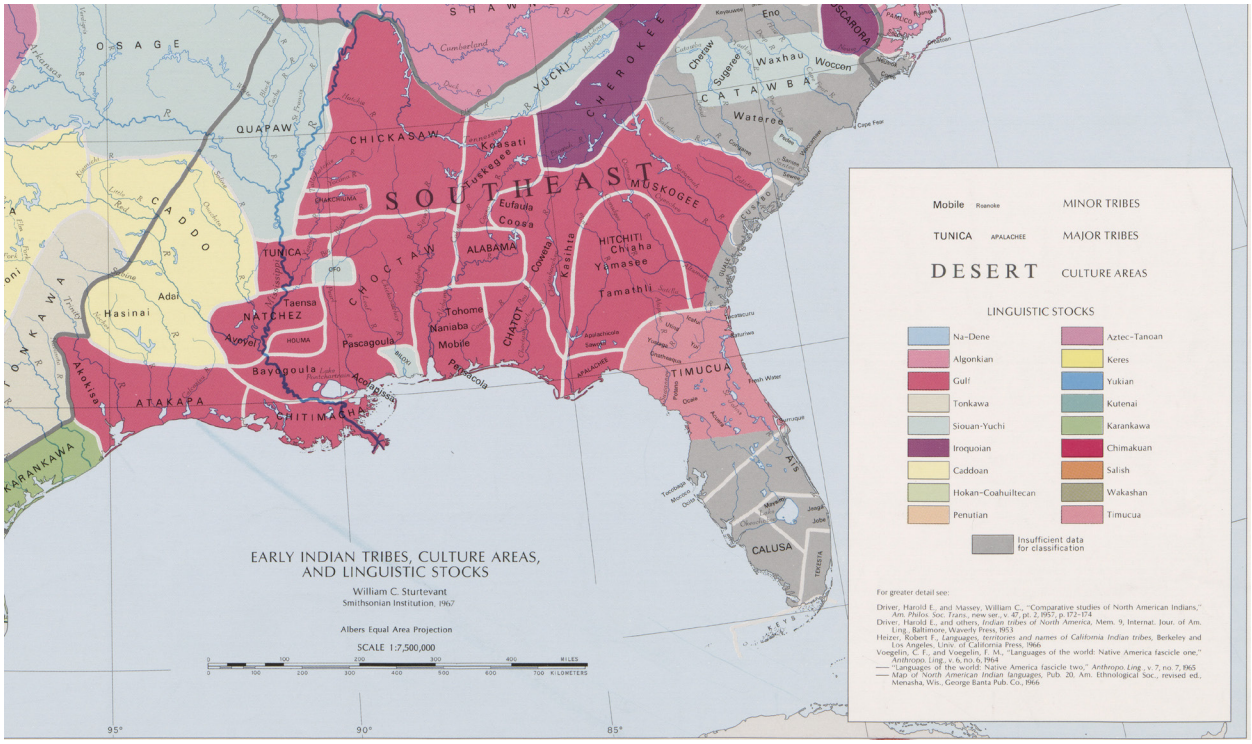

Figure 2.2: Portion of a national atlas of early Indian tribes, cultures, and languages in the United States produced in 1967. The site area was historically within "Chitimacha" territory (Source: Library of Congress http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3701e.ct003648r).

Thibodaux. The Tchauhachas were reportedly culturally similar to the Ouachas.[57]

By the time that Europeans settled the region, the native population had dwindled, likely from diseases introduced by the early explorers. France began to develop the area in the early 1700s and by 1711 Louisiana was a French colony. Almost immediately upon colonizing the area the French enslaved people for labor, capturing American Indians, including Chitimachas, and importing Africans from other French controlled colonies.[58]

The Houmas reportedly worked well with the French colonists and were instrumental in their settlement efforts, working as intermediaries between the French and other indigenous groups. The Houmas were a mobile, dispersed group and changed locations multiple times in the 1700s around the Lafourche Valley.[59] Ouachas and other American Indian groups may have merged with the Houma after their populations vastly decreased from violence and disease in the colonial period.[60]

The French founded New Orleans in 1718, the second oldest European settlement in the Louisiana Purchase after Natchitoches. By the 1720s and continuing into the 1750s, French, German, and Swiss settlers moved into the region with the encouragement of the French government, but only a few settlements were established along the upper reaches of Bayou Lafourche. Some German and Swiss immigrants made it to coastal Louisiana and Alabama in 1720 via a ship led by businessman John Law. Law's business scheme to draw the settlers into indentured servitude went bankrupt during the voyage, stranding the settlers on the coast. [61] Their independent settlements formed what came to be known as the "German Coast" when the settlers eventually found their way to St. James Parish north of Lafourche.[62] Population increased slightly in the first half of the 1700s. The colony was not self-sufficient in

57. Foret, "Native Americans of the Lafourche Country 1543-1996," 14.
58. White, "'Cultural Gumbo'? An Ethnographic Overview of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta," 14.
59. Foret, "Native Americans of the Lafourche Country 1543-1996," 17.
60. White, "'Cultural Gumbo'? An Ethnographic Overview of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta," 77.
61. Robert B. Looper, "Migration Patterns into the Lafourche Country," in *Lafourche Country*, vol. II (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Heritage Society, 1996), 10.
62. Looper, "Migration Patterns into the Lafourche Country," 12.

food production, though by this time they were increasing production of several important crops, including cotton, tobacco, indigo, corn, rice and vegetables.[63] By 1750 Louisiana's population numbered nearly 5,000 free settlers and 2,000 enslaved people. [64]

Spanish Period

In 1762, France ceded control of Louisiana to Spain as part of the Treaty of Fontainebleau. Spain did not take possession of the colony until 1769.

One early group of settlers in the region during this period were Acadians, who arrived in Louisiana sometime between French and Spanish rule in the late 1750s and early 1760s. Acadians were French occupants of the New France colony in the early 1600s in present-day New Brunswick, Canada. During the French and Indian War (1756-1763), the British expelled the settlers in 1758, an event known as the "Expulsion of the Acadians." Some Acadians went to England and others to France, only to later sail back to North America to resettle in present-day Louisiana.

The Spanish government promoted Louisiana to immigrants, inviting the exiled Acadians to settle the lands along the Mississippi in the 1760s.[65] Including these early Acadian settlers, there were 11,000 people living in Louisiana by 1763. [66] Hoping to bolster their ability to defend their colony, the Spanish government also brought in soldiers and their families from their colony on the Canary Islands in 1779. Spain established four colonies for the immigrants, who were known as Isleños, adding 2,400 people to the area.[67] According to William de Marigny Hyland, parish historian of St. Bernard Parish, the Spanish governor Bernardo de Gálvez selected five settlement locations for the Isleños that "fronted waterways that ultimately connected the Mississippi River to waterways or bodies of water leading to the Gulf of Mexico. The waterways were strategically significant, because an invading force could sail through them, reach the Mississippi River and potentially capture New Orleans. . . ."[68] One of the Isleños colonies, named Valenzuela, was located along upper Bayou Lafourche near present-day Donaldsonville. Soon after, a second group of Acadians living in exile in France traveled to Louisiana in 1785 and settled along Bayou Lafourche south of Valenzuela.[69] In 1794, a second wave of 277 Acadians moved to the Lafourche area from Thompson Creek. "By 1798, there were 1,719 'persons' and 274 slaves living along Bayou Lafourche."[70] In total, between 2,500 and 3,000 Acadians arrived in Louisiana between 1764 and 1803.[71]

The Spanish welcomed the Catholic Acadians, providing them with land grants upon their arrival, which included a "subsistence allowance, the means to build houses, and equipment for farming."[72] According to Robert Looper, "The Spanish were interested in developing their Louisiana territory by populating it, as opposed to the French philosophy of exploitation of the land."[73] This arrangement was not entirely benevolent, however, as when the Spanish forced a later group of Acadians to settle near New Orleans in order to prevent British expansion into the area.

The first-generation of Acadians settlers in Louisiana were subsistence farmers, hunters, trappers, and fisherman. The alluvial soils provided cultivable lands attractive to the Acadian settlers, who established dispersed settlements made up of small clusters of houses and fields on the natural levee along the bayou. Most Acadian properties fronted the bayou, which divided the land into narrow strips measured in *arpents* (approximately

63. Christopher Goodwin, "Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana" (New Orleans: Department of the Army, New Orleans District, 1984), 20.
64. Looper, "Migration Patterns into the Lafourche Country," 10.
65. Pena, *Scarred by War: Civil War in Southeast Louisiana*, 15.
66. Looper, "Migration Patterns into the Lafourche Country," 10.
67. Edward J. Domangue, Jr., "The Spanish Community of Bayou Lafourche," in *Lafourche Country*, vol. II (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Heritage Society, 1996), 42.
68. William de Marigny Hyland, "Los Isleños—A Historic Overview," *Los Islenos Heritage and Cultural Society*, accessed on October 8, 2020, www.https://www.losislenos.org/history/.
69. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 18.
70. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 19.
71. Carl A. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1992), 4.
72. Looper, "Migration Patterns into the Lafourche Country," 11.
73. Looper, "Migration Patterns into the Lafourche Country," 11.

Figure 2.3: Illustration of a typical Acadian dwelling produced in 1867 for Harper's Weekly (Source: The Historic New Orleans Collection, The L. Kemper and Leila Moore Williams Founders Collection, 1965.52).

192 feet) extending out from the waters' edge.[74] The Acadian inhabitants of these narrow strips of land, known as 'long lots' or 'ribbon farms,' were known as *petit habitants*.

The *petit habitants* possessed relatively small landholdings per family, but this was sufficient for subsistence farming and allowed families to live comfortably and enjoy leisure time. The families typically lived in one- or two-room cabins built of cypress logs with earthen nogging formed from Spanish moss and mud, a construction technique known as *bousillage-entre-poteaux* (Figure 2.3).[75]

Acadian communities would be transformed in the decades following the Louisiana Purchase as American immigrants flooded the region bringing new political, social, and economic attitudes. The late 1700s and early 1800s saw a drastic increase in the scale of plantation farming and slavery in Louisiana, fueled by the rise of the sugar and cotton industries. A slave revolt in French St. Domingue (modern Haiti) in 1791 opened up market share for sugar planters in southern Louisiana, leading to an influx of planters and Africans they enslaved from that colony. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 also led to the rapid growth of cotton plantations in the northern and western portions of Louisiana.[76]

The early generations of Acadians seemingly had no interest in the enslavement practices of their neighbors. By the second and third generations, an ideological split developed between Acadians who wished to continue their subsistence lifeways and those who became interested in pursuing material wealth through cash crop production.

Acadian, Anglo, Creole, and Cajun

There are several terms of cultural identity unique to Louisiana, a product of the state's complex history. These terms are confusing, as meanings have changed throughout history and there are not clear and definitive boundaries for their use. This report presents a brief summary of these terms as defined by some respected historians of the region and its history, and this summary is not intended to be a definitive resource, but rather serves to clarify the use of these terms in the context of the report.

74. Theriot, *Lafourche Parish*, 7.
75. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 27.
76. John C. Rodrigue, "Slavery in Spanish Colonial Louisiana," *64 Parishes*, Accessed July 7, 2020, https://64parishes.org/entry/slavery-in-spanish-colonial-louisiana.

Anglo-American or Anglos

A term often used in antebellum Louisiana to refer to upper-class English-speaking Protestant immigrants to Louisiana, including American and English-speaking Europeans, in contrast to the French-speaking Creoles of the area. Mostly fell out of use by 1860 as English speakers came to dominate the population.[77]

Creole

Creole is a particularly confusing and controversial term. Historian Robert W. Blythe summarizes the complexity of the term, emphasizing that context is essential to understand its meaning:

> The English "creole" comes from the French creole, which in turn derives from the Spanish criollo. Recent research indicates that the term criollo came into use as early as the 1560s in Spanish colonies and was at first used to distinguish slaves born in the West Indies from those born in Africa. In the French colony of Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti) by the seventeenth century, creole meant simply native-born, and the term was applied to anyone born in the West Indies of European, African, or mixed descent, distinguishing them from persons born in Europe or Africa who later settled in the Americas. This meaning became accepted in French Louisiana as well. Following the purchase of Louisiana by the United States in 1803, the mostly Catholic French-speaking elite increasingly seized upon creole identity to distinguish themselves from the mostly Protestant Anglo-Americans who flooded into the territory. In antebellum Louisiana, creole took on this added connotation, while it continued to be widely used to describe those who were native-born, whether black, colored, or white, free or slave. The term was also used as an adjective to describe locally derived products, as in "creole cuisine," "creole tomatoes," and "creole cattle." Following the American Civil War, former slaves and former free people of color (gens de couleur libres) in Louisiana attempted to assert their newly won political and social freedoms. This effort inaugurated a period of intense, sometimes violent, struggle for status and power with profound racial dimensions. For the first time it became important for whites of French and Spanish heritage to insist that creole was a term that never had been applied to blacks or people of mixed blood. What historian Joseph Tregle Jr. has called "creole mythology" arose. The two major tenets of this mythology were that creole status required "pure" white blood and that the creoles were a refined and cultivated group, set apart from the coarser Anglo-Americans. The tendency of those outside Louisiana, ignorant of local nuances and influenced by popular culture, to construe creole as implying mixed European and African ancestry caused proponents of the myth to insist all the more on the whites-only definition. Attempting to contest this exclusive definition, some in recent decades have described themselves as "creoles of color." For the purposes of this history, it is important to keep in mind that the particular meaning of creole is highly dependent on the context of its use and the background of the speaker.[78]

It should also be noted that Creole identity is not synonymous with Cajun identity, though the terms are often conflated by outsiders to the region.

Acadian and Cajun

Early Acadians were a distinct ethnic group characterized by their common immigration story, French language, strong community ties, Catholic faith, and self-sufficient lifestyles.[79] In general, early Acadians rarely produced cash crops, as the generation of material wealth was not necessary to support their traditional subsistence lifestyle. Furthermore, class stratification among Acadian communities was minimal because of the Acadians' cultural disinterest in materialism or the acquisition of wealth.

By the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, some class stratification had emerged among Acadians, with some enterprising Acadians joining the upper class. According to historian and author Shane K. Bernard, "While upper- and middle-class Acadians increasingly adopted the customs of the region's elite French Creoles and new Anglo-American settlers, the poor Acadians preserved the values

77. Lo Faber 64 Parishes "Anglo-Americans" https://64parishes.org/entry/anglo-americans.

78. Robert W. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve* (Atlanta, Georgia: Cultural Resources Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 2012), 9.

79. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 21.

and traditions of their ancestors."[80] As Brasseaux describes,

> The result was a highly stratified multicultural society in which culture and language provided the basis for social distinctions. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century, class lines and cultural boundaries coincided in rural Louisiana. Upwardly mobile Acadians of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries entered the "aristocratic" Creole domain. Moving still further up the socioeconomic ladder in the antebellum period, the most successful Acadians found themselves on an economic plateau dominated by extremely wealthy Anglo-American immigrants from the Carolinas and Virginia.[81]

The formerly francophone dominated state became increasingly English-speaking in the 1830s and 1840s by the influx of Anglo-Americans in the area, and Acadians were disdained for their refusal to assimilate: "The dominant culture's changing attitude toward the Acadians, evolving from condescension in the 1840s to disgust in the 1850s and 1860s, reflected increasingly hostile national attitudes toward America's linguistic and cultural minorities."[82]

Both Brasseux and Bernard point to the Civil War as the catalytic event leading to the creation of the Cajun identity. In the aftermath of the war, many formerly affluent Louisianans came to occupy the same socioeconomic strata as lower-class Acadians. As these formerly disparate groups intermarried, the cultural unity in lower-class Acadians grew so strong because of what folklorist Barry Jean Ancelet calls the process of *creolization*.[83] As Ancelet describes, in a technical sense *creolization* is "a process in which cultural traits derived from markedly dissimilar cultures (African, Franco German, Native American) were brought together and amalgamated under conditions of tropical plantation agriculture in the West Indies and Louisiana."[84] Ancelet differentiates this from the colloquial use of the term, in which *créole* historically meant anything of local origin, people, food, lifeways, or otherwise. Ancelet, who himself identifies as Cajun, states that "creolization has become associated primarily with one of its most important expressions—the descendants of the rural Acadians who intermarried and interacted with most of the other ethnic groups in the area and eventually came to dominate the Louisiana French melting pot by sheer numbers. This cultural and ethnic hybrid is what has come to be called Cajun."[85]

The origin of the term *Cajun* is an anglicization of 'Acadien.' Brasseaux explains that the term was originally used by "Anglos to refer to all persons of French descent and low economic standing, regardless of their ethnic affiliation."[86] Thus, the term historically carried stigmatizing connotations, which continued to persist through much of the twentieth century.

Some contemporary Cajun scholars posit that with the term 'Cajun,' Anglo-Americans flattened the multiracial Creole culture into a racialized socioeconomic identifier which excluded people of color with actual Acadian heritage and lumped in other French-speaking whites with no Acadian ancestry.[87]

Through to the end of the 19th century, Cajun communities chose to remain socially, technologically, and geographically isolated from the dominant American culture. They resisted pressure to adopt the English language and Protestant customs used to characterize the unified American identity. Eventually, the continued use of French in these communities came to be the most obvious cultural identifier.

In the early twentieth century, multiple factors contributed to the decline of the use French in Cajun communities. Louisiana legislators revised the state's constitution in 1921, mandating that English be the only language spoken in the

80. Shane K. Bernard, "Cajuns," in *64 Parishes* (Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, n.d.), https://64parishes.org/entry/cajuns.
81. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 92.
82. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 99.
83. Barry Jean Ancelet, Cajun Country (University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 34.
84. Ancelet, *Cajun Country*, 34.
85. Ancelet, Cajun Country, 36.
86. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 104.
87. Tyler Fontenot, "We Have Never Been Cajun: Créolization and Whitened Identity at the Margins of Memory" (University of Victoria, 2020), 2.

classroom. Teachers harshly penalized French-speaking students, leading to a sharp decline in the use of Cajun French in the following decades. The stigma associating Cajun French with a lower socioeconomic stratus led some higher class people of Acadian heritage to distance themselves from this group, which included the abandonment of the French language.

Yet, other Acadians of this class still desired to celebrate their unique identity and heritage, resulting in the resurrection of an idealized mythology of Acadian history, partly inspired by the 1847 epic hero poem *Evangelin*e by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The poem, which describes the fictional trials of a fair Acadian maiden and her love, was co-opted in the 1920s by individuals such as Susan Evangeline Walker Anding and Dudley LeBlanc to popularize the Acadian story and to promote tourism in the region. Anding, though not herself Acadian, is credited with bringing public attention to Acadian history by organizing a publicity campaign promoting a national monument to Evangeline and the Acadians, as well the creation of a park, which would become the Longfellow-Evangeline State Historic Site in St. Martinsville. Dudley LeBlanc, a cunning Cajun salesman and politician, promoted Acadian culture and history with various publicity campaigns and events, even authoring a book that attempted to be the authority on the Acadian story: *The True Story of the Acadians* (pub. 1928, republished 1932, 1967). According to W. Fitzhugh Brundage in his paper *Memory and Acadian Identity, 1920-1960*, "Anding's promotional campaign helped to infuse the public spaces of southwestern Louisiana with symbols of Acadian memory" while Dudley LeBlanc "forged the link between the Acadian identity, the distant past, and the international Acadian diaspora."[88]

Cultural preservationist Louise Olivier also contributed to the 'Acadian Revival' through her efforts to promote traditional Acadian lifeways and handicrafts in the 1940s and 1950s. According to Brundage, "her signal contribution to the Acadian revival was to institutionalize systematic cultural intervention in southern Louisiana and to introduce there the techniques of cultural preservation.... By doing so, she established a precedent for continuing state funded support for the promotion of the French language and Acadian folkways."[89]

In the late 1960s, with a renewed interest in preserving the region's cultural heritage, the state legislature changed course by establishing the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL). In addition to bringing French back into the state's classrooms, CODOFIL both promoted and protected the Cajun identity. The regional pride of the 'Cajun Renaissance' in the late 1960s and 1970s grew to a national phenomenon by the 1980s, when the groundwork for the Acadian Cultural Centers was taking shape.[90]

Acadian and Cajun are often used interchangeably, but recent scholarship rejects this tendency as an oversimplification of the complex Cajun ethnic identity.[91] Linguist Thomas Klinger of Tulane University suggests that "a narrow focus by scholars and cultural activists on the Acadian aspects of Cajun history has helped to fashion a contemporary vision of the Cajuns that excludes other groups who also played an important role in constituting Cajun ethnicity and culture."[92]

Cajun has evolved in complex ways over time. As with the term Creole, Cajun in a modern context is an identity claimed by people of diverse backgrounds. Ownership and use of both terms vary widely.[93]

Guillaume and Marguerite Hamon

The first recorded European settlers on the property that is today the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center included Acadians Guillaume Hamon (also known as William Hammond)

88. W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "Memory and Acadian Identity, 1920–1960: Susan Evangeline Walker Anding, Dudley LeBlanc, and Louise Olivier, or the Pursuit of Authenticity," in Acadians and Cajuns. The Politics and Culture of French Minorities in North America, Canadiana Oenipontana 9 (Innsbruck University Press, 2009).
89. Brundage, "Memory and Acadian Identity, 1920–1960: Susan Evangeline Walker Anding, Dudley LeBlanc, and Louise Olivier, or the Pursuit of Authenticity," 66.
90. Ancelet, Cajun Country, xxi.
91. "How Much Acadian Is There in Cajun?," in *Acadians and Cajuns. The Politics and Culture of French Minorities in North America*, Canadiana Oenipontana 9 (Innsbruck University Press, 2009), 95.
92. "How Much Acadian Is There in Cajun?," 95.
93. White, "'Cultural Gumbo'? An Ethnographic Overview of Louisiana's Mississippi River Delta," 9.

and his wife Marguerite Saulnier. Hamon and Saulnier were among the group who immigrated to Louisiana from France on the ship the *St. Remi* in 1785. Shortly after arriving in New Orleans, the Spanish colonial government relocated the couple to Bayou Lafourche. Hamon received a land grant along the south bank of the bayou. "The modern boundaries of this grant are Ridgefield Road, Jackson Street, Bayou Lafourche, and the Lafourche-Terrebonne Parish line (LA HWY-3107)."[94] The location of the Hamon's house is unknown, but Hahn believes it to have been on the banks of Bayou Lafourche between present-day Church Street and Jackson Street, just east of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center parking lot. Guillaume Hamon sold a tract of his land between modern-day Ridgefield Road and Church Street to Joseph Mourvan in November 1808 that included a residence, which would place the Hamons' home near the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit.[95] Joseph Marlbrough purchased the tract downstream of Hamon in the early 1790s. Joseph Marlbrough's tract would eventually become the core of downtown Thibodaux.

Hamon's occupancy of the land from 1785 to 1808 preceded a time when tremendous change affected Acadian culture in southern Louisiana. Because of the lack of specific information about the Hamons and because it is difficult to generalize about a heterogenous culture, it is impossible to know if Hamon represents what one could call a typical Acadian or if he developed a cultural landscape that might typify an Acadian landscape. It seems likely, based on the census records, that Hamon was a *petit habitants,* operating a small subsistence farm on the banks of the bayou. Hamon and his wife did not have children, so it is likely that the farm had a modest home, probably constructed from local materials.[96] The Hamons probably raised vegetables and a few staple crops in the rich alluvial soil along the banks of Bayou Lafourche. The 1788 census shows that Hamon had twenty quarts of corn, one cow or bull, and six pigs. The following year he was listed as having twenty quarts of corn, no cattle, and six pigs.[97] He increased his possessions by 1791 to include 100 quarts of corn, six head of cattle, a horse, and thirty pigs. These facts suggest a small farm, possibly with sheds, barns, and fences to enclose areas for crops and animals. His possessions, according to Hahn, were "slightly above the average holding in the immediate vicinity."[98]

According to Megan Farrell, typical landscape features found on an Acadian farmstead included "cypress cisterns, small frame outbuildings, and post and rail (*pieux*) fences."[99] Their houses were based on local, sometimes called Creole, building methods. They adapted local forms to the climatic conditions of southern Louisiana, incorporating raised foundations, porches, external stairways, and narrow openings to promote air flow.[100] Carl Brasseaux writes that small farmers during this period "tilled four to twenty acres—depending on the size of the family and the number of sons in the family labor pool—and produced small quantities of cotton, sugar, peas, beans, sweet potatoes, and corn."[101] Common livestock on small farms included horses, milk cattle, pigs, and oxen.

94. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 29.
95. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 35.
96. Megan Farrell, "French Vernacular Homes of Acadiana: An Overview," *Material Culture* 23, no. 3 (1991): 47–58.
97. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 29.
98. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 29.
99. Farrell, "French Vernacular Homes of Acadiana: An Overview," 56.
100. Farrell, "French Vernacular Homes of Acadiana: An Overview," 56.
101. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 12.

Figure 2.4: Detail of J.H. Colton 1855 Map of Louisiana (Source: Library of Congress https://lccn.loc.gov/2010592397).

Early American Period and Development of Thibodaux Area (1803-1905)

Louisiana Purchase

France reacquired Louisiana from Spain in 1800, though it did not reestablish an active government prior to 1803, the year that France sold Louisiana to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. In the agreement, Napoleon Bonaparte, the leader of France, sold Louisiana along with an enormous amount of land that stretched from the Mississippi River on the east to the Rocky Mountains on the west.

In 1805, the Territorial Legislative Council divided the Territory of Orleans into several counties, including Lafourche County, which encompassed the arable land along Bayou Lafourche. Then, between 1805 and 1807, the territorial legislature reorganized the region into civil parishes. Lafourche Interior Parish was one of the original nineteen civil parishes. In 1822, Louisiana divided the parish-- the western portion becoming Terrebonne Parish (Figure 2.4). In 1853, the name of the parish changed to Lafourche Parish, dropping the word "Interior."[102]

At the time of the Louisiana Purchase, Acadians had been living on land along Bayou Lafourche for over 40 years. Hahn describes the population of the Lafourche area at this time as almost entirely Acadian[103] (Figure 2.5). Following American acquisition of Louisiana, Anglo-American planters from slave states such as Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi streamed into the area and bought land from Acadians and other early settlers.[104] [105] Sugar soon became the principal crop of Lafourche Parish.

A good sugar crop in 1828 enticed out-of-state investors to enter the region, who began purchasing and consolidating small farms. In the following decades, labor intensive levee building

102. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 19.
103. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 19.
104. Pena, *Scarred by War: Civil War in Southeast Louisiana*, 18.
105. J. Paul Leslie, "Historical Sketches of Lafourche Parish," in *Lafourche Country*, vol. III (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Heritage Society, 2010), 3.

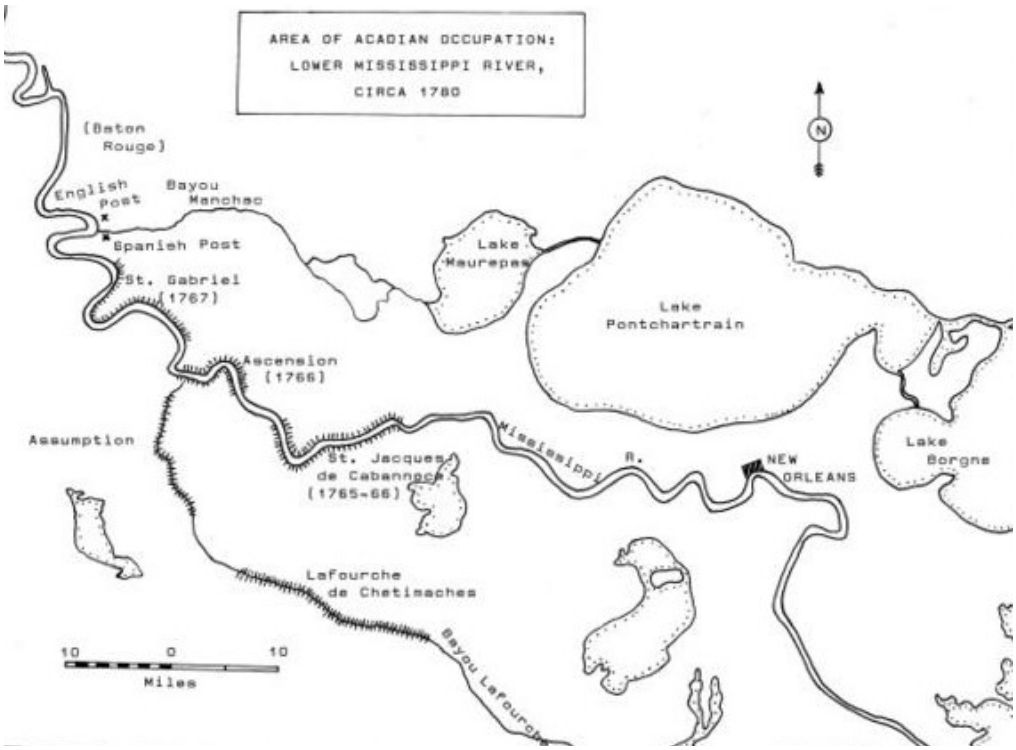

Figure 2.5: Concentrations of Acadian settlements by 1780 shows Acadians along Bayou Lafourche near present-day Thibodaux (Source: Center for Louisiana Studies).

requirements, mandatory heirship laws that split up landholdings, and an increasing demand for land along the river and bayous for sugar plantations pushed out many *petit habitants*, forcing them to move closer to the swamps or move to the southwestern prairies.[106] As they became either landless or forced onto relatively unproductive land, prairie and swamp Acadians found themselves unable to feed their large families by farming. Instead of farming, the "swampers" lumbered cypress, fished, gathered moss, and hunted wild game.[107] Acadians who reached the western prairies started *vacherries*, raising cattle, oxen, and horses on nonarable land. According to Lawrence Estaville, "by the 1840s Anglo economic and political hegemonies controlled Louisiana and had irreversibly begun to change Cajun social fabric. American encroachment, in which Anglos bought up and consolidated fragmented, uneconomical French long lots, forced some Cajuns, mostly from the old 'Acadian Coast' along the lower Mississippi and from the upper reaches of Bayou Lafourche, to move westward in what has been termed as the 'second expulsion' and rapidly Anglicize those that remained."[108]

For the Acadians that remained along the bayous and rivers, distinct class hierarchies emerged in the early half of the 1800s. Some Acadians increased their wealth by becoming enslavers and cash crop planters, while others held to their traditional subsistence lifestyle. Acadians became increasingly separated by rigid social stratification between the 1830s-1860s.

From Small Farms to Sugar Plantations

Small Acadian farms eventually gave way to larger plantations due a combination of forces. The Treaty of 1795, also known as Pickney's Treaty, which established the border between the United States and Spanish territory, had granted the United States the right of free navigation of the Mississippi River and through New Orleans. New Orleans had already established itself as the primary port for shipping goods from the interior of the continent and access to the port spurred a new phase in commercial development in the western areas of the United States.

106. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 11.
107. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 13.
108. Lawrence F. Estaville Jr., "Changeless Cajuns: Nineteenth-Century Reality or Myth?," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 28, no. 2 (1987): 130.

Additionally, new cash crops promised entrepreneurs and speculators a path toward wealth. Prior to the 1830s, cotton was the most common cash crop in the Lafourche region. Persistent bad yields from armyworm infestation, among other factors, reduced the profitability of cotton, opening a path for sugar to dominate agriculture in the Lafourche Basin.[109] The rise of sugar in the Louisiana economy had begun in the late 1700s. The planter class in Louisiana began to switch to sugar cane because a rise in the demand for sugar, initially in Europe, increased its value as a cash crop and because technological advances allowed for large-scale commercial manufacturing.[110] In 1795, New Orleans resident Étienne de Boré developed a process for converting sugarcane liquid into granulated sugar, soon making Louisiana the epicenter of the sugar refinement industry.[111] Richard Follett argues that a dramatic rise in domestic demand for sugar between 1820 and 1860 further fueled the rapid growth of the Louisiana sugar industry.

Compared to the swampy landscape of most of southern Louisiana, the high and dry land of the natural levees along the Bayou Lafourche was ideal for agriculture.[112] Despite this fact, farming sugarcane was a complicated process that required Lafourche Parish sugarcane farmers to develop specific agricultural practices and make extensive investments in equipment to raise, process, and ship their product. Further complicating matters, sugarcane was not an easy crop to grow. It is a tropical plant and is susceptible to frost, requiring an intensive cultivation and processing schedule during the growing season. Sugarcane required "good, well-drained soil, ample moisture, and a long, front-free growing season of at least 250 days."[113] In 1825, two varieties of more frost resistant sugarcane, which became known as Louisiana Purple and Louisiana Striped, arrived in the region and quickly became the dominant varieties being grown.[114]

Louisiana entered the Union in 1812 as a slave state and the sugar industry's growth supported a steady increase in the importation of enslaved people. Historians estimate that between 60 to 70 percent of all Africans who survived the voyage to the Western Hemisphere were forced to work on a sugar plantation.[115] The number of enslaved persons working on sugar plantations in Louisiana rose in step with the rise in consumption of sugar between 1820 and 1860. According to Follett, consumption of sugar in the United States "ballooned from 161 million pounds in 1837 to 900 million pounds in 1854."[116] Planters in Louisiana rushed to increase the number of acres devoted to sugar cane cultivation, and by 1853, they accounted for a quarter of the world's sugar production.[117] Throughout the Louisiana sugar plantation region, the number of enslaved people increased from about 20,000 in 1820 to 90,000 in 1860.[118] In 1830, the average sugar plantation enslaved fifty-two people. A decade later, the number increased to 76; and by 1850, the average Louisiana sugar plantation had eighty-five enslaved people working the fields and processing the crop.[119]

The tremendous amount of change in demographics of southern Louisiana during the antebellum period also impacted the Acadian/Cajun community. According to Estaville, "At the time of the Louisiana Purchase, there were roughly seven Frenchmen for every one Anglo-American in Louisiana, and at least a three to one ratio at statehood. By the Civil War 70 percent of Louisiana's population was Anglo-Saxon."[120] Estaville argues that change came early to Cajun communities in the early 1800s and he concludes that the Cajuns who stayed in southern

109. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 22.
110. Barbara Holmes, *Historic Resources Study: The Barataria Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park* (Santa Fe: Division of History, Southwest Region, National Park Service, 1986), 67.
111. Khalil Gibran Muhammad, "The Barbaric History of Sugar in America," *The New York Times*, August 14, 2019, sec. Magazine, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/sugar-slave-trade-slavery.html.
112. Richard Follett, *The Sugar Masters: Planters and Slaves in Louisiana's Cane World, 1820-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 22.
113. Follett, *The Sugar Masters*, 10.
114. Dr. Charley Richard, "200 YEARS OF PROGRESS IN THE LOUISIANA SUGAR INDUSTRY," *Sugar Journal,* February 1995, np.
115. Michael Tadman, "The Demographic Cost of Sugar: Debates on Slave Societies and Natural Increase in the Americas," *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 5 (2000): 1537, accessed October 8, 2020, https://doi.org/10.2307/2652029.
116. Follett, *The Sugar Masters,* 21.
117. Follett, *The Sugar Masters*, 22.
118. Tadman, "The Demographic Cost of Sugar," 1548.
119. Follett, *The Sugar Masters,* 24–25.
120. Estaville Jr., "Changeless Cajuns: Nineteenth-Century Reality or Myth?," 135.

Louisiana embraced the introduced innovations of agriculture and commerce as a way to survive. According to Estaville, "If the Cajuns ever had a strategy to preserve their heritage by erecting a social panoply, then it too was surely punctured by the sheer numbers of Anglo-Saxon invaders… the nineteenth century was one of tumultuous transformation."[121]

Development of Bayou Lafourche

From the earliest days of European settlement in the region, bayous were critical to supporting the lifeways of settlers. Bayou Lafourche was instrumental in the development of the area. It offered a convenient route for transportation and supplied water for consumption and irrigation. Additionally, the natural levees offered fertile soil that supported a diversity of flora but was especially valuable for its ability to support agriculture and for its elevated terrain upon which to build homes. Because of periodic flooding, settlers constructed additional levees along the banks of Bayou Lafourche to prevent the water from flooding crops and homes. Reinforced levees appeared along the length of Bayou Lafourche by 1817. Lafourche Parish passed ordinances mandating levee maintenance after a flood in 1828.[122]

According to a history of the region, "Prior to the construction of good roads and the completion of rail systems in south Louisiana, settlement and transportation focused on and utilized the waterways as a means of livelihood and communication. Boats played an integral part in daily life…."[123] Early settlers used poled or towed flatboats to carry passengers or goods along the bayous. According to Malcolm Comeaux, "Boat traditions in south Louisiana, the area of French influence, have always been strong and varied."[124] Comeaux explains that boats "evolved to fit ecological niches and particular chores."[125] He quotes a resident of Louisiana in the early 1800s who observed:

> This diversity of shapes of these boats comes from the diversity in their usage and in the places where they must go. Those that come from the far-off rivers that are wide and shallow are wide and flat in order to draw little water, while those that navigate the surface of the deep rivers must overcome the swift current, are more elongate and draw more water and are heaver. Their thick, rounded bottoms glide over the snags and logs which are found in all parts of the river beds. The narrow bayous where the water sometimes rushes in torrents boats that are shorter and lighter, whereas others still require very light skiffs in order to shoot the rapids or to be dragged over the river bed in low water.[126]

Boats propelled by sail, oars, boats, and towropes navigated Bayou Lafourche. One form of boat common in Louisiana during this period was a narrow, flat-bottomed craft called a pirogue. According to Comeaux, French settlers created the pirogue by adapting the form of the American Indian canoe. They made the two ends of their pirogues pointed, making them easier to propel.[127] The French settlers also developed new construction methods; which Comeaux describes:

> The French also changed the method of building pirogues; as opposed to Indians, they first formed the outside of the log, and then hollowed out the middle. The outer side was very carefully shaped, and French pirogues had equal dimensions and curves on either side of the centerline; this gave them excellent balance. After the outer hull was shaped, and much of the hollowing completed, auger holes were placed along the curvature where the bottom of the craft meets the sides, and also in the very center of the bottom. The craftsman then finished hollowing out the log, using the holes to check the thinness of the hull (the holes were later plugged with pegs when the craft was nearing completion). With these techniques the hull was made of uniform thickness, and without weak spots as might be found in Indian pirogues…. Being thin-hulled, it was much lighter than Indian dugouts, and this made it easier to portage and to paddle against

121. Estaville Jr., "Changeless Cajuns: Nineteenth-Century Reality or Myth?," 139.
122. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 11.
123. Goodwin, "Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," 34.
124. Malcolm Comeaux, "Folk Boats of Louisiana," in *Louisiana Folklife: A Guide to the State*, Virtual Book, 1985, https://www.louisianafolklife.org/lt/virtual_books/guide_to_state/comeaux.html#tab1.
125. Comeaux, "Folk Boats of Louisiana."
126. Comeaux, "Folk Boats of Louisiana."
127. Comeaux, "Folk Boats of Louisiana."

> the current. As long as dugouts were built, these basic techniques and tools did not change, nor were they improved upon.[128]

Other forms of boats used in southern Louisiana during this period included skiffs and flatboats. The skiff was a flat-bottomed boat with a sharp bow and square stern. The flatboat or bateau, which was also flat-bottomed, had a square bow and stern. Flatboats came in a variety of widths and lengths. They were guided by oars on the sides and stern and steered from the bow using an oar. Larger flatboats sometimes were equipped with sails. These transported passengers as well as goods.

An article printed in *The Lafourche Comet* newspaper on March 16, 1933, provides a description of how flatbottom boats operated on the bayou. The article's writer records that:

> Bayou Lafourche had flatboat lines that made regular trips up and down the stream, the boats, being loaded with barrels of sugar (not sacks as are now used); hogshead of molasses (a hogshead, which is a very large barrel, being seen no more now); potatoes, onions, and general merchandise….Flatboats were about 15 or 18 feet wide and possibly 100 feet long, being covered with an arched top, which stood about eight or nine feet above the floor. On top of the flatboat was a rudder operated by hand by means of a long pole. A man had to stand on top of the boat in any kind of weather—hot, cold, rain, at night time or day time—and work the rudder so as to keep the boat in deep water and enable it to land at the right spot…. The boat was pulled along the bayou by means of a cordelle (a heavy rope) and two and sometimes three mules ridden by youngsters who thought it was very good work to ride the mules from Lockport to Donaldsonville, night or day, along the rough batture on top of the levee, for the sum of $12.00 per month.[129]

These forms of boats remained in use into the 1900s, but their popularity declined rapidly as powered vessels appeared that could accommodate more passengers and carry more freight. In the 1700s, sailboats, sometimes called luggers, traveled between New Orleans and Bayou Lafourche (Figure 2.6). Steamboats appeared as early as 1811, but they became almost ubiquitous after 1830. Captain Ferdinand M. Streck provided steamboat passenger service between Bayou Lafourche and New Orleans beginning in the 1820s.[130] Steamboat trade between Bayou Lafourche to New Orleans began as early as 1825.[131]

One reason flatbottom boats remain in use, though on a reduced scale into the early 1900s, was, according to Bill Ellzey, because of Bayou Lafourche's low water levels. He writes that "the Lafourche was barely navigable, except during spring flooding."[132] Ellzey quotes an 1874 report by the United States Corps of Engineers on navigation problems on Bayou Lafourche and its importance to local commercial traffic. The plantations along the river, the report noted, produced several commodities, including sugar, molasses, and rice, that needed to get transported to market relatively soon after harvest or manufacturing. According to the report, the time to transport these goods "occurs at a season when the bayou is unnavigable for steamboats." As a result, the United States Corps of Engineers and private landowners cleared snags and sandbars to improve navigability.

The 1874 United States Corps of Engineers report provides a succinct overview of boat travel on Bayou Lafourche at the time:

> There were but two river steamboats regularly engaged during the past year in the navigation of the bayou, viz. The Henry Tete, with a carrying capacity of 1,000 hogsheads of sugar, and the Lizzie Hopkins, with capacity for 700. At high water the bayou is navigable for these boats. For about eight months in the year it is navigable for them to Thibodeauxville; for the remaining four months navigation for this class of boats is suspended by bars, snags, the luggers being obliged to lower sails and cordelle. From Raceland a line of flat-boats make daily trips to Lockport, seven and a half miles below. From Thibodeauxville to Donaldsonville, during the low water season (which usually lasts from

128. Comeaux, "Folk Boats of Louisiana."
129. Bill Ellzey, "Article Told of Flatboats on Bayou Lafourche," *Houma Today*, March 16, 2016.
130. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 64.
131. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 10.
132. Bill Ellzey, "Photographs and Memories: Navigating Bayou Lafourche," *Houma Today*, April 30, 2017.

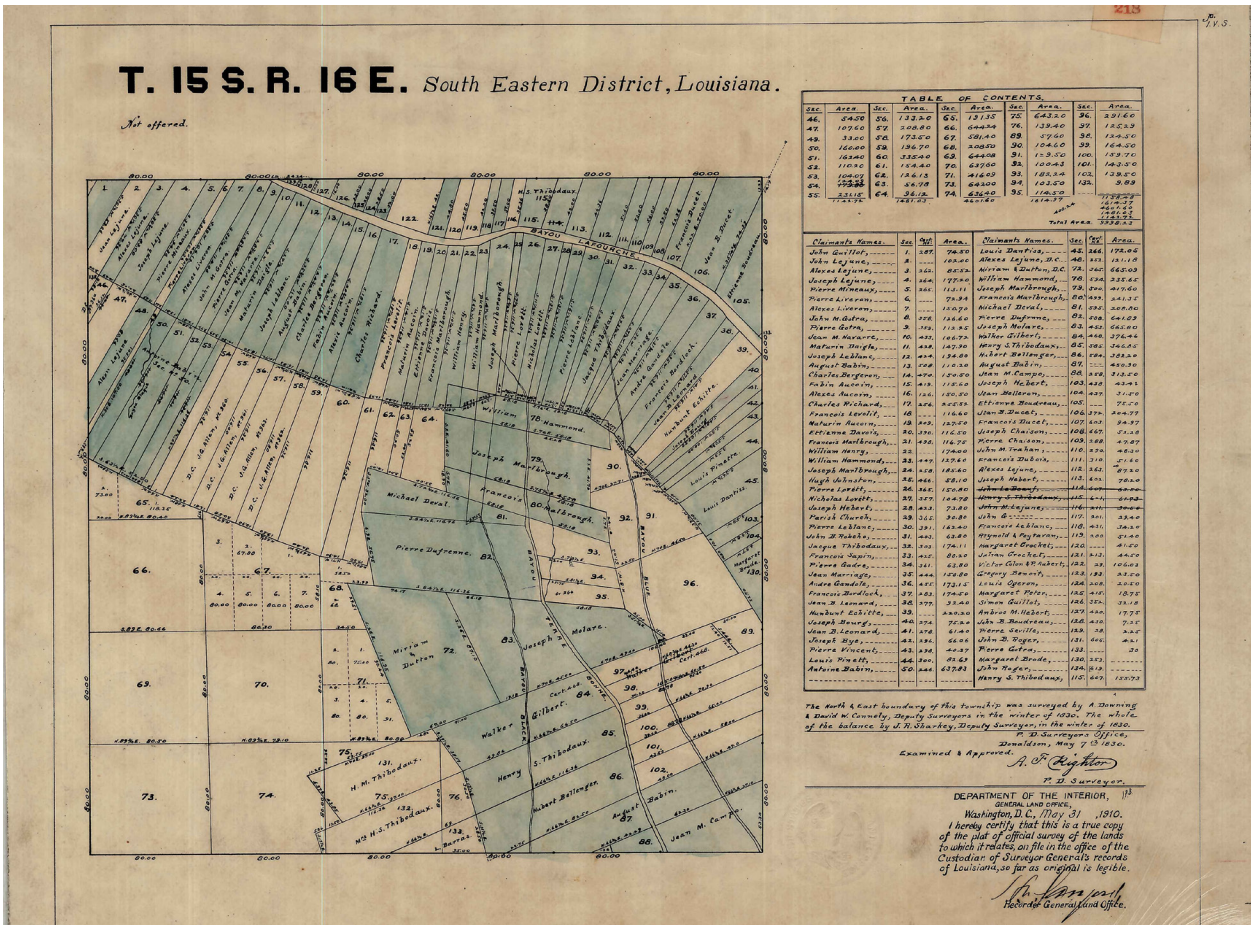

Figure 2.6: Portion of an 1830 plat map illustrating the long lot system of land ownership along Bayou Lafourche. Joseph Marlborough and William Hammond (Guillaume Hamon) are the land owners in the area that would become western downtown Thibodaux (Source: 1830 Plat, Township 15S Range 16E, Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of State Lands).

> August to December), 16 flat-boats are engaged in the carrying trade, and it is reported that they are frequently obliged to unload to get over the bars.[133]

By 1886, the work by the United States Corps of Engineers had improved the navigability of Bayou Lafourche and the number of large trading vessels increased. Most large boats transported sugar and molasses—the two most valuable commodities produced by plantations along the bayou. Several steamboats made multiple trips each week during the highwater season between December and August. These included the *Assumption*, *Isabel*, E.*W. Fuller*, and *Alice LeBlanc*.[134] But persistent issues with water levels continued. Carl Brasseaux and Keith Fontenot write, "The number of local newspaper articles and editorials lamenting the seeming irreparable problems spawned by the Lafourche waxed and waned in inverse ratio to the rise and fall of the Mississippi's water levels. Simply put, shoaling at the confluence of the Lafourche and Mississippi forced shippers to seek alternate—and more expensive—means of transporting their goods to market."[135] The unpredictable water levels of the bayou also led the United States Corps of Engineers to begin consideration of damming Bayou Lafourche, so as to convert it into a canal where water depth could be effectively controlled.[136] By the early 1900s, automobile and railroad infrastructure had developed to the point that they effectively replaced boats as the primary mode of transporting goods on Bayou Lafourche.

133. Goodwin, "Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," 35.
134. Goodwin, "Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," 27.
135. Carl A. Brasseaux and Keith A. Fontenot, *Steamboats on Louisiana's Bayous: A History and Directory* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: LSU Press, 2004), 143.
136. Ellzey, "Photographs and Memories: Navigating Bayou Lafourche."

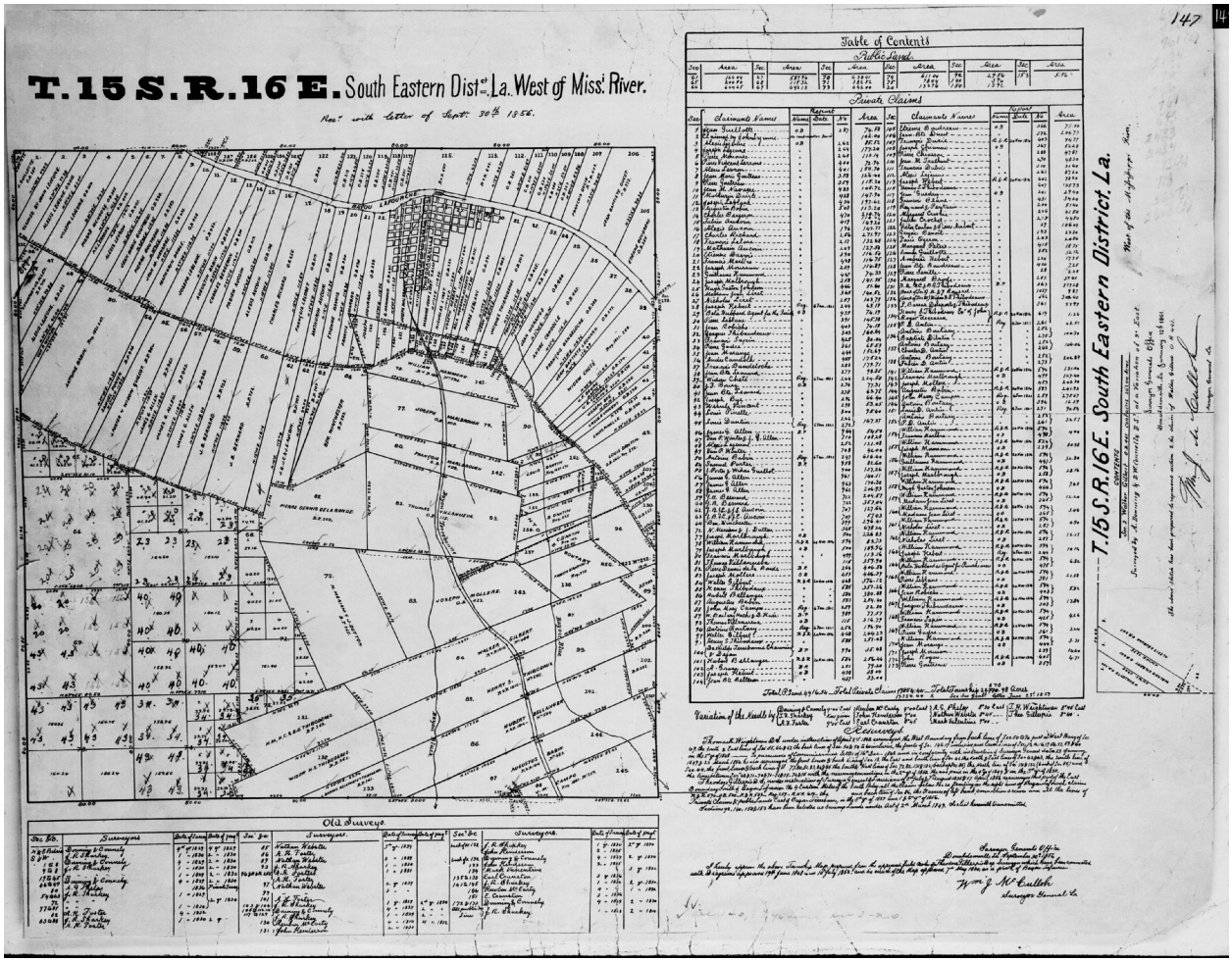

Figure 2.7: Portion of an 1856 plat map of the recently laid out town of Thibodaux, LA (Source: 1856 Plat, Township 15S Range 16E, Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of State Lands).

Flooding along the Mississippi and Bayou Lafourche eventually convinced the United States Corps of Engineers and regional leaders to dam the Lafourche. Floods in 1886, 1888, and 1890 had destroyed crops and spread disease across the region. Construction of the dam across the mouth of Bayou Lafourche began on December 17, 1902.[137] The dam effectively ended the commercial steamboat industry on Bayou Lafourche. According to a United States Corps of Engineers report from 1908, there were only "two small gasoline boats" operating commercially on Bayou Lafourche in that year.[138]

Development of Thibodaux, Louisiana

Even though settlement of the area around Bayou Lafourche began in the mid-1700s, it was not until the 1820s-1830s that the first substantial town, Thibodaux, developed in the region. Through the first half of the 1800s, settlements scattered alongside the banks of Bayou Lafourche were typically small farms, on which the residents, still mostly Acadians, grew typical food crops, including corn, potatoes, onions, peas, beans, and hay.[139] The evolution of land use and ownership in the Lafourche Basin, from small farms to sugar plantations and related industries, is reflected in the developmental history of the Percy-Lobdell Building and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site.

The town of Thibodaux, the modern-day parish seat for Lafourche Parish and the location of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, was named for the planter Henry Schuyler Thibodaux, an Acadian orphan raised by Anglos who acquired land in the area in the early 1800s. Mr. Thibodaux is an

137. Brasseaux and Fontenot, *Steamboats on Louisiana's Bayous: A History and Directory*, 144.
138. Goodwin, "Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," 36.
139. Goodwin, "Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," 23.

example of the success found by some Acadians, although his upper-class Anglo upbringing and education in Scotland make him hardly representative of a typical Acadian of his time.

In the early 1800s, Joseph Malbrough owned the land that became the location of the town of Thibodaux.[140] Henry S. Thibodaux first purchased a tract from Hugh G. Johnson that was located adjacent to and downstream from Malbrough's property around 1811. He eventually purchased the other Malbrough tract, now also owned by Johnson, in 1818. Mr. Thibodaux hired a surveyor to lay out town lots in 1820.[141] After multiple failed attempts, the town of Thibodaux incorporated in 1830.[142] A plat map surveyed in 1830 shows the area partitioned into long lots, but does not yet indicate the existence of the town of Thibodaux (Figure 2.7).[143] By 1856, a plat map illustrates square town lots labeled "Thibodauxville" overlaid atop portions of former long lot tracts 23-30, along Bayou Lafourche (Figure 2.8).[144]

In the antebellum period, the town of Thibodaux became an important commercial center along Bayou Lafourche. By 1840, Thibodaux had over 500 residents and was one of only eight locations in the state for the Union Bank of Louisiana, an important source of credit for planters and industrialists. As the area around Thibodaux offered proximity to productive farmland and the town offered access to capital, the town developed a robust commercial sector around the trade of agricultural goods.[145]

Figure 2.8: Illustration from Harper's Weekly (1871) showing small boats docked along Bayou Lafourche and the costume of a young Acadian boy (top) (Source: The Historic New Orleans Collection, The L. Kemper and Leila Moore Williams Founders Collection, 1965.52).

The site of the current Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center was west and outside the city limits of Thibodaux when it incorporated in 1830. In 1846, present-day Church Street formed the boundary between the town of Thibodaux and George Seth Guion's Ridgefield Plantation.

George S. Guion was a notable public figure in Thibodaux. In 1843, Mr. Guion donated land on Jackson Street for St. John's Episcopal Church, which was one of the first Episcopal Churches established west of the Mississippi River.[146] He donated land in 1847 to found the Guion Academy, the first public school in the state of Louisiana.[147] In 1846, Guion had E. D. Richardson layout several lots west of Church Street on the edge of the town limits. Most of these lots became commercial and industrial sites. These lots currently comprise the

140. Carol A. Mathias, "Stately Mansion Has Colorful Past," in *Lafourche Country*, vol. III (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Heritage Society, 2010), 70.
141. Mathias, "Stately Mansion Has Colorful Past," 70.
142. The town of Thibodaux was incorporated in 1830 as Thibodauxville. It was changed to Thibodeaux in 1838. The current spelling as Thibodaux was adopted in 1918.
143. Downing, A., *Louisiana Plat Map*, Official U.S. Township Survey Plats, Township 15 South, Range 16 East, Southeastern District West of Mississippi River (Donaldsonville, LA, 1830), Old Plats, Louisiana Office of State Lands, Historical Records Section, https://wwwslodms.doa.la.gov/HistoricalDocument.
144. Downing, A., *Louisiana Plat Map*, Official U.S. Township Survey Plats, Township 15 South, Range 16 East, Southeastern District West of Mississippi River (Donaldsonville, Louisiana, 1856), Old Plats, Louisiana Office of State Lands, Historical Records Section, https://wwwslodms.doa.la.gov/HistoricalDocument.
145. Goodwin, "Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the M/V Fox, an Historic Boat in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," 23.
146. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 22.
147. Floyd Benoit, "The First Public School in Louisiana: Guion Academy of Thibodaux," in *Lafourche Country*, vol. II (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Heritage Society, 1996), 82.

Figure 2.9: 1866 illustration from Harper's Weekly depicting Acadian men pulling a flatboat along the levee with passengers (Source: The Historic New Orleans Collection, The L. Kemper and Leila Moore Williams Founders Collection, 1965.52).

majority of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site.

The use of land for industrial purposes in Thibodaux is indicative of the city's growth as a manufacturing center that supported local farms by fabricating agricultural equipment related to sugar production. Sugar processing involved machinery to press and boil the cane; on most farms, it was common to have a combination of furnaces, boiling tanks, and mill rollers, which needed to be fabricated and maintained. While Lafourche Parish sugar plantations would have used horse-powered mills during the first decades of the 1800s, technological advances in the sugar industry accelerated in the 1830s with the advent of steam-powered machinery. The first steam-powered cane mill arrived in Louisiana in 1822.[148] A few years later, Norbert Rillieux, a free person of color born in New Orleans and educated in France, introduced a new steam vacuum pan that more efficiently evaporated cane juice and produced a higher quality product than the open-kettle method.[149] Most Louisiana plantations had converted to steam-powered machinery by 1850.

In the 1830s, plantation owners transported their products to market on the often-clogged bayous and rivers. Steamboats moved freight and passengers along the bayou during high water times, while flatboats were used during low water periods.[150] Flatboats were pulled via a rope, called a "cordelle," from the shore by mule or man along the levee (cordelle) road. A public road along the south bank of Bayou Lafourche appears on an 1846 map of Thibodaux.[151] This road along the bayou's levee was the main road between Thibodaux and Donaldsonville. An 1866 illustration from Harper's Weekly illustrates two Acadian men pulling flatboats from atop the levee (Figure 2.9). Children

148. Follett, *The Sugar Masters*, 24.

149. Christina Riquelmy and Deborah Currie, "Sugar at LSU: A Chronology," Online Exhibition, Louisiana State University Library, 2002, https://www.lib.lsu.edu/sites/all/files/sc/exhibits/e-exhibits/sugar/contents.html#15.

150. "What Do You Know about a Flatboat?," *Lafourche Comet*, March 16, 1933.(Reprinted in "Article told of flatboats on Bayou Lafourche," *Houma Today*, March 16, 2016, https://www.houmatoday.com/article/DA/20160314/Opinion/608084009/HC).

151. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 38.

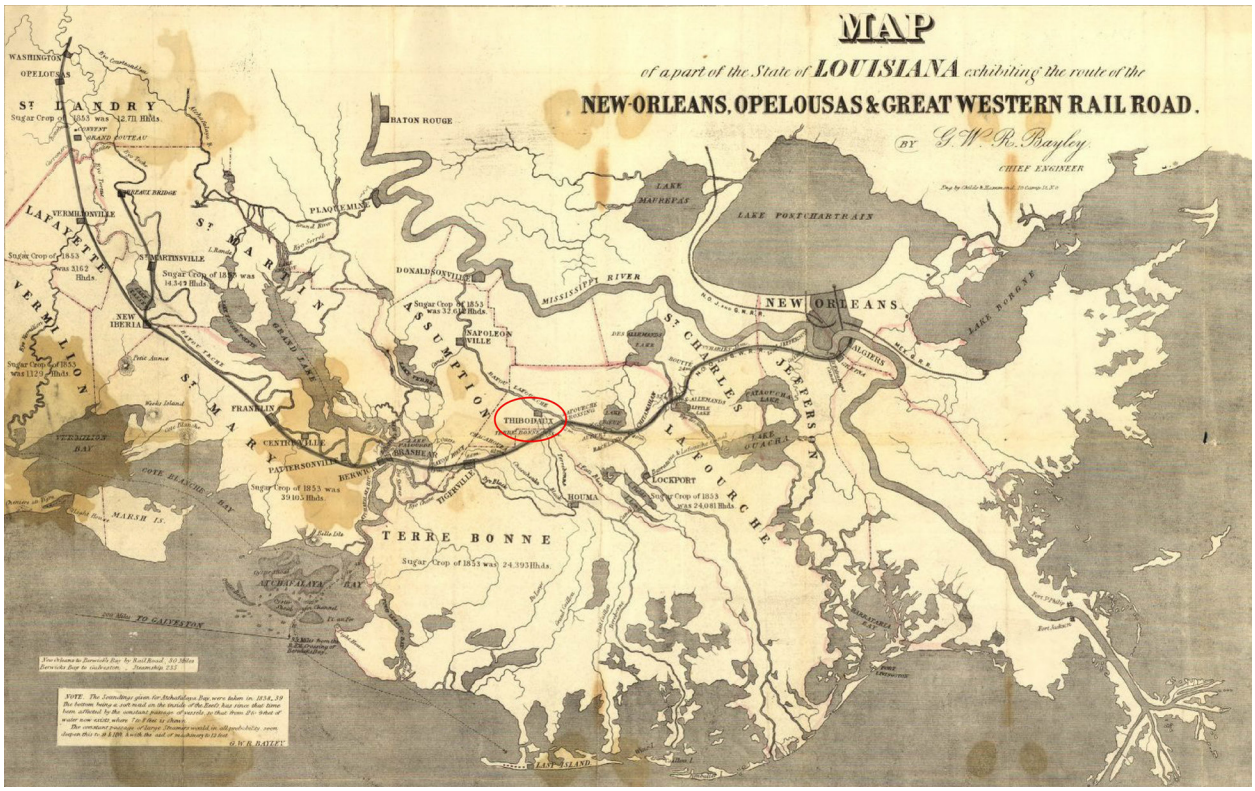

Figure 2.10: Map of the New Orleans, Opelousas & Great Western Railroad in 1853. The line crossed just south of Thibodaux, indicated (Source: Library of Congress https://lccn.loc.gov/gm72003017).

were often tasked with the job of riding mules pulling flatboats to and from Donaldsonville along the levee road.[152] This practice continued until the late 1800s.

A sandbar at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche periodically interrupted boat traffic, leading to the development of roads and railroads as alternative and more reliable transportation routes. The town installed a ferry across the bayou at the end of Maronge Street in 1847. The first iteration of the Jackson Street Bridge replaced this ferry in 1857.[153]

Railroad companies started building rail lines into the area by March 1852.[154] Individual planters also invested in rail, which quickly became the preferred method of moving hogsheads of sugar to warehouses in New Orleans.[155] By 1854, the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western Railroad traveled within three miles of Thibodaux, passing just south of the town before crossing Bayou Lafourche a few miles east of town (Figure 2.10). By 1859, a spur connected the town to the main line. This spur later extended to Houma and Donaldsonville.

Bayou Lafourche was the center of the sugar belt between 1820 and 1860; and Thibodaux's growth as a commercial center was "directly linked to that of agriculture, principally sugar."[156] By 1859, sugar plantations occupied approximately 75 percent of the improved acreage in the parish.[157] Several large plantations operated close to the Thibodaux area in the mid-1800s, including Ridgefield, Acadia, Chatchie (Homewood), Rienzi, and Laurel Valley. During this time, the population of Thibodaux grew rapidly, and businesspeople profited from the transportation network of bayous, wagon roads, and railroads that supported trade into and out of Thibodaux. Thibodaux became a bustling nexus of agriculture, trade and commerce, education, and banking. In 1842, the town had thirty houses along

152. "What Do You Know about a Flatboat?"
153. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 23.
154. Pena, *Scarred by War: Civil War in Southeast Louisiana*, 11.
155. Follett, *The Sugar Masters*, 40.
156. State of Louisiana Historic Preservation Division, "Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Thibodaux, LA: National Park Service, March 5, 1986), 8.
157. State of Louisiana Historic Preservation Division, "Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties," 8.

two streets.[158] That year, the town laid down five-foot-wide brick walkways along four streets. Also in that year, Henry Thibodaux's widow donated land to be used as the first cemetery in town. Thibodaux grew into one of the largest towns in the region and became the place where planters came to trade and to get goods and services.

At the time of the 1860 census, 5.4 percent of Acadians were of the Planter (upper) class along Bayou Lafourche.[159] By this time a majority of river and bayou Acadians had become enslavers as small, middle class farmers, with 60 percent of Acadians having two to three enslaved laborers and producing moderate sugar crops, a marked shift from their traditional subsistence lifestyle.[160] Also by this time 20.8 percent of Acadians worked in skilled trades in Lafourche Parish, much of which supported the sugar industry, presumably in industrializing towns such as Thibodaux. [161]

By the Civil War, "Louisiana's sugar industry was the most heavily capitalized and investment-rich agricultural region in the country."[162] Historian Christopher Pena writes, "Before the war, the area served as the breadbasket for Louisiana. Its principal cash crop of sugar, along with other staples such as corn, rice, and some cotton, helped fuel Louisiana's economy during the antebellum period."[163]

Civil War

The soaring Louisiana sugar economy came crashing down with the onset of the Civil War. Louisiana seceded from the Union on January 26, 1861, and joined the Confederate States of America in March. When the Civil War began, lower-class Acadians who did not participate in slavery had no stake in the war and many resisted conscription to the Confederate forces or deserted after being forced into service.[164] Bayou-residing planter class Acadians, conversely, largely supported the Confederacy's war effort.[165] Some lower-class Acadians did eventually enlist join the Confederate army after Union troops occupied Louisiana in 1862 and 1863, damaging farms, killing livestock, and infuriating small farmers.[166]

At the outset of the Civil War, the Louisiana State Militia had a headquarters in Thibodaux. The conflict reached Bayou Lafourche in the summer of 1862, when Union forces attacked Donaldsonville. In October 1862, Confederate and Union troops clashed again in Labadieville, several miles up Bayou Lafourche from Thibodaux. After the battle, many Confederate forces retreated to and reorganized in Thibodaux. The Confederates soon abandoned Thibodaux, but before leaving, Brigadier General Alfred Mouton had his troops burn the railroad depot, bridges, warehouses of sugar, and other useful supplies. Union forces soon occupied the town. Union and Confederate troops traded possession of Thibodaux at least four times between June and July 1863, though there was never a pitched battle in the town. Nevertheless, the town did suffer from the war. The foundry was "ransacked… the sawmill was left in virtual ruins, and the bridge was in a state of disrepair by the war's end and effectively blocked all bayou traffic from passing Thibodaux."[167] Navigation on Bayou Lafourche remained hampered for a decade following the war.[168]

Reconstruction and Racial Tension

In the aftermath of the Civil War, a period of severe economic depression enveloped the Lafourche region. Farms went uncultivated and became overgrown, there was a shortage of livestock, and damaged levees led to flooding.[169] Some Acadians faced starvation. In the decades following the war, the number of plantations growing sugarcane in Louisiana precipitously declined. Many of the sugar plantations in Louisiana converted to rice cultivation, though the sugar industry persisted in Lafourche Parish, eventually making a comeback by the end of the century.

158. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 21.
159. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 7.
160. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 8.
161. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 9.
162. Follett, *The Sugar Masters*, 31.
163. Pena, *Scarred by War: Civil War in Southeast Louisiana*, 3.
164. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 65.
165. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 62.
166. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 69.
167. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 25.
168. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 75.
169. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877*, 75.

Between the 1870s-1890s, the sugar industry slowly recovered largely due to lobbying by the Louisiana Sugar Planters' Association (LSPA) to pass tariffs protecting sugar producers. The LSPA also advocated for the adoption of new technologies and popularized scientific research in an effort to prepare Louisiana farmers to better compete with foreign producers.[170]

Before the Civil War, the sugar industry relied on enslaved laborers. Following emancipation, many planters, lacking access to capital in the postbellum south, were resistant to pay newly freed people, leaving some planters to try to mechanize as much of the process as possible.[171] According to Joseph P. Reidy, some planters' racial prejudice fueled the embrace of technological advancements, which reduced their production costs and reliance on 'unskilled' Black laborers, with some preferring to mechanize their process and hire "more careful and reliable" white labor to operate the machinery.[172]

Sharecropping, a practice in which laborers cultivate an area of planter's land in exchange for a 'share' of the harvest sale, was common practice on cotton plantations in postbellum Louisiana. However, sharecropping was not widely practiced on sugar plantations, apparently due to specific factors "inherent in growing cane, converting its juice into sugar, and marketing the crop" which necessitated a large, seasonal workforce on larger plantations.[173] Rather, sugar workers were generally paid wages, which was often received in the form of 'scrip,' or commissary notes only redeemable for goods sold at the plantation store. With planters setting the prices for goods sold at the plantation store and their wages worthless anywhere else, workers were economically trapped by the scrip payment system, leading some to describe the system as an invisible form of enslavement.[174]

Sugar plantations required large amounts of temporary laborers at key points in the season, which left planters vulnerable to labor shortages as laborers sought employment elsewhere the remaining months of the year. Sugar, a tropical plant, was also a temperamental crop in Louisiana and planters sought to recoup lost profits by reducing wages whenever environmental conditions produced a bad harvest. Laborers, cognizant of the planter's reliance on them, began collectively organizing and pitting planters against one another to push for better wages and working conditions. A push and pull between planters and wage laborers developed, the two mutually dependent on one another. Reidy describes this arrangement:

> The cost of labor was a significant expense for the planters. Their attempts to lower wages usually met with resistance. Unlike cotton planters, who generally settled accounts with sharecroppers at the end of the year, sugar planters paid wages: half biweekly and the other half after the harvest. In 1874, when plantation workers stopped work following a unilateral wage reduction, state authorities obliged the planters by dispatching the state militia to suppress the strike by force. Wages slowly rose during the next decade, but amidst the recession of the mid-1880s, a particularly poor crop in 1886, and the likelihood of another bad harvest in 1887 planters again reduced wages… .Plantation workers learned the painful lesson that large-scale, concerted action would be met by ruthless force. [175]

Nearly twenty years after the Reconstruction Acts were passed, planters and other powerful whites continued to use violence to upend the political participation and labor organizing efforts of Black Louisianans. White supremacist groups including the Knights of the White Camelia (which later became the White League) and the Klu Klux Klan actively suppressed African Americans' ability to gain a political or economic foothold in Louisiana.[176]

A particularly heinous example of racial intimidation and violence occurred in Thibodaux

170. Riquelmy and Currie, "Sugar at LSU: A Chronology."
171. John Desantis, *The Thibodaux Massacre: Racial Violence and the 1887 Sugar Cane Labor Strike* (Charleston: The History Press, 2016), 84.
172. Joseph P. Reidy, "Mules and Machines and Men: Field Labor on Louisiana Sugar Plantations, 1887-1915," Agricultural History 72, no. 2 (1998): 186.
173. John C. Rodrigue, Reconstruction in the Cane Field: From Slavery to Free Labor in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes 1862-1880 (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), 75.
174. Desantis, The Thibodaux Massacre: Racial Violence and the 1887 Sugar Cane Labor Strike, 92.
175. Reidy, "Mules and Machines and Men: Field Labor on Louisiana Sugar Plantations, 1887-1915," 184.
176. Desantis, *The Thibodaux Massacre: Racial Violence and the 1887 Sugar Cane Labor Strik*e, 52.

in 1887. Earlier that year, the Knights of Labor, a labor organization group, sent a letter to the Louisiana Sugar Planters Association demanding wage increases, abolishment of scrip payment, and improved payment terms, which the planters flatly ignored. The group organized strikes across the state during the critical 'rolling season' when planters would be under the most pressure to comply or risk losing their harvest.[177]

The planters refused to comply and many African Americans who participated in the strike were evicted from their homes on plantations and many moved to Thibodaux. Lewis Guion (son of George S. Guion), former Confederate officer and member of the white supremacist group the Knights of the White Camelia, headed a local militia organized to suppress black strikers in Thibodaux. On November 23, 1887, a mob of white vigilantes rioted across town indiscriminately killing an unknown number of black citizens, an event known as the *Thibodaux Massacre*.[178] Many of those killed were not even involved with the labor strike. In his 2016 book about the incident, John Desantis describes "white vigilantes gunned down unarmed black laborers and their families during a spree lasting more than two hours… Fear, rumor and white supremacist ideals clashed with an unprecedented labor action to create an epic tragedy. A future member of the US House of Representatives was among the leaders of a mob that routed black men from houses and forced them to a stretch of railroad track, ordering them to run for their lives before gunning them down. According to a witness, the guns firing in the black neighborhoods sounded like a battle."[179] The massacre was downplayed and not widely reported in local newspapers at the time. Desantis used correspondence, interviews, and federal records to compile a detailed account of the incident. Despite the labor strikes and ensuing violence, these events did not seem to jeopardize the sugar industry, which continued to have a successful harvest that season.

177. Desantis, *The Thibodaux Massacre: Racial Violence and the 1887 Sugar Cane Labor Strike*, 105.
178. Histories of the event state that at least thirty-five people were killed on November 23 and possibly as many as 300 killed wounded or missing over the next few days. See for example, Desantis, John. *The Thibodaux Massacre*, 135.
179. Desantis, *The Thibodaux Massacre*, Introduction.

Sugar Recovery and the Industrialization of Thibodaux

Favorable tariffs protecting sugar prices in the 1890s buoyed the sugar industry's revival. Between 1890 and 1912, the sugar industry continued to expand and with increasing profitability again dominated the local economy of the Lafourche region.[180] This second sugar boom directly influenced the development of the commercial economy of Thibodaux. This resurgence continued until the 1920s when the mosaic disease and a precipitous drop in sugar prices nearly collapsed the industry for a second time.[181]

Thibodaux had made quick work of rebuilding the city's infrastructure after the Civil War (Figure 2.11). The town reconstructed the bridge over Bayou Lafourche in 1866. Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad and Steamship Company constructed a railroad spur to Bayou Lafourche in 1878-1879, supplying service between Thibodaux and New Orleans. In June 1878, a new railroad wharf, constructed near Church Street, facilitated the transfer of goods between the bayou and the new railroad spur.[182] The Texas and Pacific Railroad also established a line in the 1880s, eventually connecting Thibodaux and Donaldsonville with a depot on the north side of Bayou Lafourche.

The proliferation of businesses in Thibodaux that began in the antebellum period increased in the decades after the war. The rise of mercantile establishments in Thibodaux was not unique, but emblematic of economic changes occurring across Louisiana. According to Scott Marler, each parish in Louisiana saw an increase in general stores during the period, which spread a new kind of consumerism across the south Louisiana landscape. For example, seventy-two general stores were established in West Feliciana Parish during the fifteen years after the Civil War.[183]

180. State of Louisiana Historic Preservation Division, "Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties," 8.
181. John A. Heitmann, "The Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Sugar Industry in the Lafourche Country," in *Lafourche Country*, vol. II (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Heritage Society, 1996), 101.
182. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 83.
183. Scott P. Marler, "Two Kinds of Freedom: Mercantile Development and Labor Systems in Louisiana Cotton and Sugar Parishes After the Civil War," *Agricultural History* 85, no. 2 (2011): 231, https://doi.org/10.3098/ah.2011.85.2.225.

Figure 2.11: View of Bayou Lafourche and Thibodaux in 1871 (Source: The Historic New Orleans Collection, The L. Kemper and Leila Moore Williams Founders Collection, 1965.52).

Marler compares the growth and distribution of general stores in sugar parishes and cotton parishes. Because the sugar industry adopted a labor system that paid cash wages early after the Civil War, laborers had more available money to spend at local stores. Credit sales remained a part of life in Louisiana during the late 1800s, but, according to Marler, the most successful stores did cash business. These general stores needed to maintain a sufficient inventory of goods and they turned to distribution companies like the Lobdell Company and the Percy Grocery Company, both headquartered in Thibodaux.

Site Development Prior to Percy-Lobdell Building (1846-1905)

The developmental site history of the parcels included within the current Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit reflects the growth of commercial industries within the local economy of Thibodaux and the Lafourche Parish region. The population of Thibodaux was 500 in 1840 and 1,900 in 1892; it grew rapidly to 4,300 by 1907. During this period, Thibodaux's importance as a regional commercial center increased. "At the time when most other communities in the parish had presumably one or two general stores, Thibodaux had over 100 mercantile establishments of many kinds. There were, for example, six grocery stores, seven restaurants, four barbers, five haberdashers, four laundries, four millinery shops, four drugstores, four saloons, four confectioners, and three banks. . . ."[184]

As described earlier, the first known residents of the site area were Acadians Guillaume and Marguerite Hamon who were likely *petit habitants* and farmed the site area between 1785-1808. Hamon's property encompassed the current location of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center. Joseph Mourvan purchased the land in 1808 and John Davidson Smith acquired the property in 1827. The site of the current Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center was west and outside the city limits of Thibodaux when it incorporated in 1830. In 1835 George S. Guion acquired five tracts of land, totaling about 800 acres, from John Davidson Smith. This included a portion of the land originally settled by Guillaume Hamon in 1785 and encompassed the present-day Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site. There is no record of anyone residing on the property between Hamon's sale of the property to Joseph Mourvan in 1808 and Guion's acquisition in 1835.[185]

Guion took several mortgages on the property in what appears to be an attempt to raise money to develop a sugar plantation, which he called Ridgefield. At the time of the 1840 census, the land "was uninhabited and was used as fields or pastures."[186] After another mortgage on the property in 1842, Guion apparently was able to get the plantation going and produced 361 hogsheads of sugar that year. It is certainly possible that the area that is today the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center was cultivated for sugar cane production or was the site of processing-related facilities.

184. State of Louisiana Historic Preservation Division, "Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties," 9.

185. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 36–37.

186. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 37.

In 1846, present-day Church Street formed the boundary between the town of Thibodaux and George Seth Guion's Ridgefield Plantation. In 1846, Guion had E. D. Richardson layout several lots west of Church Street on the edge of the town limits. Most of these lots became commercial and industrial sites. These lots currently comprise the majority of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site.

In the latter half of the 18th Century, the area around Church Street and the bayou became an active industrial area supported by railroad infrastructure. In the late 1870s, Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad and Steamship Company's railroad line entered Thibodaux from the south, following Church Street into town. The tracks turned east once it reached the levee and paralleled the bayou to the northwest edge of town. A turntable located near the Jackson Street bridge over the bayou was the end of the line. By 1898, the Southern Pacific Railroad was operating the route. They constructed a passenger and freight depot at the northern end of Church Street. Several commercial operations, many of whom supported the sugar industry, developed around the railroad along the west side of town. This development pattern continued over the following decades. As the west side of town became increasingly industrialized, the north end of town closest to the bayou became dominated by commercial and retail merchants, while the east and south sides of town remained residential.

Examples of industries located west of Jackson Street in the late 1800s included machine shops, foundries, boiler works, and sheet iron shops.[187] All of these provided essential support to sugar plantations, keeping their complex machinery operational. During the first decade of the 1900s, the industrial area of Thibodaux expanded westward along the bayou.

This area included the six parcels laid out by George S. Guion in 1846. These six lots stretched from Church Street on the east (now an abandoned right-of-way) to Ice Street (present-day Art Street) on the west. St. Mary Street formed the southern boundary and the lots extended north toward the bayou. The lots were numbered 200 to 205 (Figure 2.12). The westernmost lot, number 205, is the present location of the auditorium addition to the west of the Percy-Lobdell Building. The Percy-Lobdell Building would eventually occupy Lot 204. East of Lot 204, Lots 203 and 200 fronted the Public Road on top of the levee next to the bayou. Two smaller lots, Lots 201 and 202, fronted St. Mary Street. All four of these lots (200-203) became the present parking area at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit. Originally, the four bayou-fronting lots stopped at the Public Road atop the levee.

A pre-1905 image depicts the site area as seen from the public road and levee.[188] In the image, the public road is a narrow, hard-packed earthen path at the crest of the levee with steep side slopes on either side, sloping down to Bayou Lafourche. There is grassy vegetation on the levee banks; the bayou water level appears low in the image. There two houses facing the public road, with wood fencing surrounding the yards around the houses. Trees line the fences in the foreground of the image. Several small outbuildings are close to the levee at the center of the image. Hahn identified a long industrial building at the center of the image as the "Thibodaux Foundry," though it is unclear from the image whether this building is within the site area or further east.

This configuration would change by 1905, when the Public Road was abandoned and the levee removed. St. Mary Street then became the main road into Thibodaux from the west, and the lots were extended north to the edge of Bayou Lafourche. By 1907, a spur track along the bayou serviced several new industries constructed west of Church Street. These included an ice factory, a boiler works, and a grocery warehouse today known as the Percy-Lobdell Building. Guion's original lot layout remained until 1927, when the site was subdivided into twelve different parcels.

The following is an abbreviated overview of each original lot beginning with Guion's sale of the property to the time when the Percy-Lobdell Co., Ltd. became active on the site.

187. *Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA*, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co, Ltd., 1898).

188. Thurston Hahn, "Archeological and Historical Investigations of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Addition, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," Cultural Resource Survey (Thibodaux, LA, 1996), 31, JELA Archives.

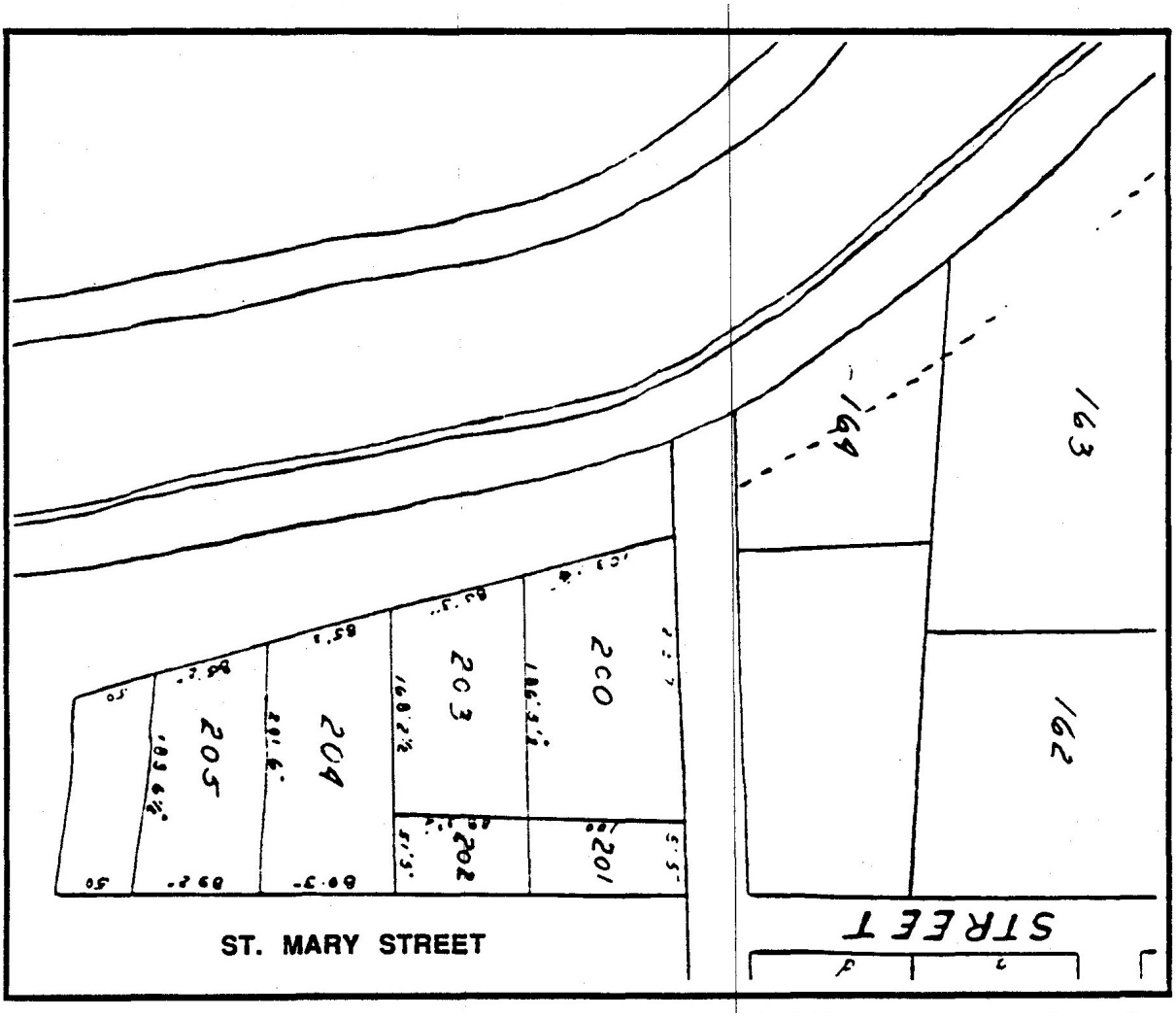

Figure 2.12: 1846 map depicting the original lot layout of the site. Included in the site area are lots 205-200 and lot 164 (Source: Hahn, Historical and Archeological Investigations).

Lot 205

Lot 205 was the westernmost lot on the block developed by Guion. George S. Guion sold Lot 205 to George Anderson, a foundry owner, on March 1, 1847. The location of Anderson's foundry is not known. Anderson had a house constructed on the property in early 1847.[189] Remnants of the foundation of this structure were possibly recovered in an 1989 archaeological investigation of the site.[190] This structure is likely to have survived until at least 1907 because a dwelling appears in this location on the 1907 Sanborn Map.[191] Hahn suggests that Anderson may have been a cooper as well as a foundryman because the tools of a cooper were in his estate when he died. Anderson sold the property to another cooper, an Irishman, Edward Hays, in 1850. Multiple households lived on the property during this time, with some members of each household apparently working in Hays's cooperage. Occupants also included the extended family of Hays's wife Ellen. After Hays's death in 1854, Ellen remarried and ownership of the property stayed within the family until 1904. The property was leased to other coopers, but this use of the property had ended by 1898 when the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map of that year shows a bakery on the site (Figure

189. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 40.
190. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 39.
191. *Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA*, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1907).

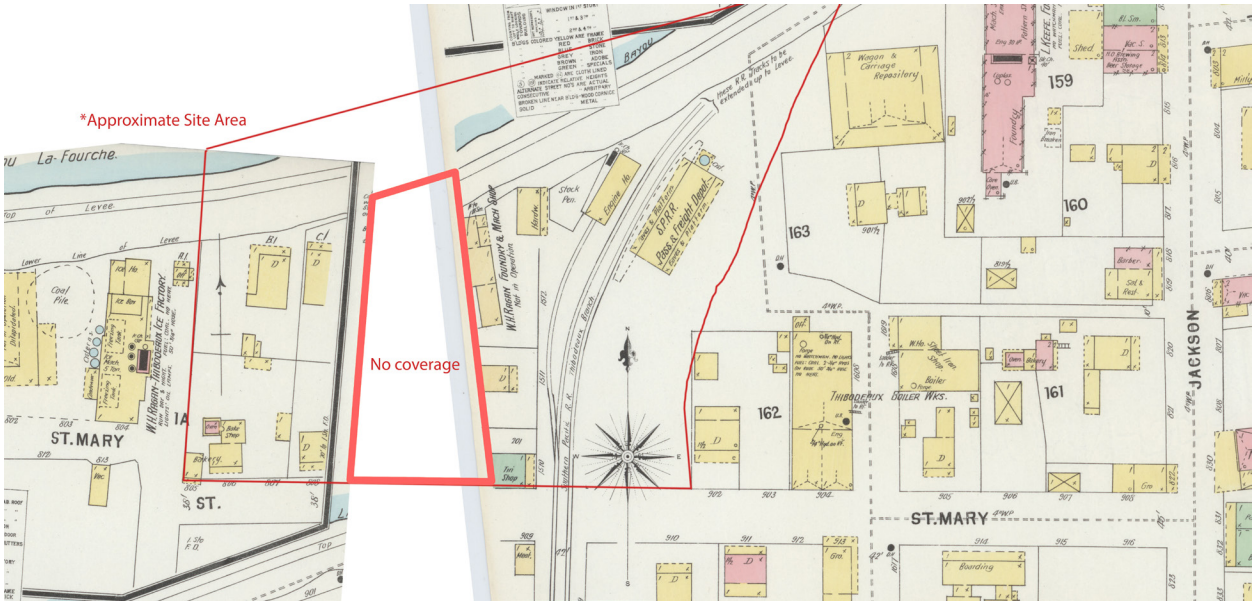

Figure 2.13: Modified portion of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1898. This image combines two sheets to show the site area, indicated in red. A large portion of the site area is excluded from the map (Source: Library of Congresshttp://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4014tm.g034081898).

2.13).[192] The bakery, presumably run by Antoine Federine, appears to have also been a residential dwelling, with multiple outbuildings and additions to the main structure. Archaeological evidence indicates the bakery was separated by fences from the dwelling built by Anderson and lot 204.

Ellen Hays's daughters from her second marriage, the Dyers, sold the property to William Jefferies in 1904. By 1907, when another Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map was published, the bakery was gone and the remaining two buildings on the lot were used as residences (Figure 2.14).[193] Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad Levee Track crossed the lot by 1907, terminating at the Thibodaux Ice Factory west of the lot across Ice Street (today's Art Street). Jeffries sold the property in 1911. In 1912, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows a large stable building occupying most of the parcel (Figure 2.15). The Percy-Lobdell Co., Ltd purchased the lot in 1918. They kept the stable next door to their building and converted it to a warehouse.

From the time of Guion's sale of lot 205 in 1847, the site was the location of a cooperage and multiple households for nearly fifty years. There was then briefly a bakery, then a stable, before being used for warehousing under the ownership of the Percy-Lobdell Company.

192. "Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA," 1898.
193. "Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA," 1907.

Lot 204

East of lot 205 was lot 204, the eventual site of the Percy-Lobdell Building (Figure 2.12). George S. Guion sold the lot to Patrick H. Gary and Charles E. Hawley on March 4, 1848. The two constructed a sawmill which burned down soon after construction. They sold the property and partially destroyed sawmill soon after to James Brown in March 1849. Brown seems to have also operated a sawmill at this location, but he ran into financial problems which resulted in numerous lawsuits concerning his property. Eventually, Joseph Ledet acquired the property in 1855. Ledet is believed to have removed the sawmill machinery before selling the property to Jean Baptiste Hebert two weeks later. Herbert lived on the property until 1868 and it does not appear that he operated any industry on the site. Hebert sold a building and two cisterns on the property to Pierre Bourée sometime before 1871. The building was apparently used as a store. The property changed hands multiple times between the 1855 and 1871, until it was sold to Evariste Maronge in 1871, whose family held the property until April 12, 1905, when it was sold to Dr. Thomas Stark, president of Lobdell Company, Limited.[194]

Not much is known about the structures present on lot 204 between 1855 and 1905. The sawmill apparently operated there between 1848 and1855.

194. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 57.

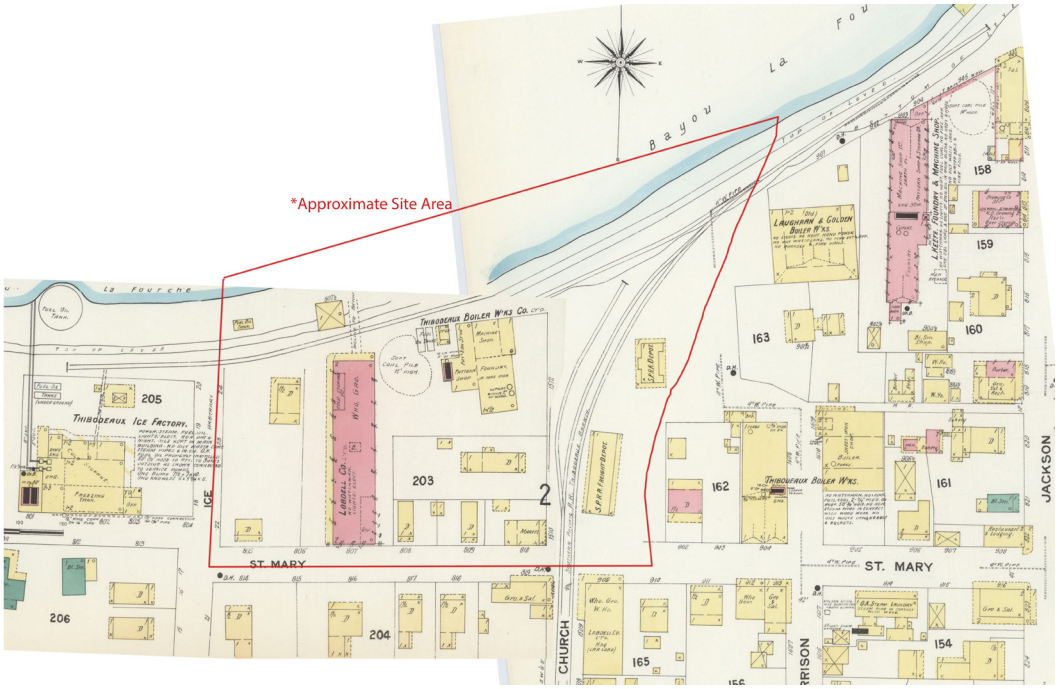

Figure 2.14: Modified portion of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1907. This image combines two sheets to show the earliest complete historical picture of the entire site area, indicated in red (Source: Library of Congresshttp://hdl.loc.gmd/g4014tm.g034081907).

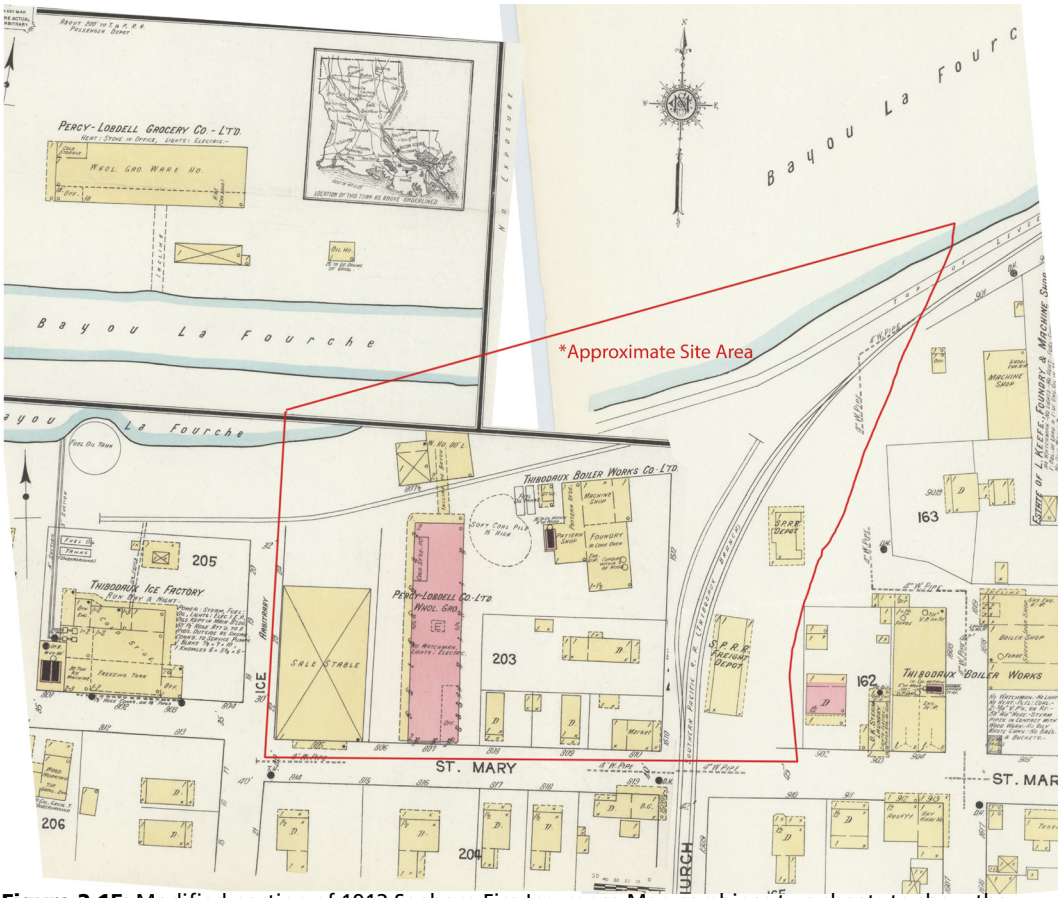

Figure 2.15: Modified portion of 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map combines two sheets to show the entire site area, indicated in red. Visible is a large stable added to the southwest corner of the site, as well as some additions to structures within the Percy-Lobdell operation (Source: Library of Congress http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4014tm.g034081912).

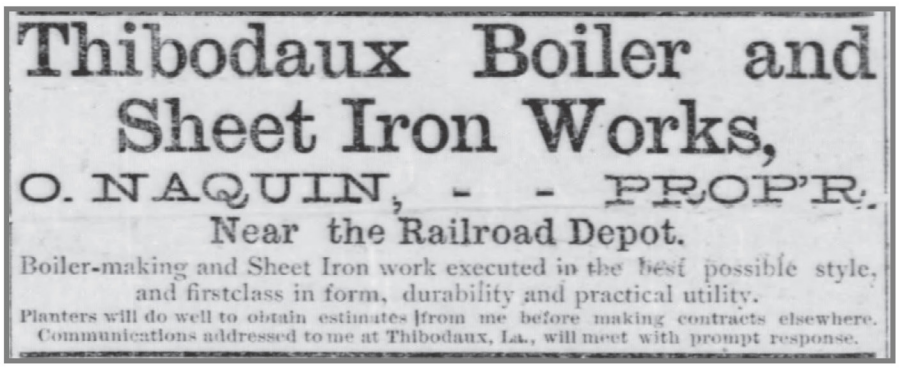
Thibodaux Boiler and Sheet Iron Works,
O. NAQUIN, - - PROP'R.
Near the Railroad Depot.
Boiler-making and Sheet Iron work executed in the best possible style, and firstclass in form, durability and practical utility.
Planters will do well to obtain estimates from me before making contracts elsewhere. Communications addressed to me at Thibodaux, La., will meet with prompt response.

Figure 2.16: 1889 advertisement in The Lafourche Comet for the Thibodaux Boiler Works lists Ozeme Naquin, proprietor (Source: newspapers.com).

Between 1855 and 1868 it was used, at least in part, as a residence, possibly also as a store. Between 1868 and1871 the sale price dropped dramatically, suggesting buildings on the site were dilapidated or missing. The 1885 and 1892 Sanborn Maps of Thibodaux do not depict this parcel, as it was beyond edge of the city limits. The 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows two one-story structures on the lot, listed as dwellings (Figure 2.13). One faces the Public Road on the north side of the lot and the other faces St. Mary Street. The construction of the present-day Percy-Lobdell Building occurred sometime between 1905-1906.

Therefore, before the construction of the existing Percy-Lobdell Building, Lot 204 featured a sawmill, a store, and multiple residential buildings.

Lots 203-200

East of Lot 204 were lots 200 through 203 (Figure 2.12). Lot 200 and Lot 203 fronted the Public Road along the levee. Guion sold lot 200 and 203 to Captain Ferdinand Streck in 1846. It does not appear that Streck made significant improvements to the lots. Streck sold the lots in 1850 to Michael Welsh. James Frost purchased the lots from Welsh in April of the same year. Frost's estate sold the lots in 1858 to Octave Blanchard. The 1860 census records Blanchard living at this location. Blanchard was a cooper, though it is not known if he operated a shop on this site. It is possible Blanchard could have been associated with other coopers operating on Lot 205 during the same time period. He sold the property to James Thompson on December 14, 1866. Thompson ran into financial problems and sold the property. Patrick Hogan purchased the lots in 1873. Hogan established the Hogan Boiler Shops and Foundry on the property. Hogan also "sold coal, ran a store and/or saloon, and resided on the lots."[195] Hogan's Boiler Shop abutted the Public Road. Hahn suggests that the location of Hogan's residence was likely a one-story, frame constructed dwelling facing Church Street that first appears on the 1898 Sanborn Map (Figure 2.13).[196]

Hogan also ran into financial problems and William (Walter) Ragan purchased the property at a Sherriff's Sale in 1882, taking over the foundry and machine shop. The 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows the Ragan Foundry and Machine Shop to the north, and the former Hogan residence to the south, both spanning lots 203 and 200. An advertisement Ragan took out in the July 27, 1899, edition of *The Lafourche Comet* announced that the Ragan's Foundry "is located in Thibodaux near the R.R. depot, and he wishes to inform the Planters and others in need of such work that he is prepared to attend to all kind of light repair work." (Figure 2.16).[197]

The 1907 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows the foundry again, now listed as the Thibodaux Boiler Works. Ozeme Naquin leased the property in 1900 from Ragan's sons to operate the foundry and machine shop. The map depicts a "fairly complex series of structures consisting of the foundry itself, a machine shop, pattern shop, stage, fuel oil tanks, and a large coal pile"[198] (Figure 2.14). The foundry and associated structures were of frame construction, with multiple structures clustered together with shared walls. Apparently,

195. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 67.
196. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 69.
197. "Ragan's Foundry," *The Lafourche Comet*, July 27, 1899, sec. Advertisements.
198. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 69.

Figure 2.17: This ca. 1915 image of the Thibodaux Boiler Works complex may have been the building located on site, however this cannot be verified by available documentation (Source: William Littlejohn Martin Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA).

the old Hogan residence was not included in the lease and was rented separately. It is unknown who may have resided at the old Hogan residence after Ragan's purchase of the property.

The Thibodaux Boiler Works (est. early 1880s) was a large operation, with multiple buildings on the east side of Church Street in addition to the foundry and machine shop west of Church Street. Ozeme was the son of a Lafourche Parish family. He served as a major in the Confederate army and is known to have worked on sugar plantations and foundries before acquiring half-stock ownership of the Thibodaux Boiler Works in 1881 and full ownership by 1887. As described by researcher John Desantis, "Ozeme Naquin, the owner of Thibodaux Boiler Works, employed eighteen people, turning out as many as thirty boilers a year. Boilers were as necessary to sugar processing as they were to steam locomotives. Strong boilers needed strong iron, as did other aspects of sugar cane infrastructure."[199]

In 1905 the Thibodaux Boiler Works rebuilt their facility, perhaps to update the aging Ragan-era facility. A ca. 1915 image shows large frame structure at the Thibodaux Boiler Works facility which may have been the structure that was present on the site (Figure 2.17).[200] However, according to the 1992 archeological report, "Since the Thibodaux Boiler Works, Co., Ltd., had at least three locations in Thibodaux, it cannot be stated with absolute certainty that this photograph represents the foundry in the project area."[201] The April 20, 1905, edition of *The Lafourche Comet* reported that "About a month ago the Thibodaux Boiler Works Co. reconstructed the building in which their machine shop is located. It is now larger, better ventilated and better lighted than formerly." By this time the machine shop and boiler works employed, according to the article, 85 men.[202] As can be determined from property sale records, the building complex was likely

199. Desantis, *The Thibodaux Massacre: Racial Violence and the 1887 Sugar Cane Labor Strike*, 85.

200. Theriot, *Lafourche Parish*, 56.

201. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 70.

202. "More Improvements," *The Lafourche Comet*, April 20, 1905.

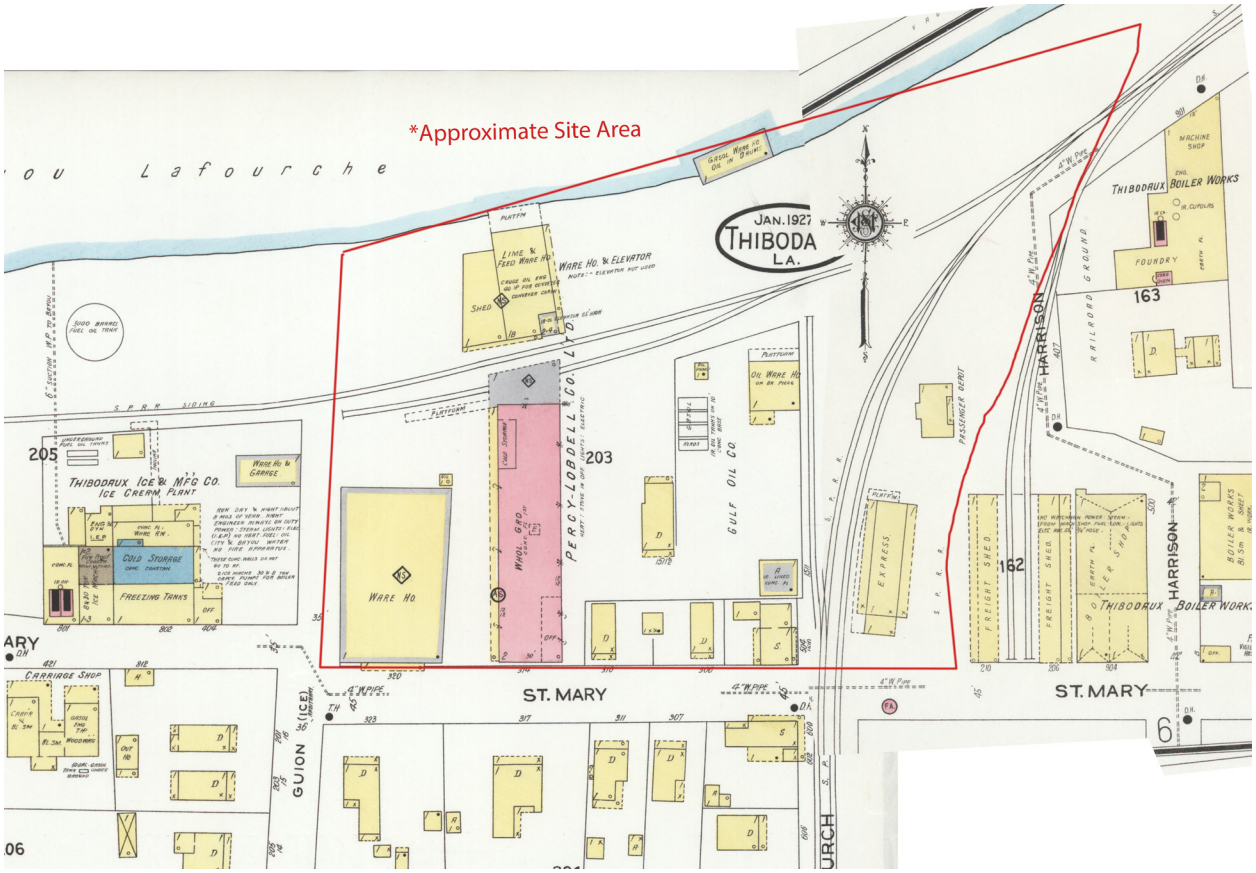

Figure 2.18: Modified portion of the 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance map combines two sheets to show the entire site area, indicated in red. Gulf Oil Co occupies the northeast corner of the site in the former location of the Thibodaux Boiler Works. The Thibodaux Boiler Works complex moved one block east and lots 203 and 200 are occupied by Gulf Oil Company (Source: Library of Congress http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4014tm.g034081927).

most removed by 1920, when the Percy-Lobdell Company, Ltd acquired the property.[203]

The old Hogan residence remained facing Church Street until around 1927. A similar shaped dwelling appears on the 1927 Sanborn Map, suggesting that the building may have been moved and turned to face St. Mary Street for a brief period (Figure 2.18). This structure was removed by 1930.[204]

Therefore, between approximately 1873 and 1916, lots 203 and 200 housed an industrial foundry and machine shop and a residence.

Lots 202-201

Lots 201 and 202 were smaller lots located south of lots 203 and 200. These fronted St. Mary Street. George Guion sold Lots 201 and 202 on January 15, 1848, with structures (assumed to be a residence) already on the property. Patrick Tyrls purchased them for himself and his wife, Ellen Carrick. Tyrls was an Irish immigrant and ditch digger. The family of four lived on the property with two other adult men and Ellen's sister. Little is known about the family's occupation of the site between 1860 and1895. After Tyrls died, Ellen remarried and left the property to her second husband in her will. The subsequent auction of the lots upon Ellen's death was challenged by one of Tyrls' sons, James, who claimed a 50 percent interest in the property. Eventually Patrick Hogan purchased the property from both parties in 1896 (fourteen years after he lost lots 203 and 200 at the Sheriff's sale).[205] Hogan sold the property shortly after in 1898 to Octave J. Toups. The 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows a wooden tin shop standing on the corner of Church Street and St. Mary Street, however the residential buildings known to have been on the site previously are not shown on that map (Figure 2.13). William Ragan purchased a portion of the

203. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 70.
204. *Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA*, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1930).
205. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 76–77.

property in 1902 to provide access between St. Mary Street and his foundry on Lots 203 and 200. Beginning in 1907, two single story wood dwellings appear on Sanborn maps and remain relatively unchanged through 1927. In this same time period, the tin shop was converted to a market building, with various additions and modifications over the years. Therefore, Lots 202 and 201 were used for a tin shop, a store, and residential dwellings from approximately 1848 through the 1920s.

Church Street Railroad R.O.W. / Lot 164

Church Street currently terminates at St. Mary Street, but the historic right-of-way went directly through the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit, terminating near the bayou. The eastern boundary of the unit at present-day W 1st Street encompasses an area that was an active railyard with freight and passenger depots, an engine house, and other accessory structures.

A branch line of Morgan's Louisiana & Texas Railroad & Steamship Company's main line from Morgan City to Lafayette extended to Thibodaux in 1879, following Church Street to approximately St. Mary Street and then paralleling the same general curve of present-day West 1st Street before terminating in a turntable at Jackson Street. The spur split from the main line where Jackson Street and Bayou Terrebonne (Canal Street) converge at the south end of town. It traveled north along a now abandoned right-of-way named "Harrison Street" to meet with Church Street.[206] Church Street carried the line north, from which point it curved at the levee toward Jackson Street. The line and turntable are first visible on the 1885 Sanborn Insurance Map (Southern Pacific Railroad Company began leasing Morgan's Louisiana and Texas line in 1885, but the line is not listed as Southern Pacific until the 1898 Sanborn Map).[207]

By 1898, a spur had been added to an engine house, stock pen, and hardware building east of W.H. Ragan's Foundry and Machine Shop (then defunct). A "Passenger and Freight Depot" is located along the inside (east) of the curve, across from the engine house (both buildings constructed by Morgan's Louisiana and Texas RR in 1878). The depot has overhanging eaves covering a platform on two sides. The line ends just past the depot, with a note on the Sanborn Map indicating that the tracks will be "extended up to the levee," suggesting that the line to Jackson Street may have been undergoing construction at that time. [208]

By 1907, the engine house had been removed, but the spur leading to it remained. The stock pen and hardware building were also removed. The "Passenger and Freight Depot" (Express Office/ Depot) was moved southwest closer to the rail line's intersection with St. Mary Street. A second, smaller depot was added in the former location of the first depot. The Lobdell Company operated a grocery warehouse on the south side of St. Mary Street, just south of the freight depot. This building had a loading dock along the railroad. (The Lobdell Company also owned a building further down St. Mary Street, located on the north side of the street. This is the building now known as the Percy-Lobdell Building.) A spur track was added south of the levee that extended past the Percy-Lobdell Building and terminated at the Thibodaux Ice Factory. The railcars traveled along Church Street, curving northeast to Jackson Street, then redirected west to loading docks at the Thibodaux Ice Factory and Lobdell's grocery warehouse along the bayou. The ice factory had a chute leading directly to the rail line for loading into cars; the Lobdell Company had a ramp that passed over the track and continued to the bayou. The spur primarily served these two businesses, although it is assumed that the Thibodaux Boiler Works operations did business with the railroad as well, potentially servicing engines and fabricating parts. This arrangement of the railroad remains essentially the same until the 1920s, when additional spurs were added.

An undated image depicts several site features in this area, likely as they appeared between ca. 1898-1907 (Figure 2.19). The image is taken from an area near the levee at the northeast end of the site, facing southwest. The image depicts a heavy industrial site with little vegetation. The spur track and stock pen are visible in the foreground, with a cattle chute leading to a spur line off the Church Street ROW The stock pen is a painted wooden fence with four rails, which comes to a point at the intersection of the spur track and the tracks along the Church Street R.O.W. The

206. "Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA," 1907.
207. Guy Dunscomb, A Century of Southern Pacific Steam Locomotives, 1862-1962 (Modesto, California, 1967), 424–26.
208. "Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA," 1898.

Figure 2.19: Undated image of the small Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, passenger rail, and stock pen ca. 1899-1907 at the northeastern end of the site area (Source: State Library of Louisiana).

rear cars of a passenger train are on the Southern Pacific Railroad line following the Church Street R.O.W. The cars on the tracks are consistent with the style of passenger cars used by the Southern Pacific Railroad between the late 1880s and early 1900s, manufactured by the Pullman Company. The engine house appears to have already been removed by this time, as the spur leading to it is blocked by a stack of palettes to the left of the image. The small passenger depot is in the middle of the image, and appears to be a well-built, one-story gable-on-hip roofed building with a projecting side gable on the west facade. There is a small projection on the west facade (visible on Sanborn Maps) with an awning covering the window, which may have been the ticket booth. The roof appears to be clay tile, with a chimney projecting from the center of the side gable, indicating the building was heated. The main level is lined with large eight over eight windows, with a transom and doorway on the western facade. The roofline of the larger depot is visible to the right of the image behind the rail cars. In the background is the Thibodaux Boiler Works complex (the company's other location, outside of the site area) near St Mary and Harrison Streets. The image is blurry, but the name of the proprietor "O. Naquin" is visible painted on the building.

Another undated image from this period (ca.1893-1906) depicts this area from another angle (Figure 2.20). The "Passenger and Freight Depot," railroad tracks, and the engine house are as they appeared on the 1898 Sanborn Map. The image, taken from the east side of the tracks near the northeast end of the site, faces southwest. The depot is a gabled frame building with overhanging eaves and decorative scalloped fascia board. The depot appears to be elevated on a wood pier foundation. A wooden above-ground cistern sits just north of the depot, likely used to refill steam locomotives. A wooden ramp leads to a loading platform at the depot where a steam locomotive is stopped. The steam locomotive is labeled "Morgan LA & Texas R.R." The gable roofline of the engine house is visible beyond the locomotive to the right of the image, with the same scalloped fascia detail.

Between 1846 and the construction of the Percy-Lobdell Building in 1905-1906, the six lots contained in the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit were used by skilled tradesmen and their families as places of home and work, with a

Figure 2.20: Undated image (ca. 1900) of the Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger & Freight Depot, and the engine house. The steam locomotive is identified as "Morgan LA & Texas R.R." Southern Pacific had been leasing the Morgan Louisiana & Texas line since 1885 (Source: William Littlejohn Martin Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA).

cooperage, foundry, sawmill, and other industrial production facilities adjacent to modest dwellings. The parcels were bounded on the west and south by city streets (St. Mary Street and Ice Street). To the east, the block was bounded by a railroad line and Church Street. On the north, the block was bounded by the bayou, a public road, and eventually a railroad spur track. Multiple tracks and railroad buildings were located at the eastern end of the site area.

Percy-Lobdell Company Period & Twentieth Century Development of Site (1905-1982)

Lobdell Company Ltd/ Percy-Lobdell Company, Ltd Period (1905-1920)

The Lobdell & Percy Company, Ltd., grocers, was established in 1901 by Peter Randolph Percy (1872-1950) and John Little Lobdell, Jr., (1848-1910). As of the 1900 census, Percy was living with Lobdell's family in Thibodaux and both men were listed as merchant grocers. By March 1900, the two men worked together as commission and brokerage agents. They shared an office in the McCulla building on Market Street until March 1900 when they moved to the Meyer Building on Main Street. According to *The Lafourche Comet*, one of the products they represented was Joy Flour.[209] For a brief period the two were listed as "Jobbers & Commission Merchants." An advertisement in a 1900 edition of *The Lafourche Comet* stated that

209. "Local Rays," *The Lafourche Comet*, March 1, 1900.

"Sugar Planters Orders given Special Attention" by their company.[210] It appears the two men intended to move into a new warehouse on Thibodaux St., the plans of which are briefly mentioned in a news article from March 1900 stating that "The Meyer Bros are having a warehouse erected on Thibodaux Street (the rear of their Main Street property) for the accommodation of their tenants, Messrs Lobdell & Percy, the business of the latter gentlemen developing so as to require more space." This deal must have fallen through because the company leased part of a lot at the southwest corner of St. Mary and Church Streets in January 1901, establishing a grocery and dry good store.

The Weekly Thibodaux edition on February 2, 1901, announced the creation of "a stock company whose title is Lobdell and Percy Company, Limited."[211] Several investors, including Edward Badeaux and Joseph Claudet, two local businessmen, invested $25,000 in the company. The article states that "Messrs. Lobdell and Percy have done a splendid business in the past. And with an increase in capital and the additional strength given by Messers Edward Badeaux and Mr. Joseph Claudet, who have in the past proved themselves to be men of excellent business qualities, the success of the new concern seems assured."[212] Badeaux was wholesale candy dealer and Claudet managed the Thibodaux Ice and Manufacturing Company. John Lobdell served as the new company's president and Peter Percy was its vice president. The company apparently had plans to build a large building on a lot they leased, "which is situated just above the Southern Pacific Rwy's freight depot, and adjacent to the tracks of that company, which will enable them to handle their freight at a minimum cost."[213]

In March 1904, J. L. Lobdell, president of the Lobdell & Percy Company, Ltd., sold the company's assets to Dr. Thomas Ashton Stark (1866-1944), president of the Lobdell Company, Ltd., for $30,000. The sale constituted a reorganization of the company and provided for the independent operation of Percy Grocery Co. Included in the sale was rights to the lease and all the merchandise at the St. Mary and Church Street location which included a flatboat, livestock, carts, buggies, agricultural implements, and all the company's merchandise.[214] J. L. Lobdell became vice president and manager and Benjamin J. Roth of Napoleonville became secretary and treasurer of the company.[215] The separation between the Lobdell Company and Percy Grocery Company lasted until 1909, when they merged again.

On April 12, 1905, Stark purchased Lot 204 from Octavie Maronge Frost one block west of their existing warehouse for $3,850. The price is almost double paid for the adjacent lot, Lot 205, a year before. Hahn concludes that the valuation of the property suggests that construction of the Percy-Lobdell Building began in late 1904 or early 1905, possibly before the April 1905 sale of the property, and that the building was completed in late 1905 or early 1906.[216] He writes that, "From the purchase price alone, it would appear that the present Percy-Lobdell Building was at least in the process of construction at the time of the sale."[217] This theory is partially refuted by a newspaper article on improvements around Thibodaux, printed in the April 20, 1905, edition of *The Lafourche Comet* which announced that "The Lobdell Co., one our successful wholesale establishments, has just given evidence of its solidity. It has bought a site on which to locate its large warehouse and offices, the place bought being the property of the late Evariste Maronge, which is near the Thibodaux Ice Factory . . . We expect to see the new owners soon erect a large building on the property just acquired. "[218] This quote confirms that the building was not yet under construction by late April 1905, but was at least completed by 1907, as it appears on the Sanborn Map from that year. Two lots west of the Percy-Lobdell Building, the W.H. Ragan-Thibodaux Ice Factory also rebuilt their facilities sometime between the printing of the 1898 and 1907 Sanborn Maps. It is likely that there was a strong relationship between the two businesses, as ice would have been required for perishable grocery storage and transport prior to refrigeration.

210. "Lobdell and Percy," *The Lafourche Comet*, March 22, 1900, sec. Advertisements.
211. "Lobdell and Percy Co, Ltd.," *The Weekly Thibodaux*, February 2, 1901.
212. "Lobdell and Percy Co, Ltd."
213. "Lobdell and Percy Co, Ltd."
214. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 58.
215. "Will Leave for Thibodaux," *Assumption Pioneer*, April 2, 1904.
216. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 54–57.
217. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 57.
218. "More Improvements."

As mentioned previously, at the time of the 1907 the Sanborn Map, the Lobdell Co., Ltd. was operating two warehouses. One was east of Church Street, closer to town and next to the railroad depot. The second was west of Church Street and is the Percy-Lobdell Building. The 18,000 square-foot Percy-Lobdell Building, as it is currently known, was a massive upgrade to their warehousing capacity.[219] The Percy Grocery Co. also operated a third warehouse across the bayou from downtown Thibodaux during this time. Percy Grocery Co. and the Lobdell Co., Ltd. advertised independently in the local newspapers between 1904-1908.

As mentioned previously, concerns about water levels and continued flooding resulted in the construction of a levee across the mouth of Bayou Lafourche, cutting it off from the Mississippi River. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began the construction of a temporary dam in 1903 and completed the project in 1904. This had significant impacts for bayou-fronting properties. Blocking the mouth of Bayou Lafourche at Donaldsonville removed the threat of flooding along the banks of Bayou Lafourche and made obsolete the artificial levees constructed alongside the bayou. This led to the abandonment of the Public Road in Thibodaux that traveled along the levee on the south banks of the bayou. Prior to 1905, the Public Road was the primary road heading north and west out of Thibodaux. Upon its abandonment, St. Mary Street became the main road out of town.[220] This also allowed property owners to extend their property lines all the way to the bayou around 1905, when the Percy-Lobdell Building was under construction.

The siting of both the rebuilt Thibodaux Ice Factory and the new Percy-Lobdell Building appears to have been influenced by the changes on Bayou Lafourche and the abandonment of the old Public Road.[221] The Thibodaux Ice Factory's office faced the Public Road in 1898. After the ice factory was reconstructed prior to 1907, the office moved to St. Mary Street. The Percy-Lobdell Building's office also faced St. Mary Street, with its loading area oriented toward the bayou.

The damming of the bayou stopped the periodic fluctuations of the water level, however it led the bayou to becoming stagnant without the influx of fresh water. The dam prevented boats from traveling directly to New Orleans, forcing boats to head south toward the Gulf of Mexico and back up through the mouth of the Mississippi. With more restrictions on boat activity, the railroad and roads supplanted boats for personal transportation and the conveyance of goods into and out of Thibodaux. With flooding of the bayou controlled and as other means of transportation grew, the road along the levee became unnecessary. Eliminating the Public Road allowed for the construction of a railroad spur along the bayou which attracted commercial customers. Southern & Pacific Railroad had incorporated Morgan's Louisiana & Texas into their growing conglomeration by 1900. Southern Pacific is listed on all Sanborn Insurance Maps of Thibodaux after 1907. Sometime between 1898 and 1907, the company added the Levee Track spur, between Church Street and Ridgefield Road.[222]

Access to the railroad and bayou created a strategic location for businesses. A circa 1900 photograph looking west along the Public Road and levee shows the character of the landscape in this active corridor (Figure 2.21). W.H. Ragan's Foundry and Machine Shop is in the foreground, near the Levee Track. In the background is W. H. Ragan's Thibodaux Ice Factory. Even after goods could no longer be shipped to New Orleans via Donaldsonville, the bayou remained a transportation resource for commerce. It is reported that a paddle boat called the *Interstate* pushed barges loaded with merchandise to Thibodeaux from New Orleans, making two deliveries each week. Goods were transported via a conveyor belt from a loading platform on the bayou to the Percy-Lobdell Building. A similar scene is depicted in an undated photograph of the Percy Grocers building on the north bank of Bayou Lafourche (Figure 2.22). The image shows a barge being unloaded by workers onto a sloped platform leading up to the grocery warehouse. This process is likely similar to that used at the Percy-Lobdell Building located on the opposite side of the bayou.

219. "Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA," 1907.
220. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 28.
221. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 28.
222. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 28.

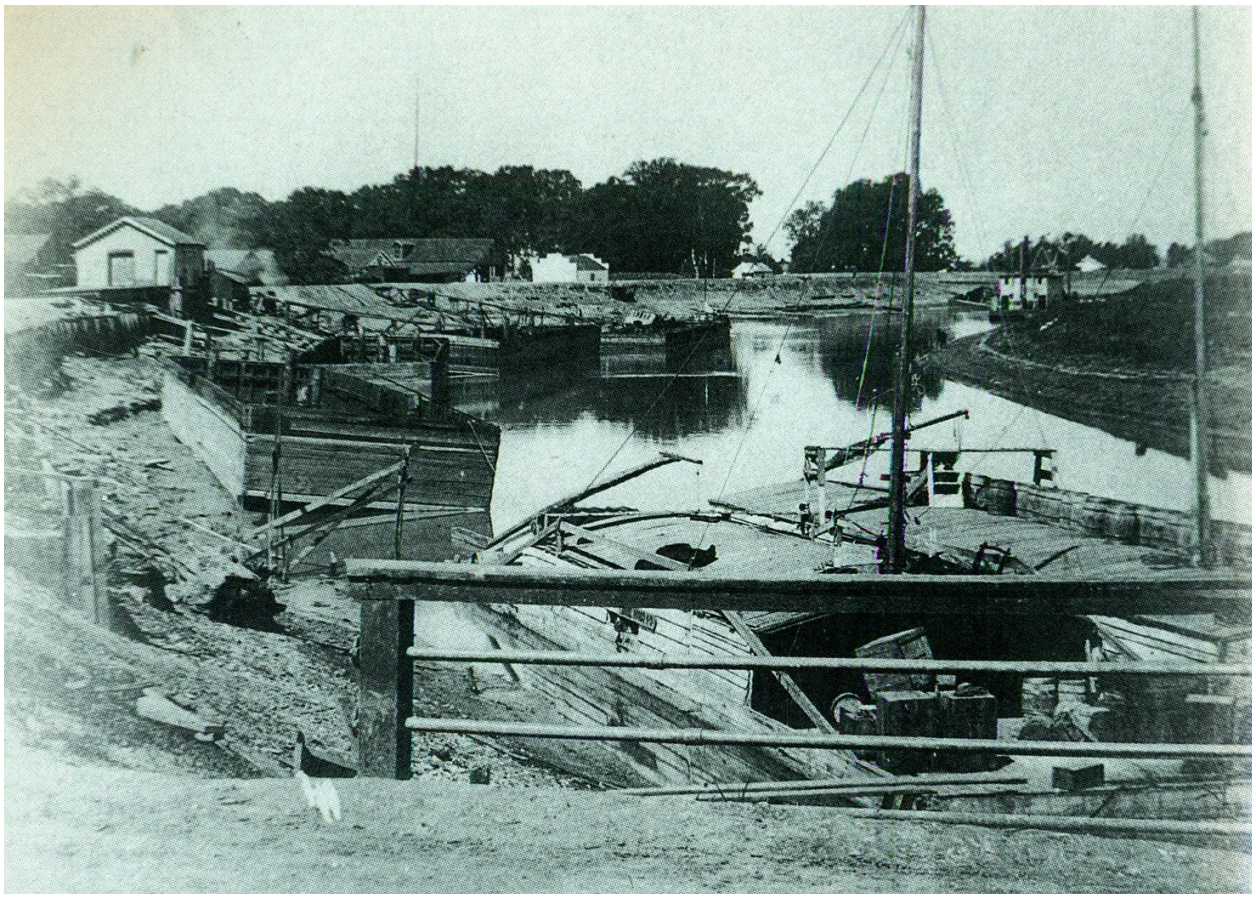

Figure 2.21: Undated image circa 1890-1900 of Bayou Lafourche shows the heavy use of the bayou by flatboats and other vessels (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure 2.22: Undated image shows the Percy Grocery Co. facility on the north shore of Bayou Lafourche, opposite and downriver from the Percy-Lobdell Building. The loading ramp construction is likely similar to the ramp used at the Percy-Lobdell Building (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

The 1907 Sanborn Map shows the arrangement of the buildings and parcels on the entire Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site at the time the Lobdell Company became active there (Figure 2.14). The Percy-Lobdell Building (known then as the Lobdell Building) is the only brick structure on the site. It stretched from Saint Mary Street on the south toward the bayou, reaching the Levee Track spur. A canopy on the first story extended along the west and north elevations and connected to a ramp leading down to the loading platform on the bayou. As mentioned, at this time the office was located in the southeast corner of the building close to St. Mary Street. An elevator was located in the center of the two-story building and a cold storage room was located near the northwest corner on the first floor. The building had a tin or slate roof and twenty window openings, some with iron shutters. The building was outfitted with electric lighting.

A one-story frame stable stood on the banks of the bayou north of the building.[223] Two small frame dwellings were located on Lot 205, immediately west of the Percy-Lobdell Building. A fuel oil tank was located near the bayou to the north of Lot 205. The "Thibodeaux Boiler Works Co., Ltd." operated by Ozeme Naquin spans lots 203 and 200, east of the Percy-Lobdell Building. The 1907 Sanborn Maps shows a 15-feet-tall coal pile between the two buildings. The boiler works complex included two fuel oil tanks, a small storage shed, and four connected structures facing the Levee Track and bayou. The old Hogan dwelling, two other small dwellings, and a market building are located in the southeast corner of the site.

On January 14, 1909, the Percy-Lobdell Company was created by merging the Lobdell Company, Limited and the Percy Grocery Company, Limited. The new company combined the assets of the two companies and the primary shareholders of each company joined to form a new Board of Directors. Included on the original Board of Directors were E. U. Morvant, C. V. Mire, Joseph Claudet, P. R. Percy, and H. L. Sims from the Percy Grocery Company and Dr. Thomas Stark, R. C. Martin, Jr., James Beary, B. N. Roth and L. E. Caillout from the Lobdell Company.[224] J. L. Lobdell died suddenly in 1910 soon after the merger but was omitted from the list of officers and stockholders in the new company.[225]

Between 1907 and 1912, the Percy-Lobdell Company, Limited made some additions between the main building and their structures along the bayou. Most of the surrounding parcels remained essentially unchanged during this period. All structures on lots 203-200 to the east of the Percy-Lobdell Building remained unchanged, including three dwellings, the boiler works, and market building. The two dwellings on Lot 205 west of the Percy-Lobdell Building are gone by 1912 and were replaced with a large frame stable. The Percy-Lobdell Company's changes to their lot included the addition of an 80-foot warehouse adjacent to their existing stable along the bayou and a loading ramp connecting the warehouse to the main building platform (Figure 2.15).

The Percy-Lobdell Building served as the primary warehouse for the wholesale grocery company. Until at least 1916, the Percy-Lobdell Company also continued to operate a second warehouse on the north side of Bayou Lafourche. This building was previously the headquarters of the Percy Grocery Co.

Early 1900s advertisements list flours and grain, animal feed, and 'willow-ware' among the company's offerings.[226] An advertisement in a December edition of *The Lafourche Comet* lists over a dozen different "agricultural implements" for sale, including ten different styles of plows, harrows, planters, and mule carts.[227] As early as 1908 the company advertised themselves as agents for Gulf Oil gasoline and coal oil. The fuel oil tank present in the 1907 Sanborn Map could have been for oil distributed by the Lobdell Company. By 1910 the company sold a range of goods, including "lamb gloves, potted ham, tomato paste, vanilla wafers, chips, snuff, various cigars, and "Bud Beer.'"[228]

223. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 28.
224. Elton Oubre, "A Brief Look Into the Earliest History of the Percy Lobdell Building" (Thibodaux, LA, July 15, 1988), Nicholls State University Archives.
225. "Lobdell and Percy Grocery Companies Merge Interests," *The Times-Democrat*, January 17, 1909.
226. As seen in advertisements in *The Lafourche Comet* between the years 1901-1908.
227. "Bargains in Agricultural Implements," *The Lafourche Comet*, December 30, 1909.
228. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 58.

A review of Thibodaux's local newspapers during the first decades of the 1900s shows that residents in the region were exposed to a wide range of brand-name goods arriving to their town from across the country. As William Link has observed about the rise of consumerism in the postbellum South, "by offering their customers finished goods, supplies, feed, and fertilizers, merchants provided a vital connection to the resources of the outside world."[229]

During the first two decades of the 1900s, residents of Thibodaux opened their newspapers to learn of a myriad of brand-name goods available in stores in their town. Winsberg's clothing store sold Hart Schaffner and Marx suits, Percy-Lobdell Company offered Bevo soft drink, LeBlanc's Garage sold new model Hudson cars, Malhiot's Phonograph and Curio Store sold Victor Victrolas and records.

The conclusion that historians like Matthew Hall and Edward Ayers make is that while participation in consumerism was uneven across the South, depending upon local economic conditions, the general consumption patterns that existed in the United States during the late 1800s and early 1900s "penetrated" most areas of the region. Thibodaux certainly appears to support their argument with companies like the Percy-Lobdell Company offering a wide array of new products and conveniences in town and in general stores distributed across the parish.

Between 1912-1916, the Percy-Lobdell Company invested in some additional equipment on the property, evidence of the company's steady growth. It is mentioned in *The Lafourche Comet* newspaper on May 9, 1912, that the company commissioned construction of a 65 ft 'solar oil' powered boat with 15 ton capacity to "deliver goods to customers along bayou Lafourche," which is described as "evidence that the business of the Percy-Lobdell Co. is steadily forging ahead."[230]

In late September 1913, the Percy-Lobdell Company announced that it planned to build a modern grain elevator to handle local corn brought via Bayou Lafourche and the railroad. Mr. Percy, the company's manager, contracted with an elevator builder from Illinois for a plant with a 20,000-bushel capacity equipped with cleaners, shuckers, shellers, and cooling fans. The plant was to be complete by November 10, 1913.[231] As of 1914, the company sold feed to the police department at Napoleonville.[232]

The corn elevator appears to have been an addition to the warehouse along the bayou. The 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the elevator on the southeast corner the "Feed Warehouse" (Figure 2.23).[233] The map also shows an open platform extending east from the feed warehouse to a one-story "Oil House" clad in sheet metal. The small stable next to the grain warehouse had been rebuilt since 1912. The canopy along the north elevation of the main building had been replaced by a much larger canopy extending to the Levee Track to the north. One of these projects may have been the addition to the company's warehouse requested in a 1914 building permit.[234] The corn elevator and expanded warehouse space may have been the result of the Percy-Lobdell Company's operation to sell locally produced crops. They advertised in the December 20, 1917, edition of *The Lafourche Comet* that "we are well equipped to handle the corn crop of Bayou Lafourche and tributary waters as we operate our own boat and barge line, and in most instances can save the growers a long haul." So they encouraged local farmers that "if you have anything to offer in ear corn or shelled corn, do not fail to give us an opportunity to make you a bid. Our buyers will be in the field regularly."[235]

The 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map also curiously shows the number of openings on the main Percy-Lobdell Building reduced dramatically from twenty openings to nine during this time. It suggests that some windows were closed or perhaps the surveyor only counted openings on the ground floor. Either way, the reasoning for this is unknown.

229. Quoted in Matthew R. Hall, "'The Reliable Grocer': Consumerism in a New South Town, 1875-1900," *The North Carolina Review* 90, no. 3 (2013): 271.
230. "Packet F.T. Nichols," *The Lafourche Comet*, May 12, 1912.
231. "To Our Customers and Planters," *Assumption Pioneer*, September 27, 1913.
232. "Proceedings of the Police Jury," *Assumption Pioneer*, July 25, 1914.
233. *Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA*, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1916).
234. "Proceedings of the Board of Alderman," *Assumption Pioneer*, May 30, 1914.
235. "We Want Your Corn," *The Lafourche Comet*, December 20, 1917, sec. Advertisements.

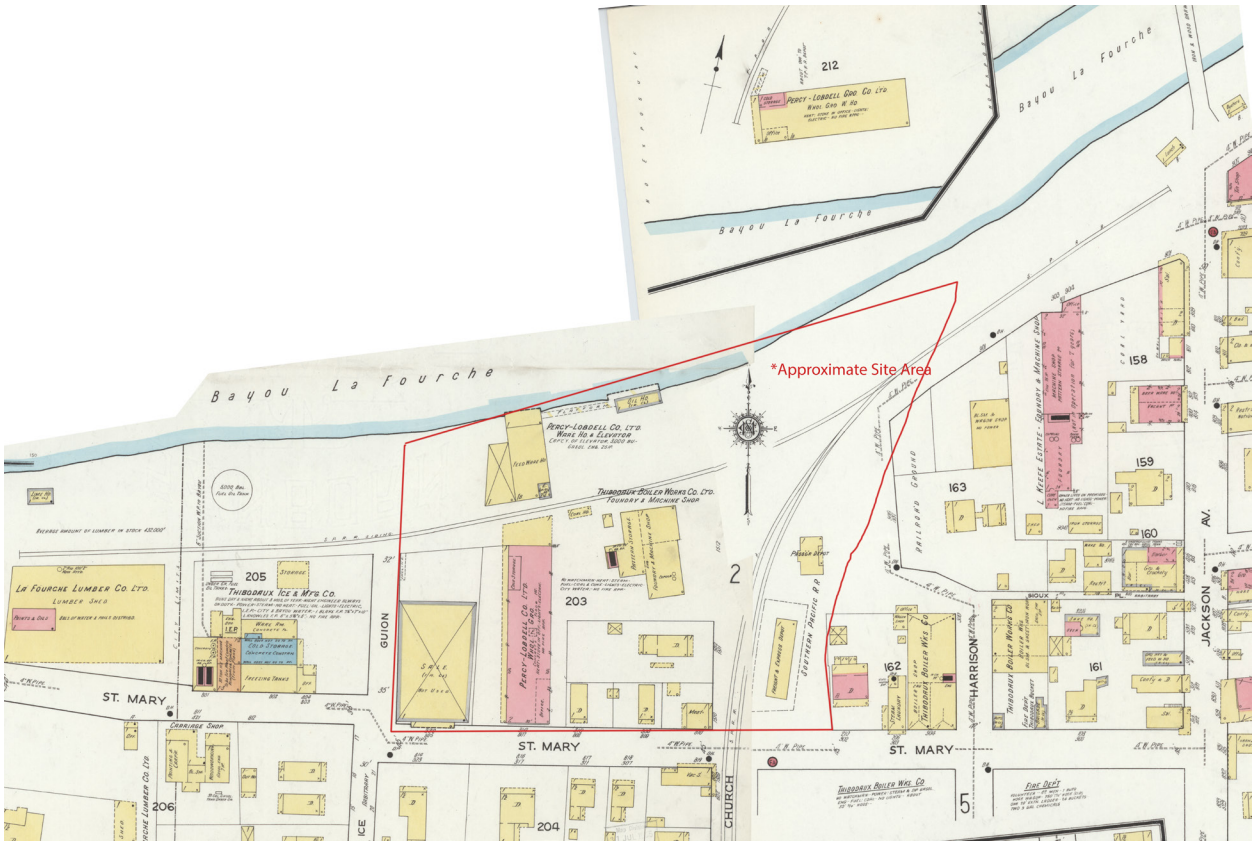

Figure 2.23: Modified portion of 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map combines two sheets to show the entire site area, indicated in red (Source: Library of Congress http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4014tm.g034081916).

In 1917, A. S. Baker of Percy-Lobdell Company, Ltd., reported that the company would be selling several railcars worth of Middle State Red Triumph and Long White seed potatoes.[236] That same year, Baker also advertised that the company was "in the market for your potatoes, onions, [and] garlic," noting "we are operating our own boats and barges."[237] It is evident from these descriptions that the company used both the rail line and bayou to distribute their goods.

In addition to the changes the Percy-Lobdell Company made to their facility between 1912-1916, the Thibodaux Boiler Works made minor changes to their fuel storage area, replacing the two fuel oil tanks with a coal house. The 15-foot soft coal pile that was between the two companies had also been removed. The three dwellings on the site remained essentially unchanged. The large sale stable on Lot 205, listed as unused in 1916, was sheathed in tin siding.

Between 1918 and 1920, the Percy-Lobdell Company purchased four lots around their building, taking control of nearly the entire block.[238] On July 11, 1918, Percy-Lobdell Company, Limited purchased Lot 205, with the now-vacant stable, from Minnie Jones McGee for $5,000.[239] On March 27, 1920, the company purchased two lots (200, 203, and portion of 202) east of their warehouses from William Ragan for $10,000.[240] Hahn suggests that the Thibodaux Boiler Works foundry building was likely demolished by the time of this sale, as the Percy-Lobdell Company would have had no use for the building.[241] The Thibodaux Boiler Works built a new foundry and machine shop, which appears on the 1927 Sanborn Map, closer to its large complex east of the railroad tracks (Figure 2.18).[242]

236. "Plant Good Seed Potatoes," *Assumption Pioneer*, January 20, 1917.
237. "Potatoes, Onions, Garlic," *Assumption Pioneer*, May 5, 1917, sec. Advertisements.
238. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 60.
239. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 48.
240. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 70.
241. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 70.
242. *Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA*, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1927).

In 1919 Percy-Lobdell Company, Limited reached an agreement with Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad and Steamship Company to build a 180-foot-long Scale Track immediately south of the Levee Track to the rear of the Percy-Lobdell Building.[243] As it would be primarily used by the Percy-Lobdell Company, the company paid for and assumed maintenance of the track, while the railroad completed the actual construction. A platform scale made by E. & T. Fairbanks & Company was installed in the south part of the first floor near the front entrance. This scale was set into the floor, allowing carts to be rolled onto it and weighed.

For a fifteen-year period between 1905 and 1920, the area that is currently the site of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit was defined by the successful operation of the Percy-Lobdell grocery warehousing company that progressively acquired much of the site. The activities of the Thibodaux Boiler Works foundry and machine shop during this time were a continuation of the same land use that began in 1873 with J. Patrick Hogan, followed by W.H Ragan, and Ozeme Naquin. The over 40-year operation of a boiler-making foundry and machine shop on the property is a significant aspect of the site's developmental history. Also significant is the working-class residential use of the site alongside other industrial uses beginning when the first lot was sold by Guion in 1846.

Interstate Wholesale Grocers and Gulf Oil (1921-1975)

In February 1921, Interstate Wholesale Grocers, Inc. bought Percy-Lobdell Company, Limited for $362,948.41. Established in Covington, Louisiana, in 1891, Interstate had grown into one of the largest corporations in Louisiana and operated branches at Covington, Bogalusa, Franklin, Slidell, and Shelby, Louisiana, and Hattiesburg, Tylertown, Laurel, and Columbia, Mississippi.[244] The purchase included all the property and merchandise in Thibodaux and Lockport and the company retained the Percy-Lobdell name.[245]

The company continued to use both the bayou and railroad to distribute its products. In July 1921, the company's packet boat F. T. Nicholls and its associated barges began running extended routes from New Orleans to Thibodaux via Golden Meadow and Houma.[246] In 1930, Thibodaux built a 17-mile pipeline to the Mississippi River to provide the city with drinking water. Bayou Lafourche, lacking an influx of fresh water, filled with sediment, water lilies, and industrial pollution.[247] In the early 1950s, the Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District constructed a pump station to divert a controlled flow of water from the Mississippi River into the bayou.[248]

In the 1920s and 1930s, after oil was discovered in the marshlands of Lafourche Parish, the oil and gas industry dramatically increased its presence in the local economy. The combined significance of agriculture and oil industry in the parish is reflected in its motto "Feeding and Fueling America." In January 1925, Interstate Wholesale Grocers sold part of lot 200 and a 50 percent interest in lots 200, 202, and 203 to the Gulf Refining Company.

A 1924 map associated with this sale and the January 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map show significant changes to the site during this period. The 1924 map shows that the Thibodaux Boiler Works building had been removed by that time and much of the area along the bayou was, for a few years, vacant. The three dwellings in the southeast corner of the site are still present in 1924. The Percy-Lobdell Building and associated buildings on the bayou appear unaltered, with the exception of the stable being used for storage (Figure 2.24).

The 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps illustrate several changes to Lots 200 & 203 after Gulf Oil purchased interest in the properties (Figure 2.18). The Gulf Oil Company constructed a bulk oil facility that serviced gasoline-powered boats operating on Bayou Lafourche. The facilities include a new corrugated iron oil warehouse on brick piers with a loading platform. A railroad spur

243. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 28.
244. "With the Louisiana Editors," *Assumption Pioneer*, December 11, 1920.
245. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 61.
246. "Packet F.T. Nicholls & Barges," *The Lafourche Comet*, November 3, 1921.
247. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 11.
248. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 11.

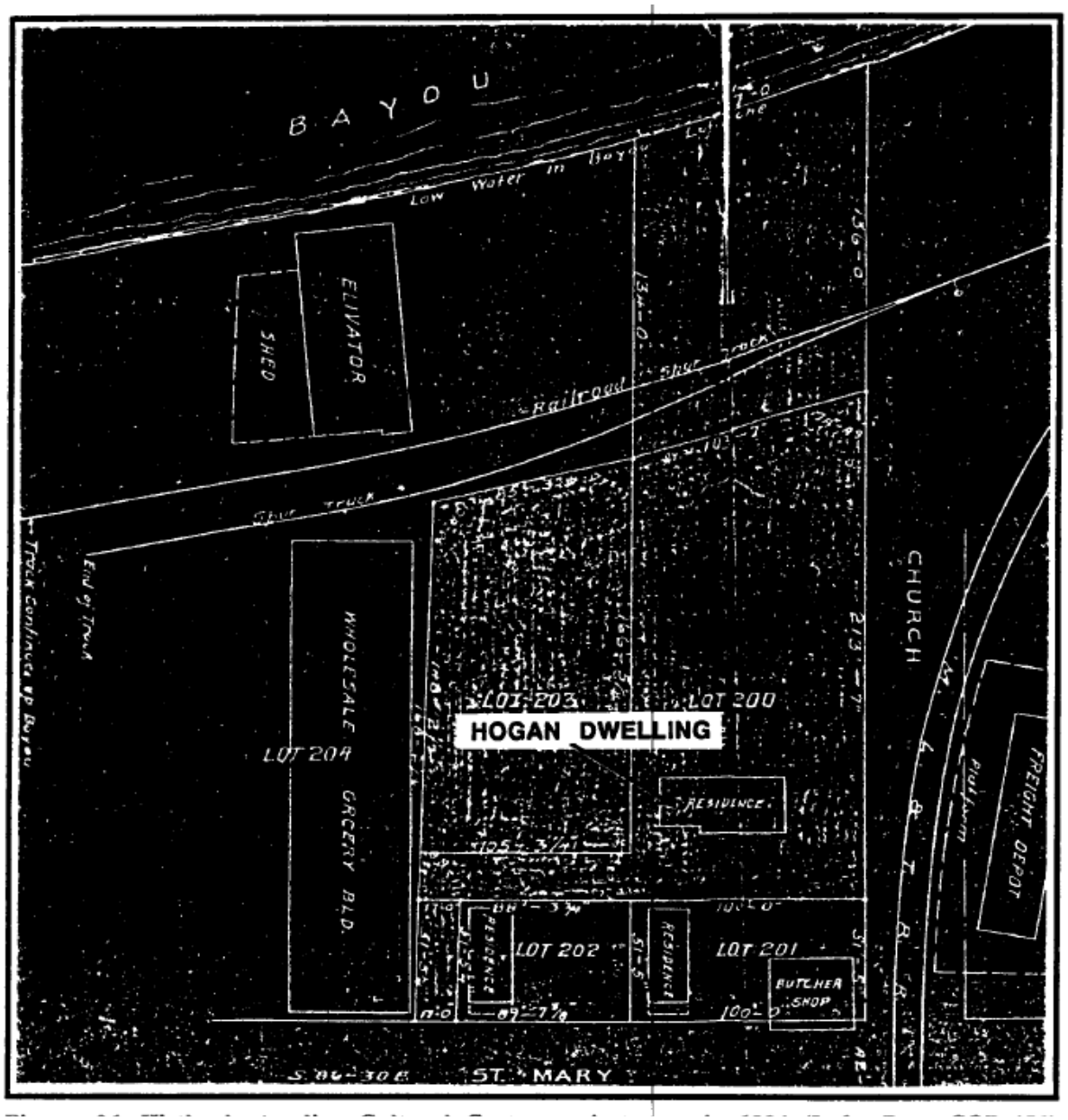

Figure 2.24: Site map from 1924 indicates the Hogan Dwelling was reoriented sometime between 1924 and the 1927 (Source: Hahn, 1992).

extends to the east side of the warehouse. Four iron tanks, three gasoline and one kerosene tank, are set on a ten-foot concrete base west of the oil warehouse. Adjacent is a small wooden oil pump structure. A second oil warehouse is located at the water line of the bayou. A corrugated iron-clad automobile garage with a concrete floor is located along the railroad line in the southeast corner of the lot behind the residences on St. Mary Street. The garage occupies the area that was formerly the site of the Hogan house. The map suggests that the Hogan house may have been moved, because a building with a very similar footprint appears west of the Gulf Oil Company's property line. This building was demolished by 1930.

The Percy-Lobdell Company had been advertising as a distributer of Gulf Oil products since 1908. Gulf Oil's products continued to be advertised as "Handled by the Percy-Lobdell Company" into the 1920s, even after the company built the bulk oil plant facility on the site.[249]

The structures related to the wholesale grocery operation in 1927 included the Percy-Lobdell

249. "Gulf Oil," *The Lafourche Comet*, December 27, 1923, sec. Advertisements.

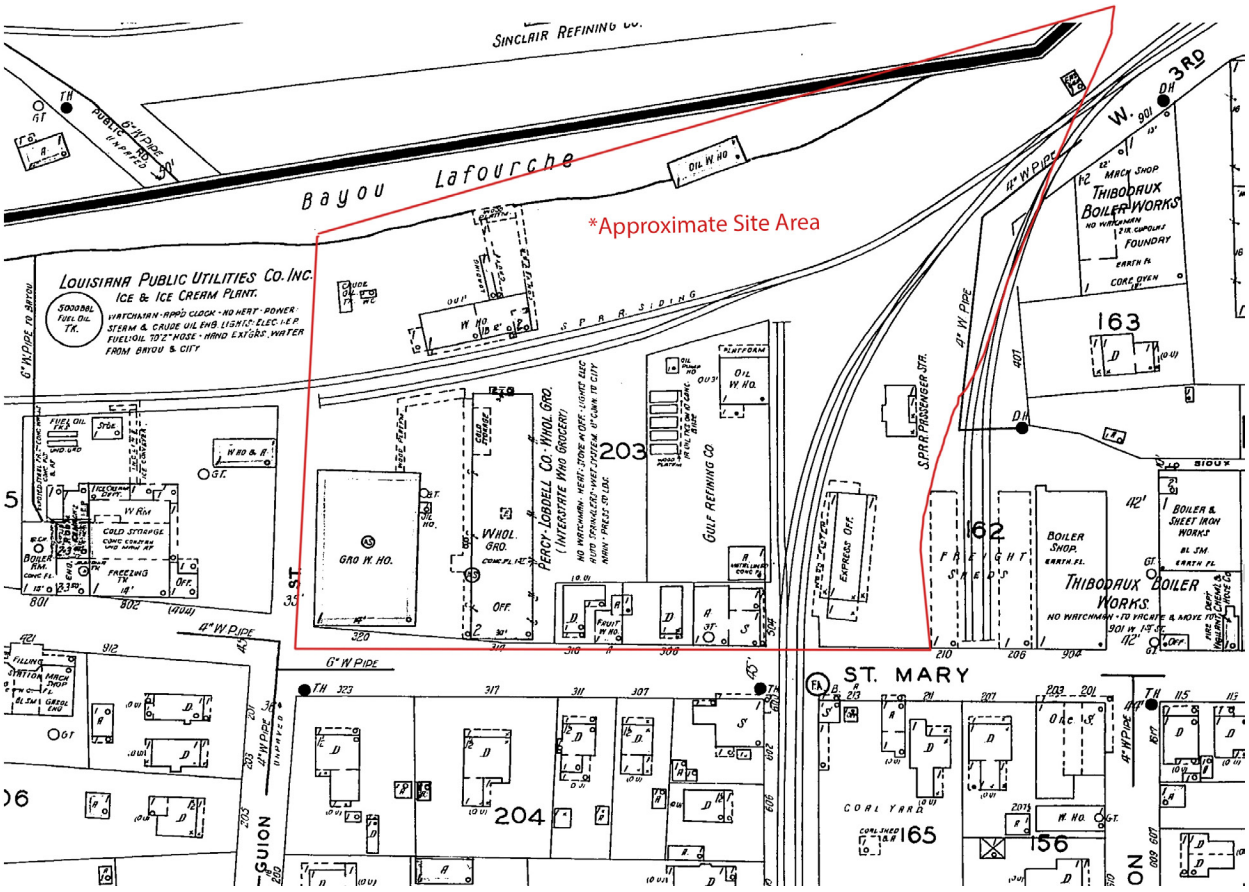

Figure 2.25: Portion of the 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the site area indicated in red (Source: Library of Congress).

Building, the former stable (warehouse by 1927) to the west, and the shed and feed warehouse with the elevator along the bayou. It is noted on the 1927 Sanborn Maps that the 65-feet-tall grain elevator is no longer in use. The building is listed as a Lime and Feed Warehouse with a 40-horsepower conveyor belt. The Scale Track is shown passing underneath a canopy on the north end of the building. The canopy was removed by 1930.[250] A platform projecting to the west from the canopy has a loading area for the Scale Track.

Between January 1927 and March 1932, the complex underwent further changes (Figure 2.25). The canopy on the north side of the Percy-Lobdell Building was removed but the west canopy had been extended to the south to connect to the stable-turned-warehouse at 320 St. Mary Street. (The City of Thibodaux acquired the front portion of the lot with this stable/warehouse in the 1930s to allow for the realignment of St. Mary Street. The building was modified and remained standing until the mid-1970s).[251] The feed warehouse and elevator on the bayou appears to have been demolished by 1932 and replaced by a new, smaller warehouse with loading platforms between the railroad spur and the banks of Bayou Lafourche. The Gulf Oil facilities remained relatively unchanged, while the (presumably moved) Hogan house between the Percy-Lobdell Building and the Gulf Oil property is gone by 1932. The two residential houses and market on St. Mary Street remained essentially unchanged since 1907; but a new building appeared next to 310 St. Mary Street. This one-story building is shown to be a fruit warehouse. The market building at the corner of St. Mary Street and Church Street had two small additions to the rear.

The railroad still operated two depot buildings east of Church Street, now labeled as the "Express Office" and "Passenger Station." Two railroad spurs leading to two "Freight Sheds" fronting St. Mary Street are located at the eastern boundary of the

250. "Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA," 1927.

251. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 61.

project area. This freight spur was added after 1916 and its path follows the approximate alignment of present-day W 1st Street.

The property around the Percy-Lobdell Building saw relatively few changes between 1932 and July 1949. The loading area on the bayou-fronting warehouse next to the Percy-Lobdell Building was slightly reconfigured. (The address of the Percy-Lobdell Building was 314 St. Mary Street; the warehouse on the bayou is listed as 314½ St. Mary Street.) The southeast portion of the grocery warehouse at 320 St. Mary Street was being used to bottle wine. Wine arrived by rail in tank cars and was filtered, bottled, and packaged for sale in the building. Two small buildings were added between the Percy-Lobdell Building and the Gulf Oil Complex.

The two frame residences and market building in the southeast corner of the site were still present, with multiple additions and modifications made since their construction around 1907. At some point in the 1960s or 1970s, the residence on lot 202 (parcel 109-06) was replaced by a one story brick building, with a small attached garage used as a produce market. The residence (parcel 109-07) and store (parcel 109-08) on lot 201 appear to have been reconfigured after 1961. The residence was removed and replaced with an electrical transformer. The tin shop/market/store at the corner of St Mary Street was replaced by another early 20th century building after 1961, which may have been moved to this location, possibly the houses from 109-06 or 109-07.[252]

The railroad Passenger Depot was removed by the 1940s, but the Express Office/Depot remained until reportedly destroyed by fire sometime in the early 1970s.[253] By 1950 a new concrete plant appears on the north side of the Levee Track, between the railroad and the bayou. The Thibodaux Boiler Works had a 30´x60´ wooden repair shop, and the Drexel Motor Company had a pump house.[254]

The Percy-Lobdell branch of Interstate Wholesale Grocers remained in operation at the building into the 1960s. Interstate Wholesale Grocers, Inc. was liquidated in the 1970s, but appear to have ceased using the Percy-Lobdell Building several years earlier. An article in *The Daily Comet* newspaper on July 24, 1972, describes a wine bottling operation, Vermat, Inc., going into the building. According to the article, "The cavernous old Lobdell Building, which has been idle for quite some time, is fairly bursting with activity now."[255] The building remained relatively unchanged since its construction in 1905-1906, with the exception of loading platforms and canopies that changed throughout the active years of the building.

From the time of George S Guion's initial layout of parcels in 1846 until the 1970s, the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site was an active commercial and industrial area for approximately 125 years. The location of the site, with access to the bayou and railroad lines, promoted the efficient movement of goods in and out of the site. Modest dwellings were also present on the site during the same time period. As the only remaining architectural evidence of the industrial and commercial function of the site, the Percy-Lobdell grocery warehouse exemplifies the greater commercial development of Thibodeaux and the surrounding region in the early 1900s. The Percy-Lobdell Building reflects the evolution of the food retailing industry that transitioned during this period from local, open-air markets to general stores in small towns that served surrounding rural communities. The Percy-Lobdell Building, therefore, represents Thibodeaux's development as a commercial hub for the region and reflects the distribution of goods to consumers in the area around Thibodeaux.

252. These observations are based on aerial images, Sanborn maps, and 1988 documentation images by NPS.

253. Thurston Hahn, "Archeological and Historical Investigations of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Addition, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," Cultural Resource Survey (Thibodaux, LA, 1996), 72-74, JELA Archives. The report states that fire destroyed the Express Office/Depot in 1972, citing *The Thibodaux Chronicles: A Sesquicentennial History* by Phillip Uzee. Aerial images from 1973 show that the building was still standing by that time. It is likely the building burned sometime after 1973. A 1982 aerial image shows a different building footprint in that location.

254. *Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA*, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1950).

255. Susan Finch, "Old Warehouse Bustling," *The Daily Comet*, June 24, 1972.

Interim Period (1975-1982)

In October 1975, J. G. Duplantis purchased the Percy-Lobdell Company's property in Thibodaux, including the Percy-Lobdell Building. In February 1977, Duplantis sold the property to Deep South Sporting Center, Inc., operators of a sporting goods store.[256] This store reportedly operated in the building for a brief period during the late-1970s and early-1980s.

Gulf Oil Co. was active on the site until selling the property in 1979. All facilities remained from the Gulf Oil period until they were removed by the NPS in 1989.[257] The stable-turned grocery warehouse next door to the Percy-Lobdell Building remained until the mid-1970s.[258] Of the two residences along St. Mary Street dating to ca. 1907, it appears both residences had been demolished by 1954.[259] A one-story brick house replaced the house on Lot 202 by 1970 and was demolished by NPS in 1989. A transformer station was sited in the location of the second residence sometime in the 1970s or early 1980s and removed by 1989. The building history of Lot 201 is inconclusive. The market/store pictured on Sanborn Maps from 1907-1930 appears to be still standing in an aerial image from 1961. However, the configuration of this building is distinctly different from the side-gabled bungalow pictured on the site in 1988 images. The bungalow appears to date to the 1920s, and there are several houses of similar form on St. Mary Street in images of the street from the 1930s, though research did not reveal when this building was constructed or whether it was moved to this location after 1961.

The congested assortment of railroad tracks and spurs in and around the site including the Scale Track and Levee Track remained active until the 1970s. According to the Southern Pacific Railroad records, the railway company formally abandoned the line in October 1983.[260] NPS removed the track remnants in 1990-94.[261] [262] Sometime in between 1974-1982, a corrugated steel warehouse replaced the burned Express Office/Depot and was used as a Feed and Seed store.[263] By 1994, the building was gone and only the concrete pier foundation remained, which the NPS removed.[264]

256. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 61.
257. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve*, 166.
258. Aerial images taken in 1973 and 1982 indicate that the warehouse was demolished sometime during that period.
259. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations," 1992, 53.
260. Images of the ICC abandonment filings are posted on the website, https://www.abandonedrails.com/thibodaux-branch.
261. Hamilton & Associates, *As-Constructed Drawings, Acadian Culture Center, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve*, 1990, Construction Drawings, 1990, JELA_467_41026B_[id12624], NPS ETIC.
262. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, "Site Demolition Plans Wetland Acadian Culture Center" (National Park Service, May 1994), ETIC 467 60051 id241841, JELA Archives.
263. Hahn, "Archaeological and Historical Investigations, 1996," 74.
264. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, "Site Demolition."

Lafourche Parish Public Library Period (1982-1988)

In 1980, Martha Sowell Utley, local activist, founded the Martha Sowell Utley Memorial Library Trust to fund the construction of a public library and cultural center in Thibodaux to promote community access to the arts and humanities in Lafourche Parish.[265] Utley's leadership established a strong foundation for the project and the Trust continued to work toward its goals after her death in February 1981. The Utley Memorial Library Trust purchased the Percy-Lobdell Building and surrounding property from Deep South Sporting Center in February 1982.[266]

Architectural Design Competition (1982)

A *The Daily Comet* article described the Trust's activities to promote the creation of a library and museum in the building. The article encouraged residents to participate in a design workshop where professional architects and design teams from local architecture schools would compete to generate a winning design concept for the building. The Utley Memorial Library Trust developed a program for the proposed facility's use, stressing that it should incorporate "a library, theatre, art gallery, museum, arts and crafts area, a tea-room, a bayou-side park and amphitheater" and that the facility must service all members of the community regardless of age, ability, education, or identity.[267] It also established the goal of making the building "a landmark in the eyes of the community… both functionally and architecturally."[268]

Between September 3rd and 7th, 1982, the Thibodaux Friends of the Library held an "Architectural Design Festival" to develop "fresh creative design alternatives for [a] new library and cultural center" in the Percy-Lobdell Building. The Friends group invited three nationally prominent architects "with very different design philosophies" to participate in a design charrette with teams of architecture students and faculty from Louisiana State University, Tulane University, and Mississippi State University.[269]

Library Remodeling (1986-1987)

Renovations of the Percy-Lobdell Building were delayed when cost estimates for implementing the winning architectural design were $2 million. Ultimately, the Friends of the Library hired local architect Thomas W. Papazoglakis (former office at 915 Talbot Rd Thibodaux) to design a smaller scope renovation project to fit within the project budget.

Concurrently, local leaders and state representatives interested in preserving Acadian and Cajun culture began conversations with the Jean Lafitte National Historic Park and Preserve. At the time, the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, authorized in 1978, was interested in creating cooperative management agreements in Acadiana.[270] In 1985, the NPS staff presented a proposal to the Delta Region Preservation Commission create three, cooperatively managed Acadian Cultural Centers in Eunice, Lafayette, and Thibodaux, to highlight different aspects of Acadian culture and lifeways.[271]

NPS officials met with Thibodaux authorities and proposed the creation of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center in the Percy-Lobdell Building. The City of Thibodaux, the Friends of the Library, and the NPS agreed the site could house both desired functions. NPS signed a cooperative agreement with the Friends of the Library in February 1986, agreeing to work together on exhibits and programs in the building.[272] In May 1986, the Utley Memorial Trust donated the property to the Friends of the Library, Inc., Thibodaux Chapter, stipulating that the existing Percy-Lobdell Building be used as a library or cultural center. That September, the Friends of the Library leased the building to the Lafourche Parish Council

265. Omega Synergistics, Inc., "Building Program for the Proposed Martha Sowell Utley Memorial Library and Cultural Center," 1982, 3, Thibodaux Library.
266. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 62.
267. Omega Synergistics, Inc., "Building Program for the Proposed Martha Sowell Utley Memorial Library and Cultural Center," 5., 5.
268. Omega Synergistics, Inc., "Building Program for the Proposed Martha Sowell Utley Memorial Library and Cultural Center," 5.
269. Thibodaux Friends of the Library, "Architectural Design Festival," 1982, Thibodaux Library.
270. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve*, 157.
271. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve*, 157–61.
272. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve*, 166.

for twelve years for use as a library.[273] Use of the building would be shared between the library, the Wetland Acadian Cultural Center, and Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc., a non-profit community theater established in 1960, who had been housed in the building since 1983.[274]

Renovations to the Percy-Lobdell Building were completed between 1986 and 1987. The Friends of the Library oversaw the renovation of the building and installation of the Thibodaux Branch Library. Funds for the renovation included $165,000 from the Parish Council and $40,000 raised by the Friends of the Library, plus an additional $365,000 raised by the Friends of the Library to complete the renovations.[275]

Site improvements overseen by the Friends of the Library included the creation of a shell/gravel-paved parking lot west of the building and a smaller parking lot to the northeast, behind neighboring buildings. Exterior improvements included restoration and reglazing of the building's historic wood sash windows, reconstruction of the canopy along the west and north elevations, the installation of windows and paneling within former door openings on the west elevation, removal of remaining steel structure from the north addition, and the installation of storefront glazing in the openings of the north elevation. Two second floor windows on the east elevation were lengthened into doors and were fitted with exterior metal staircases to serve as emergency exits.

A new main entrance was added at the center loading door on the west elevation, accessed from a parking lot west of the building. This door led into the large, open northern part of the first floor. A new theater for the Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc., was created in the southern part of the first floor. The second floor was remodeled to house the Lafourche Parish Public Library. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986 as part of a Multiple Resource Area in Thibodaux.

The building reopened to the public in 1987 with the Lafourche Parish Library operating on the second floor and the Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc. using the first floor for theatrical performances.

Despite the recent improvements, the NPS recognized that the renovated facilities would be insufficient for the needs of the cultural center. In January 1987, NPS hired Hamilton and Associates, an architectural firm, to begin the design process for the Wetland Acadian Cultural Center.[276] Hamilton proceeded with design analysis and hired Dr. Barry Ancelet of the University of Southwestern Louisiana to conduct cultural research. Ancelet formed "a team of folklorists, historians, linguists, and photographers. This team assembled a large amount of documentation and turned over a five volume report on Cajun history and culture to the NPS in July 1987."[277] The research compiled in this extensive project would form the basis for the exhibits and programming in the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center.

273. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 62.
274. "A Place to Call Home," Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc., accessed February 16, 2018, http://www.thibodauxplayhouse.com/a-place-to-call-home.
275. Ambroise Landry, "History- Thibodaux Branch Library Located in Percy Lobdell Building" (unpublished, undated), JELA Archives.
276. Hamilton & Associates, "Environmental and Cultural Assessment and Compliance Statement for the Wetlands Culture Center, Thibodaux, LA, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park" (New Orleans: National Park Service, 1988), 11.
277. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve*, 159.

National Park Service Period (1988-present)

One year into the design process, NPS hired archeology firm Babson & Orser to conduct initial archeological investigations on parcel 109-02 (former lots 205, 204, and the northern portion of lot 203) in March of 1988. The adjacent shell/gravel parking lot and recent construction debris limited archeological discovery. Nevertheless, the group "determined that there were cultural resources that were potentially eligible within their project area and recommended that further archeological work be conducted."[278]

In November 1988, the Friends of the Library, Inc., donated parcel 109-02 including the Percy-Lobdell Building to the NPS as a unit of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, stipulating that the second floor be used as a public library for the next fifty years.[279]

At that time, the area that would become the Wetland Acadian Cultural Center was broken into multiple small parcels with several parking areas, buildings, structures, debris, refuse, and overgrown vegetation. Photographs dated March 1988 depict the pre-construction conditions of the site.[280] NPS began quickly acquiring these adjacent parcels to develop for the cultural center, adding parcels 109-01, 109-04, 109-05, 109-07, 109-10, 109-11, and 109-12 by 1988 (Portions of former lots 205, 204, 203, 200).[281] The two residences on St. Mary Street (parcel 109-06/Former Lot 202 and parcel 109-08/Former Lot 201) were not acquired until summer 1988. Refer to Figure 2.26 and Figure 2.27 for maps showing the relationship between parcel numbers and former lot numbers (Lots 205-200 were broken into 12 parcels by 1927).

In July of 1988, Art Street, at the western boundary of the site, became an official city street. (Previously, it was called "street," or "Ice Street, in reference to W. H. Ragan's Thibodeaux Ice Factory located on the west side of the street. It was then called Guion Street from approximately 1916 through at least the 1930s. It became Art Street sometime after 1932).[282]

In total, the NPS purchased about five acres and began further improvements and additions to the Percy-Lobdell Building and surrounding site.[283] A survey of the property dated December 1988 shows several buildings, fuel tanks, remains of railroad tracks, concrete slabs, and other debris on the property prior to the start of the project. In January of 1989, NPS approved demolition/stabilization plans which included the removal of all features associated with Gulf Oil, as well as the former railroad grading, vegetation, debris, and inactive utilities.[284] Demolition plan revisions dated November 1989 slated the two residences on St. Mary Street and features in the Church Street right-of-way for removal.[285] The site was fully cleared and re-graded by November 1989.

Hamilton and Associates hired archeologists Coastal Environments, Inc. (CEI) in early 1989 to conduct Phase II Intensive (Level II) archaeological investigations on the site. Fieldwork began in April 1989, amid the redevelopment of the site, and monitoring continued through November of 1989. The investigations included all parcels between Art Street and Church Street except for the two residential sites, as those lots had not yet been acquired by NPS.

CEI did conduct historic research on the two residential sites; unfortunately, research did not reveal a definitive construction date for either building. The two residences and the view from St. Mary Street were photographed in 1988 before being demolished by NPS in summer 1989 (Figure 2.28). Parcel 109-06 (former Lot 202) appears to have been a 1960s-era single-story hipped roof brick building with an attached concrete block garage with a roll up door which formerly housed a produce stand (Figure 2.29). Parcel 109-08

278. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 88.
279. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 63.
280. Photographs hand dated March 1988, "Library at Thibodaux" folder, JELA Archives.
281. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 88.
282. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 81.
283. Blythe, *Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve*, 166.
284. Hamilton & Associates, *Demolition/Stabilization Plans, Acadian Culture Center, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park*, January 11, 1989, January 11, 1989, JELA Archives.
285. Hamilton & Associates, *As-Constructed Drawings, Acadian Culture Center, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve*.

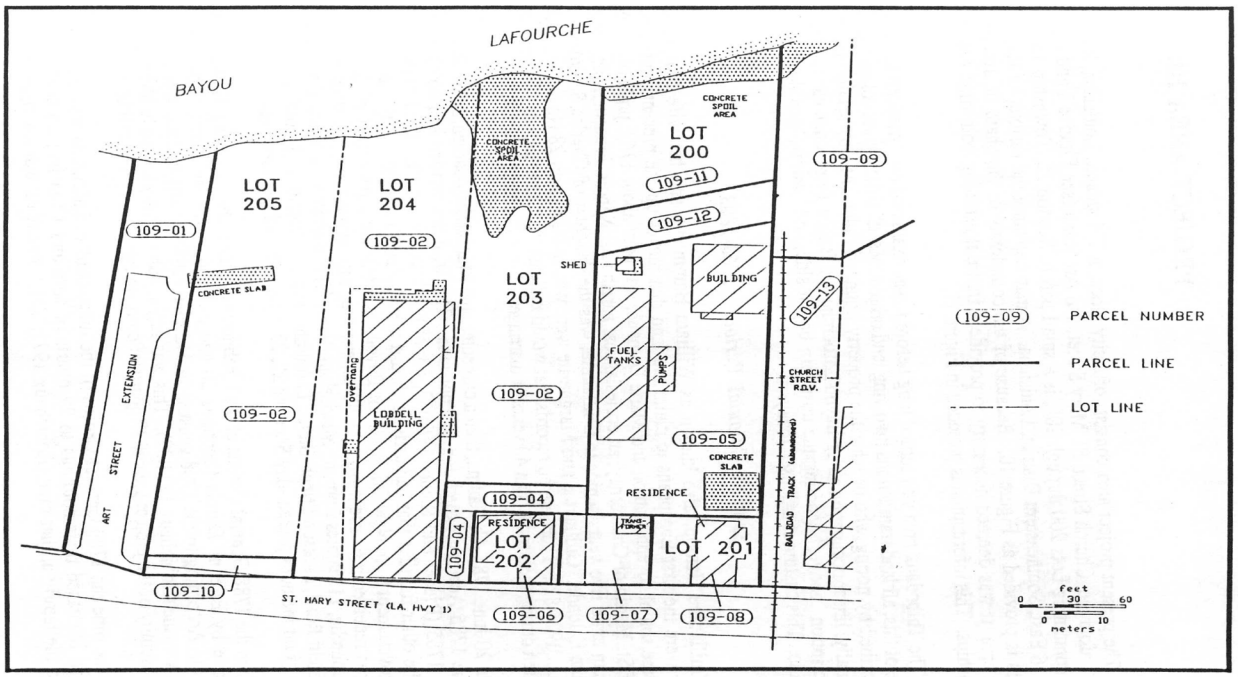

Figure 2.26: Relationship between parcel and lot numbers within the site area (Source: Hahn, 1992).

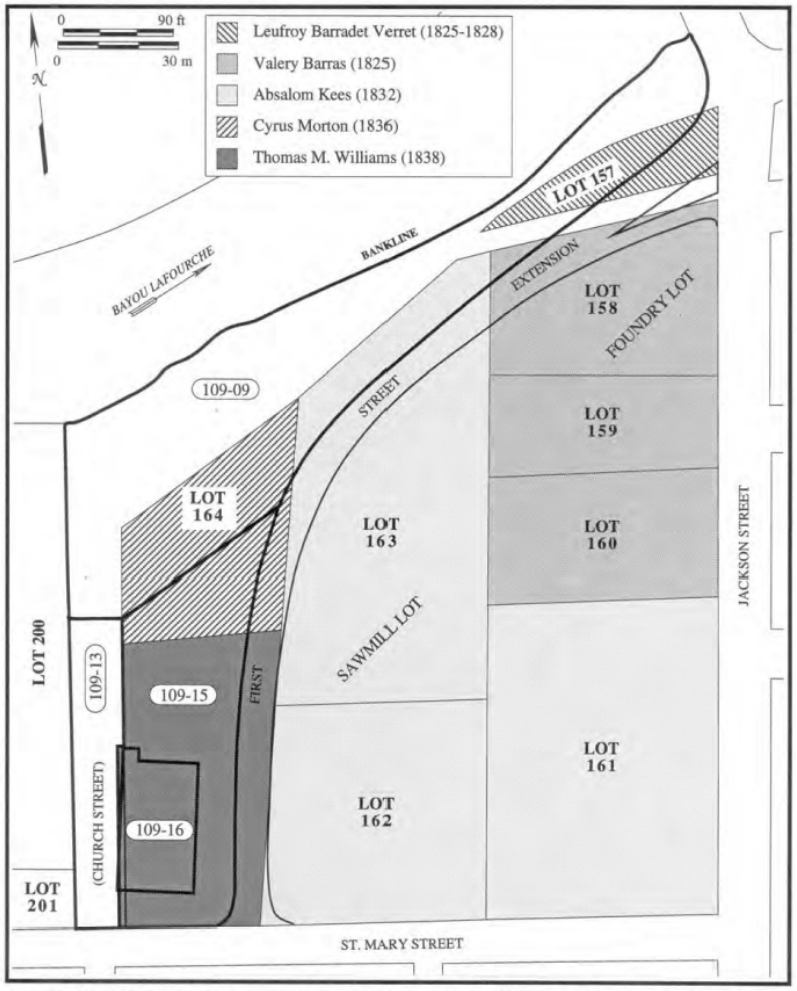

Figure 2.27: Original lots overlaid with parcel boundaries on the eastern side of the site, from the Church Street R.O.W. to W 1st Street (Source: Hahn, Archeological and Historical Investigations 1996, 46).

Figure 2.28: The Percy-Lobdell Building in 1982, prior to the development of the Wetland Acadian Cultural Center. Note the residential buildings in the location of the present-day parking lot. View from south side of St. Mary Street to east (Source: Thibodaux Library Archives).

(former lot 201) appears to have been a two-story side-gabled frame bungalow of early 20th century construction with midcentury material changes including windows and awnings. Images of St Mary Street from the 1930s depict several residences of similar form. This building was likely moved to the site from another location (possibly from parcel 109-06 or 109-07) sometime after 1961 (Figure 2.30).

Photographs dated March 1988 depict the Gulf Oil facilities store before demolition. The Gulf Oil building was a gabled, single-story corrugated steel warehouse. South of the warehouse were elevated fuel tanks, a water tower, and a transformer surrounded by chain link fencing.

The entire site was surveyed in 1989, providing a detailed record of existing conditions prior to major development of the site the following year. In addition to the Percy-Lobdell Building, other buildings noted on the survey included the two residences described above, and the Gulf Oil building, Wayne's Feed and Seed building, and another storage building, which are described below because the NPS did not acquire those buildings until 1994 (Figure 2.31). See also Appendix B for additional photographs of these buildings taken in 1988.

Figure 2.29: The Percy-Lobdell Building and adjacent residence and produce stand in 1982, prior to prior to the development of the Wetland Acadian Cultural Center. The residence is located on parcel 109-06 in the location of the existing parking lot. View from the south side of St. Mary Street to west (Source: Thibodaux Library Archives).

Figure 2.30: A residential building formerly in the location of the existing parking lot on parcel 109-08. Seen before the building was demolished by NPS in 1989. Seen from St. Mary Street in 1988, view to northeast. (Source: Thibodaux Library Archives).

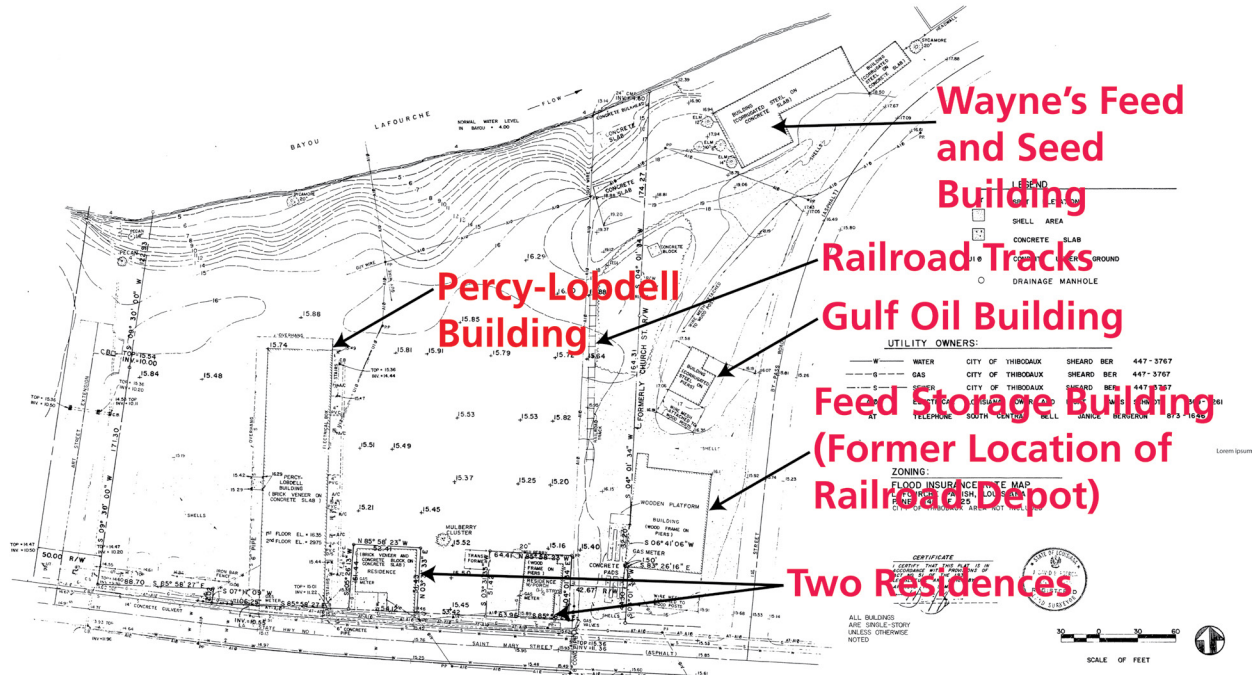

Figure 2.31: 1989 Survey from As Constructed Drawings (Source: Etic 467-41026B, NPS; annotated WLA).

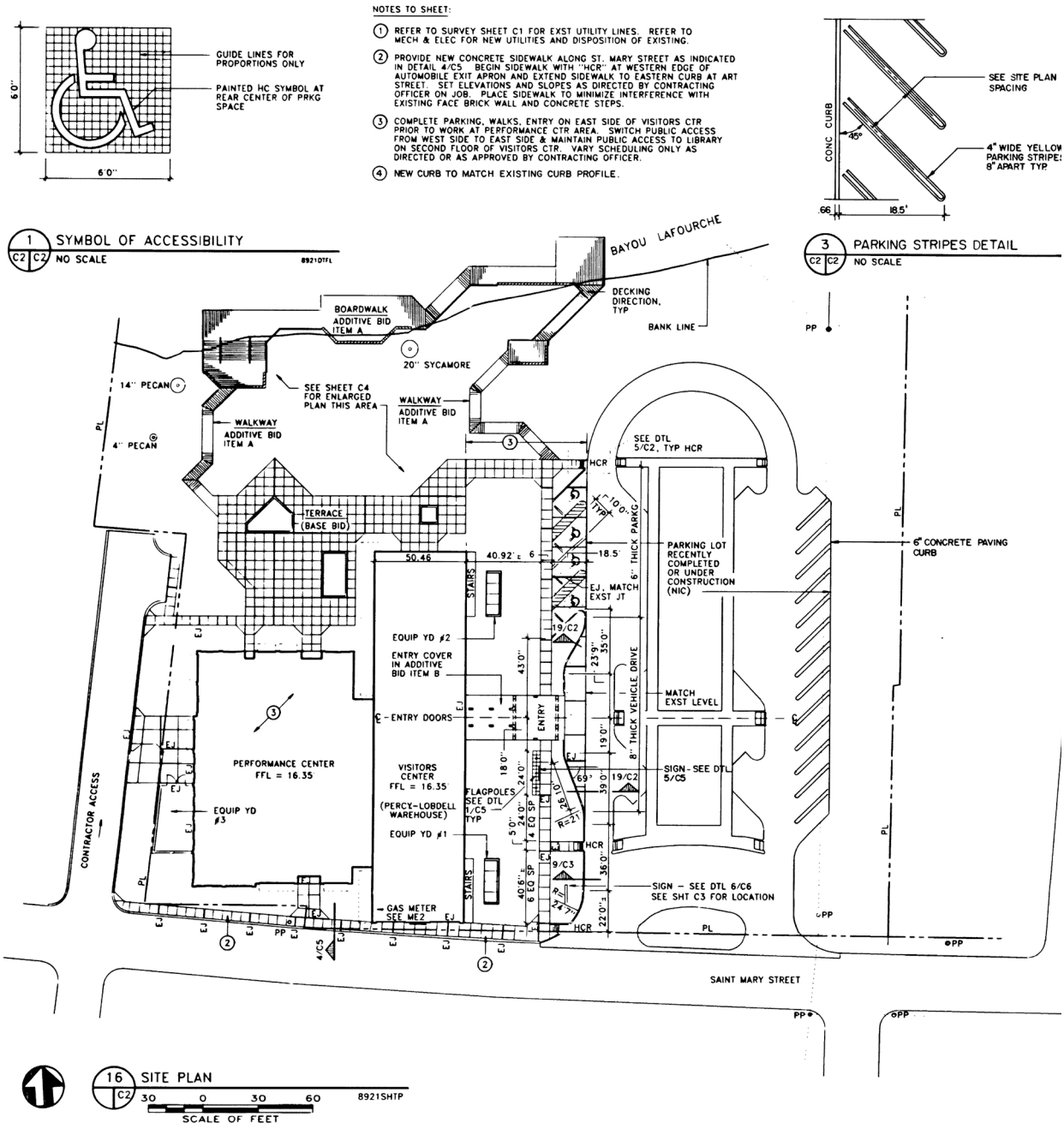

Figure 2.32: Portion of As-Built Site Plan by Hamilton & Associates dated 1990. The site renovations were completed after NPS acquisition of the site and included the addition of a performance center, entry alcove, plaza, parking areas, and landscaping around the original Percy-Lobdell Building (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Hamilton and Associates produced the construction documents for additions to the building and site, which were approved in June 1990 (Figure 2.32). The 1990 drawings show that the paved parking lot east of the Percy-Lobdell Building was "recently completed or under construction" by that point.[286] Further additions to the site, proposed in the plans, include new pedestrian circulation and a major addition onto the west elevation of the Percy-Lobdell Building. This addition would house a large performance center with auditorium, restrooms, and hallway/

286. Hamilton & Associates, *As-Constructed Drawings, Acadian Culture Center, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve*.

exhibit area. The pedestrian improvements included concrete sidewalks throughout the site and a large concrete plaza or "terrace" on the north side of the historic structure and new addition. The plans also show a boardwalk leading down to Bayou Lafourche. The existing NPS sign was also constructed as part of this project.

The historic building's exterior remained somewhat unchanged except for the creation of a new east entry door, the addition of a new east entry portico, the attachment of the new west wing, and modifications to the entrance on the south facade. The south facade entrance retained a pair of historic sliding doors, with raised panels in the lower section and four-lite glazed panels in the upper portion. These doors had been fixed in place around a hinged door and frame, mounted in the center of the opening. The historic fanlight had been removed sometime before 1982 and the opening had been covered by a piece of plywood. The later door and trim were removed, the historic sliding doors were fixed shut, and the opening was walled over at the interior. A new fanlight was custom made by a local Marvin window dealer and the 1991 detail drawing notes "fan light window is conjectural design due to lack of historic photo." NPS removed raised sheet metal lettering reading "THE LOBDELL Co. LTD" from the cornice in 1991, for reasons that are not documented.[287] The outline of the letters remains visible on the sheet metal panel.

First floor remodeling included removal of partitions and finishes within the former theater space and the creation of new exhibits and a small presentation room, the partitioning of the north part of the first floor into offices and a crafts room, reconfiguration of the recently-built open staircase to the second floor, and the conversion of the former lobby into a reception/orientation room and gift shop for the park. A new one-story performing arts center addition was built off the west side of the building. This included a gallery/theater lobby, auditorium and stage, toilet rooms, dressing rooms, storage, and utility rooms. The second floor library remained unchanged except for the reconfiguration of the open stair added in the 1986-1987 remodeling.

The Hamilton and Associates drawings record the planned elimination of several site features dating to the historic period. For example, the raised railroad bed remained legible on the site in 1989. A note on the site plan reads: "cut & remove raised area of former railroad beds between elevations 16.0.' Scrape, remove, & deposit as fill in lower elevations of Bayou Bank." The plan also called for removal of several buildings, fences, walkways, and concrete foundations.

Archeologists CEI recorded this description while monitoring the site work: "Following the completion of this phase of archaeological field work, the Lobdell site was cleared and landscaped. Clearing the site consisted of the removal of most of the trees and all of the underbrush along the bank of Bayou Lafourche, the demolition of the Gulf Bulk Plant, and the grading of Areas 1, 3, and 4."[288] Area 1 was an area extending off east facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building, behind the residence on St. Mary Street that remained until 1989. This area is currently under the parking lot. Area 2 was west of the Percy-Lobdell Building and is the site of the auditorium addition. Area 3 was the area between the Percy-Lobdell Building and the bayou. Area 4 was east of Area 1; it extended from St. Mary Street to the bayou. It is also part of the parking lot and the greenspace north of the multi-use path.

The archeological report included other details about the site work. An edited version of these observations follows:

> The northern half of Area 1 was subjected to a substantial amount of landscaping. The fence and underbrush separating this area from Area 4 were removed, as well as the rubble mound from the placement of the electrical power poles…. After these above-surface obstructions were removed, the entire area was graded…. The northern portion of the area… was more heavily disturbed during landscaping of the site. The presence of the rubble mound immediately north and the gasoline tanks… resulted in the removal of the boiler foundation.

287. The Louisiana SHPO issued a finding of no adverse effect based on a telephone conversation that is not recorded in available documentation. Leslie P. Tassin to Neil C. Magnum, 28 October 1991, in Jean Lafitte National Historical Park archives.

288. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 149.

No major work was conducted by the construction crew in Area 2. The only portion of this area to be affected by these construction activities was along the northern edge of the area …. This area, however, was heavily modified during the site's preparation for new construction….

Area 3 was heavily disturbed by the landscaping activities associated with the clearing of the site. The levee/railroad bed was removed during landscaping of the site and the bank of Bayou Lafourche was graded to a less steep angle. These land-moving activities necessitated the removal of the concrete slab on the railroad bed…. During its removal, it became apparent that the visible part of the concrete represented only a small portion of the entire structure. This structure was probably associated with the Scale Track.

The brick foundation [found north of the Percy-Lobdell Building] … like the concrete slab, represented only a small portion of a very large foundation. This brick foundation is associated with the grain elevator depicted on the 1916 through 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps. The booth pit, or basement, of this structure must have remained open until very recently, for it was full of recent trash…. All the trash, along with the upper portion of the grain elevator foundation was removed from the site as part of the overall grading of the site.

As in Area 1, the northern portion of Area 4 was heavily disturbed by landscaping activities. The concrete foundations of the gasoline storage tanks were quite massive and necessitated the removal of substantial quantities of soil. While the removal of the foundation disturbed a large area, its very construction undoubtedly destroyed whatever features were in the immediate vicinity.

As noted earlier, much of this area was contaminated with petro-chemicals. This, combined with necessary landscaping, removed much of the former parking/drive area of the bulk plant. Removal of the concrete, shell, and asphalt along with some of the underlying soil resulted in the discovery of the wall foundation of the front of the old Thibodeaux Boiler Works. This feature was cleaned, mapped, and photographed prior to its removal.

That portion of Area 4 along the bank of Bayou Lafourche was heavily altered during the landscaping of the site. It was necessary to landscape this area to remove the levee/railroad bed and the concrete rubble between the levee and the bayou. Additional landscaping of this area was necessary to create a gentle slope from the peak of the natural levee down to Bayou Lafourche.[289]

During the construction of the auditorium addition, work revealed more evidence of historic features, including the 1847 house built by George Anderson, the mid-1800s bakery at the corner of St. Mary Street and current Art Street, the circa 1910 stable next to Percy-Lobdell Building, a 1850 privy, a brick pier foundation of a house, a well, thirteen boardwalk foundations constructed in 1905, and several hundred artifacts including ceramic and glass vessels and shards. According to the report, "all archeological remains were removed from the construction area so that a proper foundation could be made for the new construction."[290]

A total of 8,729 artifacts were recovered as part of the archeological investigations and monitoring of construction activities in 1989. Most of the artifacts related to domestic and industrial activities on the site between around 1847 and 1930. CEI located several historic structures, including the foundations of the Thibodaux Boiler Works, the road that passed along the east facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building, the foundation of the Anderson House west of the Percy-Lobdell Building, the bakery building at the corner of St. Mary Street and Art Street, the warehouse/stable that replaced the bakery, the levee/railroad bed, and the Percy-Lobdell Company grain elevator and warehouse. CEI did not find evidence of the Hamon period of occupation. The Hamon family was the Acadian family who first settled the area that became part of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center.

289. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 149–52.
290. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 187.

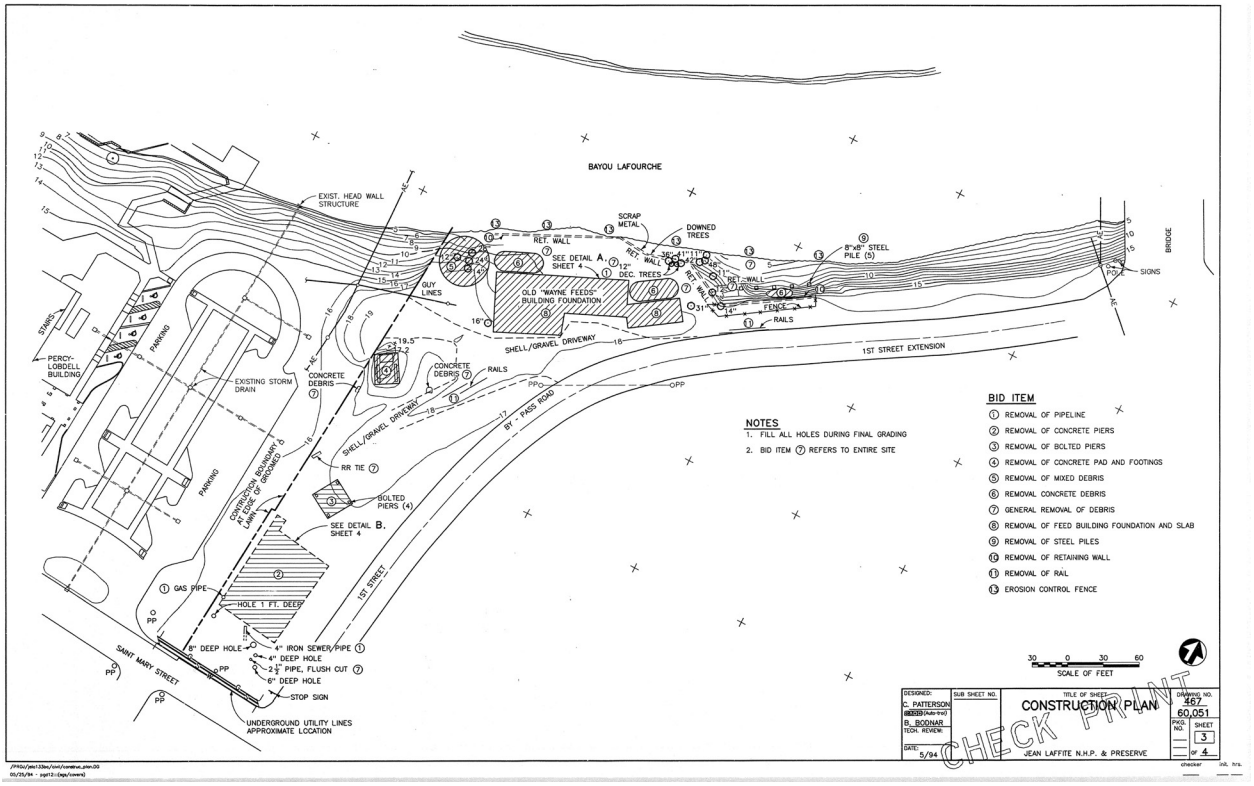

Figure 2.33: This construction plan dated May 1994 outlines the site features to be demolished from the eastern portion of the Wetland Acadian Culture Center site (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

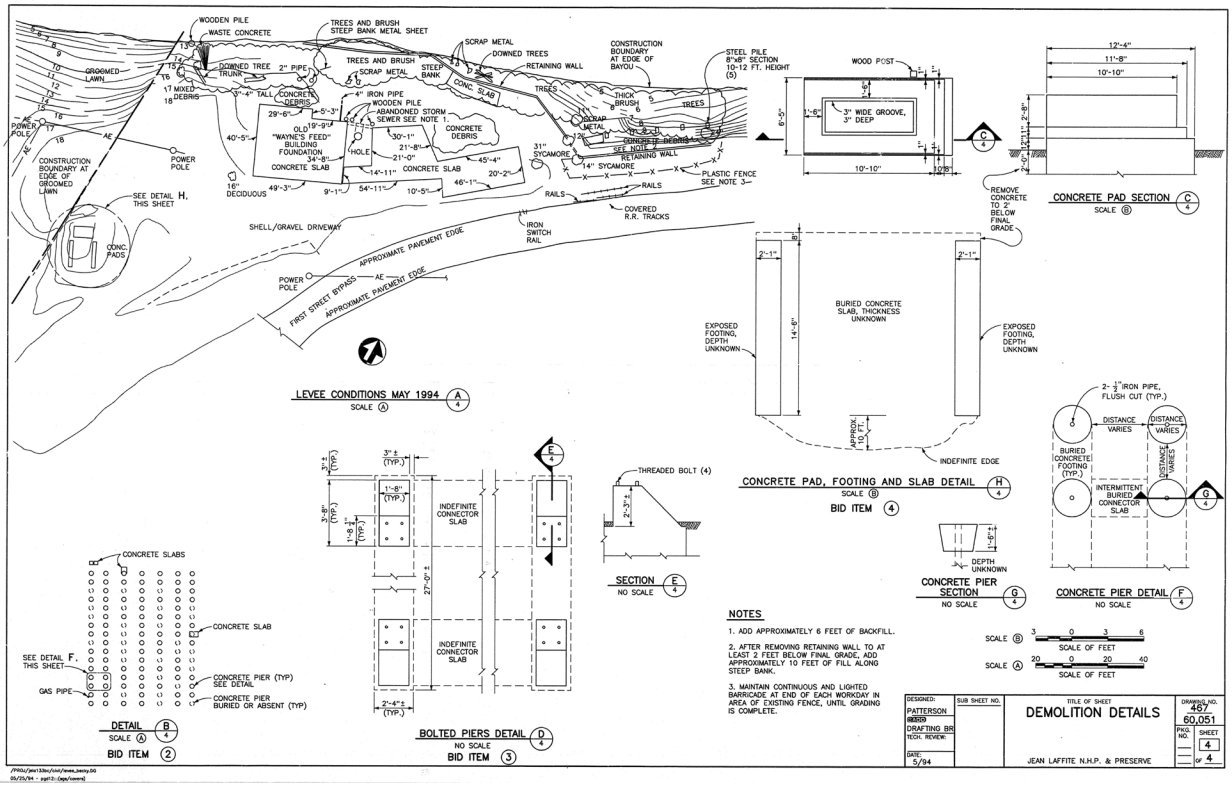

Figure 2.34: This demolition plan dated May 1994 details the dimensions of existing site features to be demolished from the eastern portion of the Wetland Acadian Culture Center site (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve opened in the building on November 21, 1992. According to the JELA Administrative History, "Senators Johnston and Breaux and Congressman Tauzin attended. Festivities included music by the Bayouland Dixieland Band and the Lafourche Cajun Band, craft and foodway demonstrations, and children's programs. The Thibodaux Playhouse offered performances of The Great Big Doorstep in its new home."[291]

On April 17, 1993, members of the Lafourche Heritage Society and the Bayou Lafourche Chapter of the American Revolution dedicated a historical marker at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center to commemorate the prehistoric site of the confluence of Bayou Lafourche and Bayou Terrebonne.

In 1994, NPS acquired the parcel between Church Street and West 1st Street. A survey dated May 1994 shows the location of the former Wayne's Feed and Seed building (occupying a ca. 1950 repair shop associated with the Thibodaux Boiler Works) and another adjacent storage warehouse (construction date unknown). Located north of 1st Street along the bank of Bayou Lafourche, both buildings were gone by 1994 and only the concrete foundations remained. Photographs dated March 1988 depict the feed & seed store as a gabled, single-story, corrugated metal building.[292]

By 1994, the area was cluttered with steel piles, concrete pads, the former spur track (ca.1925), retaining walls, and other detritus. Site demolition plans produced by NPS show the removal of all of these site features (Figure 2.33, Figure 2.34).[293] The plans call out the removal of the concrete slab foundation of the ca. 1950 Thibodaux Boiler Works Company, Ltd. repair shop (most recently Wayne's Feeds Building). The plans also call for the removal of the concrete pier foundation of the former feed storage warehouse/former Southern Pacific Express Office/Depot. The building was gone by 1994, and only the foundation remained. This building appears in the background of an undated photograph of the Percy-Lobdell Building

Figure 2.35: Undated photograph from JELA Archives looking east towards a building identified in 1996 archeological report as a feed storage building believed to occupy to former location of the railroad depot (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

taken between 1989 and 1994 (Figure 2.35). The 1996 archeology report states that the concrete pier foundation was from the old railroad depot but this is not confirmed.[294] The drawings also call out the removal of concrete debris and a gas line, the bolted pier associated with a water tower structure (date unknown), the concrete pad and footings of an "early twentieth century loading dock of the levee track," steel piles and a retaining wall on the bayou edge (dates unknown), and remnant railroad track from the ca.1898 alignment of the Southern Pacific Railroad.[295]

Apparently NPS considered a parking lot expansion for the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, as evidenced by a rendering dated February 1992 titled "North Lafourche Promenade."[296] Ultimately, the site was cleared of all site features but the parking area was never added. A concrete walkway proposed on the 1992 drawing was not constructed until 2012.

291. Blythe, Administrative History of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, 166.
292. Photographs hand dated March 1988, "Library at Thibodaux" folder, JELA Archives.
293. National Park Service, Denver Service Center, "Site Demolition."
294. Hahn, "Archaeological and Historical Investigations, 1996," 88.
295. Hahn, "Archaeological and Historical Investigations, 1996," 70.
296. *North Lafourche Promenade, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park*, February 1992, Conceptual Rendering, February 1992, JELA Archives.

The Percy-Lobdell Building has seen few changes since the early-1990s. The 1990 wooden boardwalk was replaced with a recycled plastic material. The NPS occupies the first floor of the historic building and Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc. continues to use the large auditorium addition. The Lafourche Parish Public Library relocated to the former home of *The Daily Comet* newspaper at 705 W 5th Street in February 2012. The second floor of the Percy-Lobdell Building briefly operated as a "Wi-Fi Café" with free wireless internet and free coffee before being converted into the library system's administrative offices.[297] The Thibodaux Playhouse launched a campaign for the construction of a new performing arts center at another site in March 2014. The new building would feature a facade loosely based on that of the Grand Theatre (1919-1922, Joseph Robichaux, architect, demolished 1995) at Green and Fourth Streets.[298] As of 2022, the JELA Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center was still hosting Thibodaux Playhouse productions.

297. "Lafourche Library Opens Wi-Fi Café," *Daily World*, July 16, 2012.
298. "A Place to Call Home."

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Key

- COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL
- ROADWAY
- RESIDENTIAL
- CHANGES TO BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Credits:

1. Hahn, Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center (1992)
2. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Thibodaux LA, 1898

Illustration 2.1

(1898)

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historic Park & Preserve

Cultural Landscape Report

MAY 2023

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PROJECT BOUNDARY

BAYOU LAFOURCHE

BOTTOM OF LEVEE

TOP OF LEVEE

RAILROAD TRACKS

BOTTOM OF LEVEE

SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

FUEL OIL TANK

STABLE

INCLINE TO BAYOU

FUEL OIL TANKS

SOFT COAL PILE

THIBODAUX BOILER WORKS CO.

S.P.R.R. DEPOT

THIBODAUX ICE FACTORY

ICE STREET

RES.

PERCY LOBDELL BUILDING

RES.

RES.

RES.

RES.

MARKET

BUILDING MOVED

S.P.R.R. FREIGHT DEPOT

CHURCH ST R.O.W.

RES.

THI B WO

STREET

0' 50' 100' North

ST MARY STREET

Key

- COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL
- ROADWAY
- RESIDENTIAL
- CHANGES TO BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Credits:

1. Hahn, Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center (1992)
2. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Thibodaux LA, 1907

Illustration 2.2

(1907)

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historic Park & Preserve

Cultural Landscape Report

MAY 2023

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BAYOU LAFOURCHE

PROJECT BOUNDARY

PLATFORM

OIL HOUSE

FEED WAREHOUSE

STABLE

SPUR TRACK

SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

THIBODAUX BOILER WORKS CO.

PASSENGER DEPOT

THIBODAUX ICE MANUFACTURING CO.

GUION STREET

SALE STABLE

PERCY LOBDELL BUILDING

RES.

RESIDENTIAL

RES.

RES.

MARKET

FREIGHT AND EXPRESS DEPOT

RES.

ST MARY STREET

0' 50' 100' North

Key

- COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL
- ROADWAY
- RESIDENTIAL
- CHANGES TO BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Credits:

1. Hahn, Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center (1992)
2. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Thibodaux LA, 1916

Illustration 2.3

(1916)

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historic Park & Preserve

Cultural Landscape Report

MAY 2023

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BAYOU LAFOURCHE

GASOLINE WAREHOUSE

PROJECT BOUNDARY

LIME AND FEED WAREHOUSE

SHED

SPUR TRACK

SCALE TRACK

SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

OIL PUMP

PLATFORM

OIL WARE-HOUSE

FUEL OIL TANKS

PASSENGER DEPOT

PLATFORM

GULF OIL PROPERTY

THIBODAUX ICE & MANUFACTURING CO

GUION STREET

WAREHOUSE

PERCY LOBDELL BUILDING

RES.

BUILDING MOVED

GARAGE

EXPRESS DEPOT

FREIGHT SHED

FREIGHT SHED

RES.

RES.

STORE

0' 50' 100' North

ST MARY STREET

Key

- COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL
- ROADWAY
- RESIDENTIAL
- CHANGES TO BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Credits:

1. Hahn, Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center (1992)
2. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Thibodaux LA, 1927

Illustration 2.4

(1927)

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historic Park & Preserve

Cultural Landscape Report

MAY 2023

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BAYOU LAFOURCHE

OIL WAREHOUSE

PROJECT BOUNDARY

WOOD PLATFORM

SPUR TRACK

LOADING

SCALE TRACK

CRUDE OIL

W.C.

WAREHOUSE

BUILDING RECONFIGURED

SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

OIL PUMP

PLATFORM

OIL WARE-HOUSE

FUEL OIL TANKS

PASSENGER DEPOT

PLATFORM RECONFIGURED

PLATFORM

INTERSTATE WHOLESALE GROCERY (PERCY LOBDELL BUILDING)

GULF REFINING CO.

BUILDING REMOVED

UBLIC
. INC
REAM

GUION STREET

GROCERY WAREHOUSE

EXPRESS OFFICE

FREIGHT SHED

FREIGHT SHED

BUILDING ADDITION

GARAGE

GARAGE

RES.

RES.

GARAGE

STORE

OFFICE

FRUIT WAREHOUSE

0' 50' 100' North

ST MARY STREET

BUILDING ADDITION

Key

- COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL
- ROADWAY
- RESIDENTIAL
- CHANGES TO BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

Credits:

1. Hahn, Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center (1992)
2. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Map, Thibodaux LA, 1927

Illustration 2.5

(1932)

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historic Park & Preserve

Cultural Landscape Report

MAY 2023

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Existing Conditions

Introduction

Please refer to Illustration 3.1 at the end of this chapter for an overview of existing conditions.

The focus of this study is the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Unit of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, hereby referred to as the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit, located at 314 St. Mary Street, Thibodaux, LA 70301 (Figure 3.1). The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit occupies relatively flat terrain on the south side of Bayou Lafourche.

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit is within the urban context of the town of Thibodaux, LA (Figure 3.2). The small downtown area is composed of commercial, industrial, and residential land uses with a range of dates of construction, resulting in a context of land uses that reflects those present during the period of significance—1850 to 1920s—listed on the National Register of Historic Places nomination that includes the Percy-Lobdell Building.[299] The town of approximately 14,000 residents is located 60 miles southwest of New Orleans. The town is surrounded to the north and south by farmland spread across higher ground along the bayou, which gives way to large areas of swamp lowlands.

The north boundary of the study area is defined by Bayou Lafourche. The eastern boundary of the study area is marked by W 1st Street. St. Mary Street is the southern boundary, and Art Street is the western boundary (See Illustration 3.1: Existing Conditions). A mix of commercial and residential buildings are west, south, and east of the site. The residential buildings within the viewshed of the unit appear date from the early 1900s, while the commercial structures appear to date from the late 1900s.

According to the Lafourche Parish Assessor's office, the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

299. State of Louisiana Historic Preservation Division, "Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Partial Inventory: Historic and Architectural Properties," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Thibodaux, LA: National Park Service, March 5, 1986).

Figure 3.1: Main visitor entrance to the JELA Wetland Acadian Cultural Center on the east facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building, view to west (Source: WLA Studio, 2017).

unit consists of multiple parcels. A large parcel containing the Percy-Lobdell Building, additions, and greenspace extending to the bayou, is identified as parcel 999.[300] A small parcel along St. Mary Street, parcel 8020397702, is owned by the City of Thibodaux. Two additional parcels at the corner of St. Mary Street and W 1st Street, parcels 8020397600 and 8020437950, are owned by the federal government (Figure 3.3). The entire site is approximately 5 acres, mostly rectangular in shape, with a long extension of the site to the northeast along the bayou.

The site was historically composed of six individual lots that served a wide range of industrial, commercial, and residential functions from the mid-1800s through the late-1900s. The entirety of the site was used for agricultural purposes before being subdivided into six individual lots in 1846, after which each lot followed an individual developmental timeline. Historic land uses on the site include a cooperage, foundry and boiler works, grocery wholesaler, stables, oil distributer, as well as residential. The location of the site along Bayou Lafourche made it convenient for the shipping and distribution of goods for local businesses. A public road atop the former levee, which connected Thibodaux to surrounding communities, also supported the commercial enterprises located at the site. In the late 1800s, land uses on site began to form a close relationship with the railroad, which

300. Parcel 999 is shown as federally owned, but the property information card links to another parcel in town on the city's website.

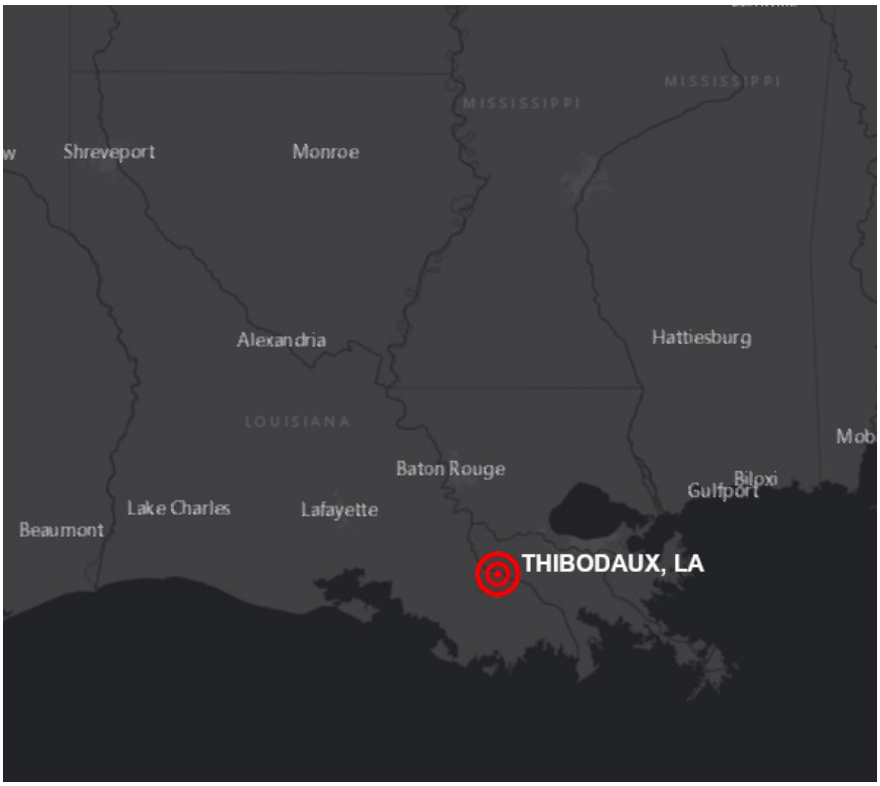

Figure 3.2: The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site is located in the City of Thibodaux in southeastern Louisiana (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

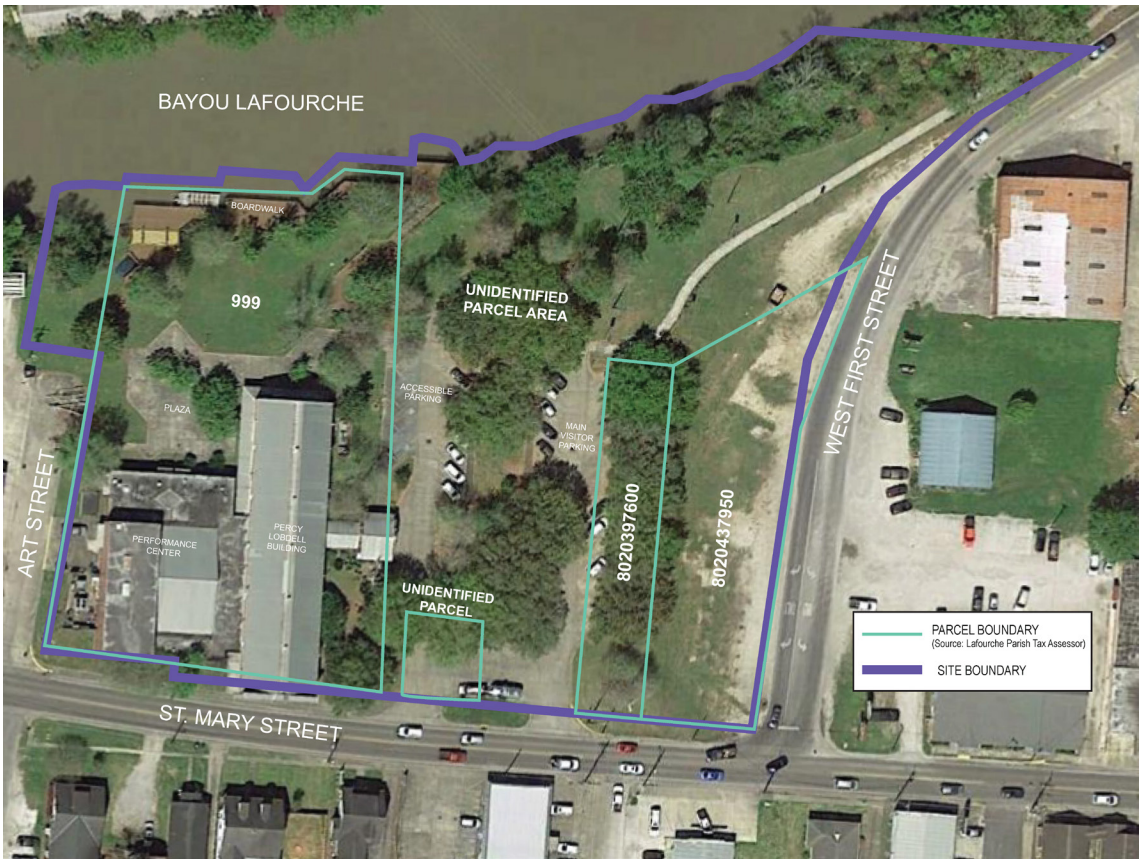

Figure 3.3: Diagram of existing parcel boundaries as reported by the Lafourche Parish Tax Assessor. The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site area is indicated in purple. Parcel data is missing for much of the site area (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

crossed the eastern portion of the study area by 1879; a spur across the northern portion of the study area was added around 1905.

Landscape features that provide evidence of the industrial character of the site have been mostly obscured by subsequent site development in the early 1980s and 1990s when the site was redeveloped to become a community center and later a NPS site. The Percy-Lobdell Building, constructed circa 1905-1906, is the most prominent historic feature remaining on the site. A Historic Structure Report (HSR), completed in 2019, documented the existing conditions and developmental history of the Percy-Lobdell Building and provided recommended treatments. This CLR report builds on the HSR to include the entirety of the site and the unique developmental history of parcels adjacent to the National Register-listed Percy-Lobdell Building.

The following document organizes site features by landscape characteristics, which are the "tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of the landscape, or are products of its development, respectively."[301] Further, "these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance."[302] The NPS identifies thirteen landscape characteristics. These landscape characteristics are defined as follows:[303]

- Natural Systems and Features: Natural aspects that often influence the development and resultant form of a landscape.
- Spatial Organization: Arrangement of elements creating the ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.
- Land Use: Organization, form, and shape of the landscape in response to land use.
- Topography: Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.
- Cultural Traditions: Practices that influence land use, patterns of division, building forms, and the use of materials.
- Cluster Arrangement: The location of buildings and structures in the landscape.
- Circulation: Spaces, features, and materials that constitute systems of movement.
- Topography: Three-dimensional configuration of the landscape surface characterized by features and orientation.
- Vegetation: Indigenous or introduced trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous materials.
- Buildings and Structures: Three-dimensional constructs such as houses, barns, garages, stables, bridges, and memorials.
- Views and Vistas: Features that create or allow a range of vision, which can be natural or designed and controlled.
- Constructed Water Features: The built features and elements that utilize water for aesthetic or utilitarian functions.
- Small-Scale Features: Elements that provide detail and diversity combined with function and aesthetics.
- Archeological Sites: Sites containing surface and subsurface remnants related to historic or prehistoric land use.

While most sites contain at least several of the thirteen characteristics, "[n]ot all characteristics are always present in any one landscape."[304] The existing Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit features twelve of the thirteen landscape characteristics, the exception being constructed water features.

Natural Systems and Features

Due to centuries of human habitation and heavy development and modification of the natural flooding cycles of the Mississippi delta, much of the natural systems of this region are now impacted by man-made interventions including levees, dams, canals, and other engineered systems.

301. Robert R. Page, "National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide" (U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009), 7–4.
302. Page, 53.
303. Page, 53.
304. Page, 53.

Hydrological System

The site is located directly adjacent to Bayou Lafourche, a 106-mile distributary of the Mississippi River. Bayou Lafourche begins northwest of the site in Donaldsonville, LA, taking a circuitous path for approximately 33 miles before passing the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site. The bayou has undergone several transformations since European settlement. As a result of these modifications, Bayou Lafourche now carries significantly less water volume that it had historically. Bayou Lafourche currently averages approximately 4.5 feet in depth (Figure 3.4).

Human-made levees added alongside Bayou Lafourche to prevent flooding are no longer necessary and many have been removed. The bayou's flow rate is regulated by the pump station in Donaldsonville. The reduced flow rate from the pump station, installed in 1952, has degraded the water quality in the bayou and allowed for saltwater intrusion into lower estuary systems. These problems have led to an initiative to increase the flow of freshwater into Bayou Lafourche. As of 2019, funds were approved for multiple projects including dredging and the installation of a new pump station to increase the minimum pumping capacity into the bayou to 1,000 cubic feet per second. These changes will affect the flow of the bayou through the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site.[305]

Terrain and Soils

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site occupies a level area on the natural levee next to Bayou Lafourche. The topography of the levee edge has changed over the site's history. The site terrain is now primarily flat with imperceptible slopes, except on the *batture*, the area between the edge of the bayou and the natural levee. The highest elevations on site are approximately 15.5 ft above sea level.[306]

Soil types in this region are alluvial, and range by geographic relationship to the Mississippi

Figure 3.4: Bayou Lafourche as seen from Jackson Street Bridge east of site area, view to west (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

River and its distributaries. The natural levees, backswamps, and floodplains surrounding these waterways each have distinct soil characteristics. The historic flooding patterns of Bayou Lafourche created the dominant soil characteristics of the site. These soils are very young, derived from sediments that were deposited a mere 1600-600 years ago.[307] The predominant native soil series in the area is Cancienne. The Cancienne series is found in high to intermediate positions along natural levees beginning in Baton Rouge and continuing south along the Mississippi delta to the Gulf of Mexico. The Cancienne series is characterized by very deep, silt loam-silty clay loam with a dark, grayish-brown color. These somewhat poorly drained soils are classified as hydrologic soil group C.[308] Cancienne soils have primarily 0-1% slopes with 18-48" depth to the water table and high available water storage capacity. Soil pH ranges from moderately acid in Ap horizons (to depth of 58cm) to moderately alkaline in B horizons (58-201cm).

It is noted in a 1992 archeological survey prepared by Coastal Environments, Inc that the soil stratigraphy was heavily modified on the site throughout its history, with areas of cut and fill, archaeological remains, and other disturbances distributed throughout the site.[309] Archeological excavations performed in 1989 did not reach sterile

305. Halle Parker, "Money Secured to Construct Bayou Lafourche Pump Station," *Houma Today*, August 28, 2019, https://www.houmatoday.com/news/20190828/money-secured-to-construct-bayou-lafourche-pump-station.
306. Thurston Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center," Cultural Resource Survey (Thibodaux, LA, 1992), 7, JELA Archives.
307. Jayur Madhusudan Mehta and Elizabeth L. Chamberlain, "Mound Construction and Site Selection in the Lafourche Subdelta of the Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana, USA," *The Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 14, no. 4 (October 2, 2019): 457, https://doi.org/10.1080/15564894.2018.1458764.
308. Natural Resource Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture, "Web Soil Survey," July 1, 2020, https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/gmap/.
309. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations," 10.

soils until a depth of 80 centimeters or more below the surface in some areas.[310] It is unlikely that many areas of the site exhibit stratigraphy representative of an undisturbed Cancienne profile.

Ecoregion & Native Ecology

The site area is within the Mississippi Alluvial Plain Southern Holocene Meander Belts (73k) Level IV Ecoregion as defined by the United States Geological Survey (Figure 3.5).[311]

As described by Chapman et al.:

> The Southern Holocene Meander Belts ecoregion stretches from just north of Natchez, MS, south to New Orleans, LA. Similar to the more northerly meander belt regions, such as 73a, point bars, oxbows, natural levees, and abandoned channels occur. However, this region has a longer growing season, warmer temperatures, and greater precipitation than its northern counterparts. As a result, many plant species common in this region, such as live oak, Spanish moss, and laurel oak, do not occur, or are less common in the regions to the north. The bottomland forests have been cleared and the region has been extensively leveed and modified for agriculture, flood control, and navigation.[312]

310. Hahn, 87.
311. S.S. Chapman et al., *Ecoregions of the Mississippi Alluvial Plain* (Reston, Virginia: U.S. Geological Survey, 2004), https://gaftp.epa.gov/EPADataCommons/ORD/Ecoregions/map/map_front.pdf.
312. S.S. Chapman et al.

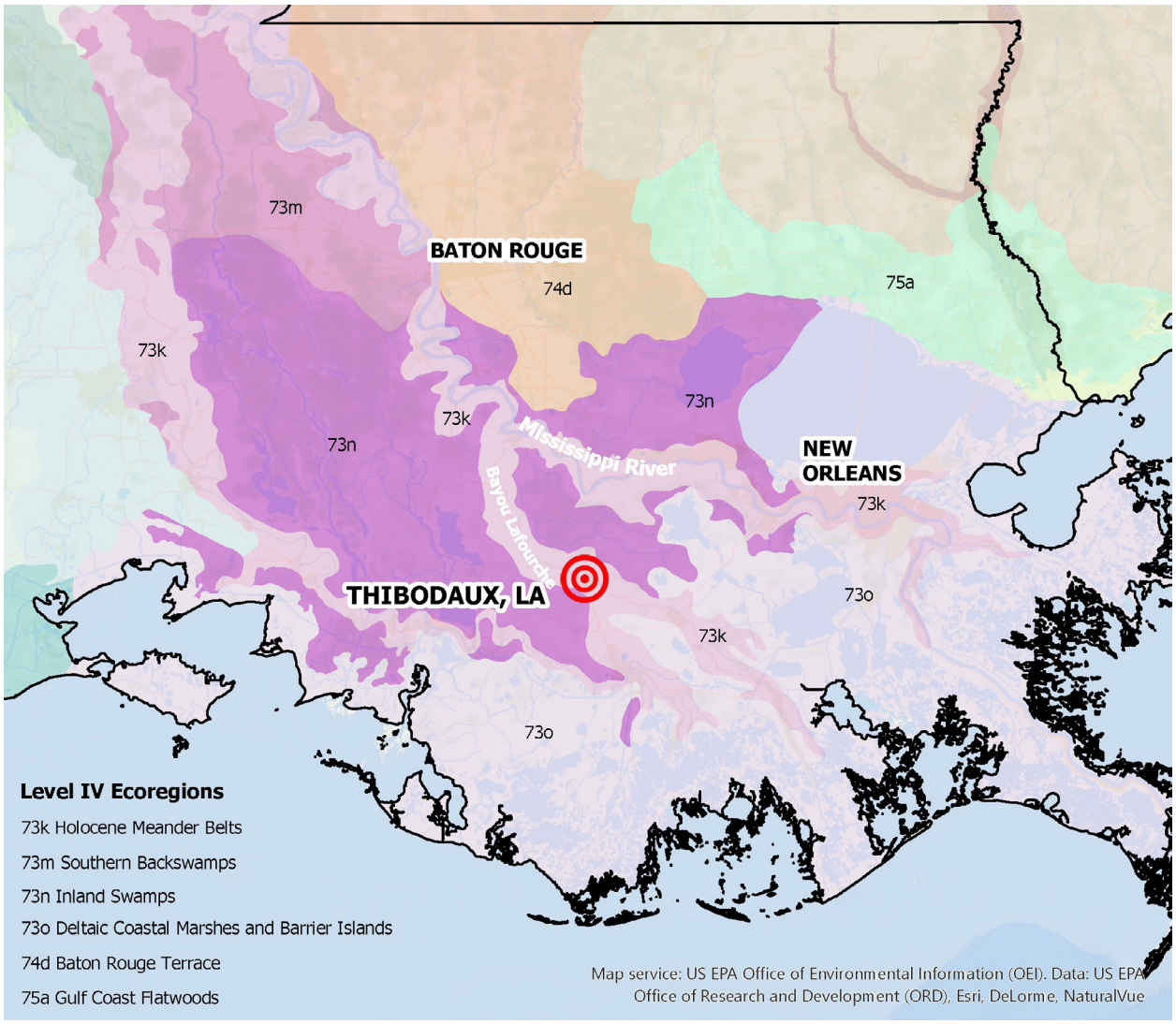

Figure 3.5: Level IV Ecoregions of Louisiana. The site area is within the Southern Holocene Meander Belts Ecoregion, 73k (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

The native plant community of this area can be broadly described as Bottomland Hardwood Forest; however there are no remnants of the native plant community present on the site. According to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, "Bottomland hardwood forest loss is estimated to be 50-75% of the original pre-settlement acreage"[313] The native ecological community hosts many species of hardwood trees including multiple species of oaks, sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), Drummond red maple (*Acer rubrum var. drummondii*). Understory species include buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.),* dwarf palmetto (*Sabal minor*), and switchcane (*Arundenaria gigantea*).[314] Some of these species were specified in the planting plan for the site redevelopment in the early 1990s, and are now present on the site as cultural vegetation.[315] Bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) trees found on the site are native to backswamps, low lying areas, and edges of distributaries such as Bayou Lafourche.[316]

Regional Fauna

As the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit is within an urban context, wildlife habitat is not a major feature of the site. Non-native Muscovy ducks (*Cairina moschata*) were found roaming the site at the time of site visits (Figure 3.6). Typical urban-adapted wildlife such as squirrels and common species of birds can also be found on the site.

Regional Climate

The climate of southern Louisiana is hot and humid, marked by long, hot summers and mild winters. According to U.S. Climate Normals for the Thibodaux area of Louisiana (1991-2020), average winter temperatures range between

Figure 3.6: Non-native Muscovy ducks visit the site area (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

46.5°-66F°, with an average temperature of 56.3°F. Average summer temperatures range between 74.4°F-91.5°F, with an average temperature of 83°F. Normal annual precipitation is 71.13″. Summer is the wettest season, averaging 25.56" of precipitation. Fall is the driest season, averaging 14.48″ of precipitation. Thibodaux receives zero annual snowfall.[317]

The growing season is long, ranging from 250 to 300 days. Rainfall can be heavy, and the area is susceptible to flooding and storm surge during frequent tropical storms and hurricanes. News reports from August 2021 indicate that Thibodaux received significant damage from hurricane Ida, a Category 4 storm. As of a 2019 Geologic Resources Inventory Report, the next most recent storm to affect the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site was Gustav (2008).[318] Tropical storms and hurricanes are a growing risk to coastal communities as climate change increases the frequency and intensity of these storms. Storm surge models provided by the National Hurricane Center indicate that currently, the City of

313. "Natural Communities of Louisiana, Louisiana Natural Heritage Program" (Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, 2009), 22,https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Resources/Publications/Natural_Communities_Fact_Sheets/ The_Natural_Communities_of_Louisiana_2009.pdf.
314. "Natural Communities of Louisiana, Louisiana Natural Heritage Program," 22.
315. Hamilton & Associates, *As-Constructed Drawings, Acadian Culture Center, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve*, 1990, Construction Drawings, 1990, JELA_467_41026B_[id12624], NPS ETIC.
316. "Natural Communities of Louisiana, Louisiana Natural Heritage Program," 20–21.
317. "U.S. Climate Normals Quick Access," Government, National Centers for Environmental Information, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Information, August 3, 2022, https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/us-climate-normals/#dataset=normals-annualseasonal&timeframe=30&location=LA&station=USC00169013.
318. CA. Shupp and K. KellerLynn, "Jean Lafitte National Park and Preserve: Geologic Resources Inventory Report," Natural Resource Report (Fort Collins, Colorado: National Park Service, 2019), 56, NPS IRMA, https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2266903.

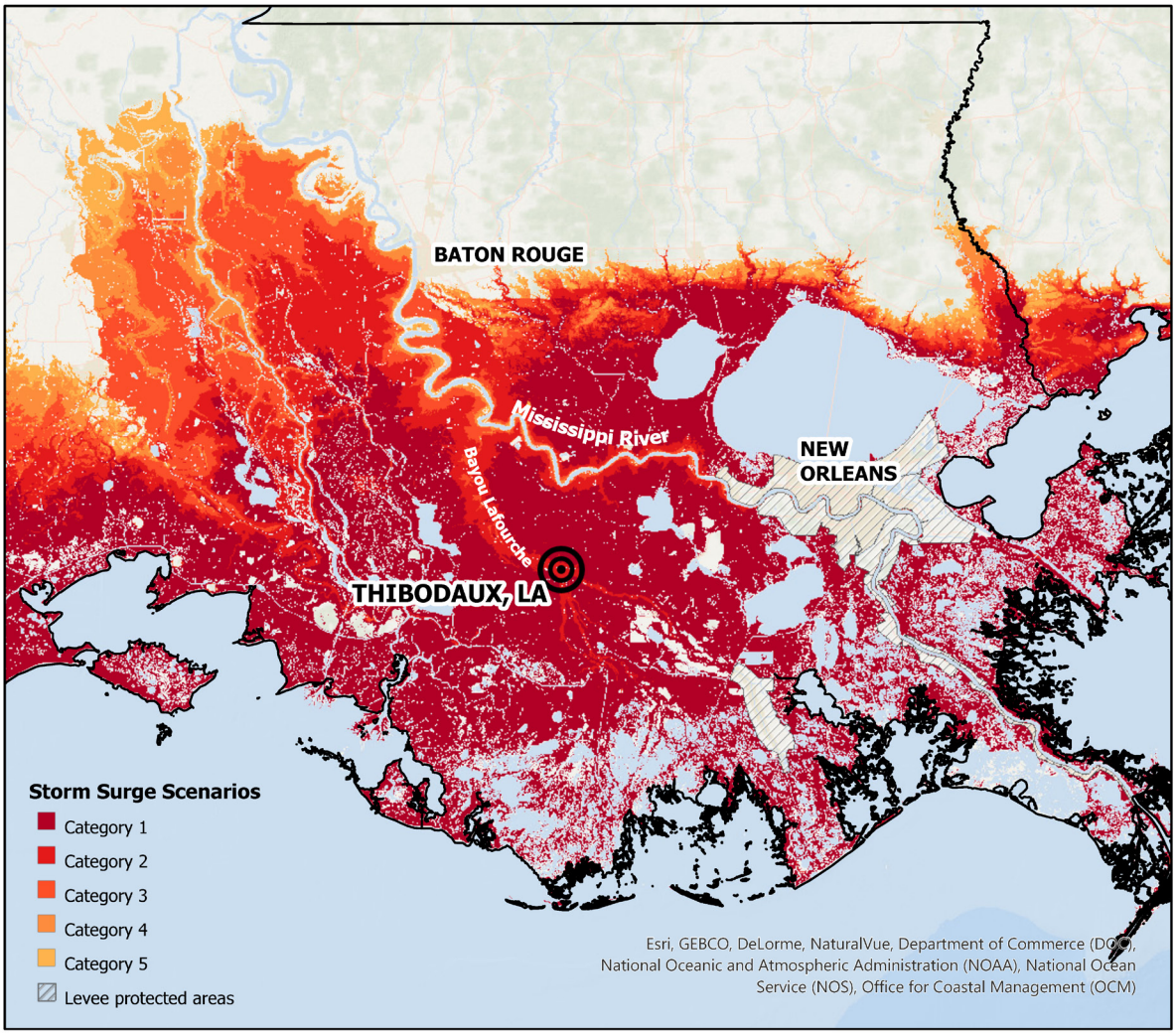

Figure 3.7: Recent models of coastal flood exposure risk indicate that the site area faces a high risk of flooding in the event of a tropical storm (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Thibodaux will be inundated by any storm greater than a Category 1 hurricane (Figure 3.7).[319]

Features:

- Hydrological system
- Geological system
- Ecoregion and native ecology
- Regional fauna
- Regional climate

Spatial Organization

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center landscape contains three spatial zones that are defined mostly by vegetation, paved areas, and buildings. Zone 1 includes the Percy-Lobdell Building, auditorium addition, and plaza area; Zone 2 includes the entrance portico and parking area east of the building; and Zone 3 includes the open grassy area along the eastern edge of the site (Figure 3.8). Much of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit features an inward facing arrangement of structures and vegetation. A sense of enclosure is created by the overhead tree canopy, vegetation along the bayou, and the spatial arrangement of buildings, which limit sight lines into and out from the unit.

319. NOAA/NWS/NHC, "National Hurricane Center Storm Surge Risk Maps," August 4, 2022, https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/203f772571cb48b1b8b50fdcc3272e2c/page/Category-2/.

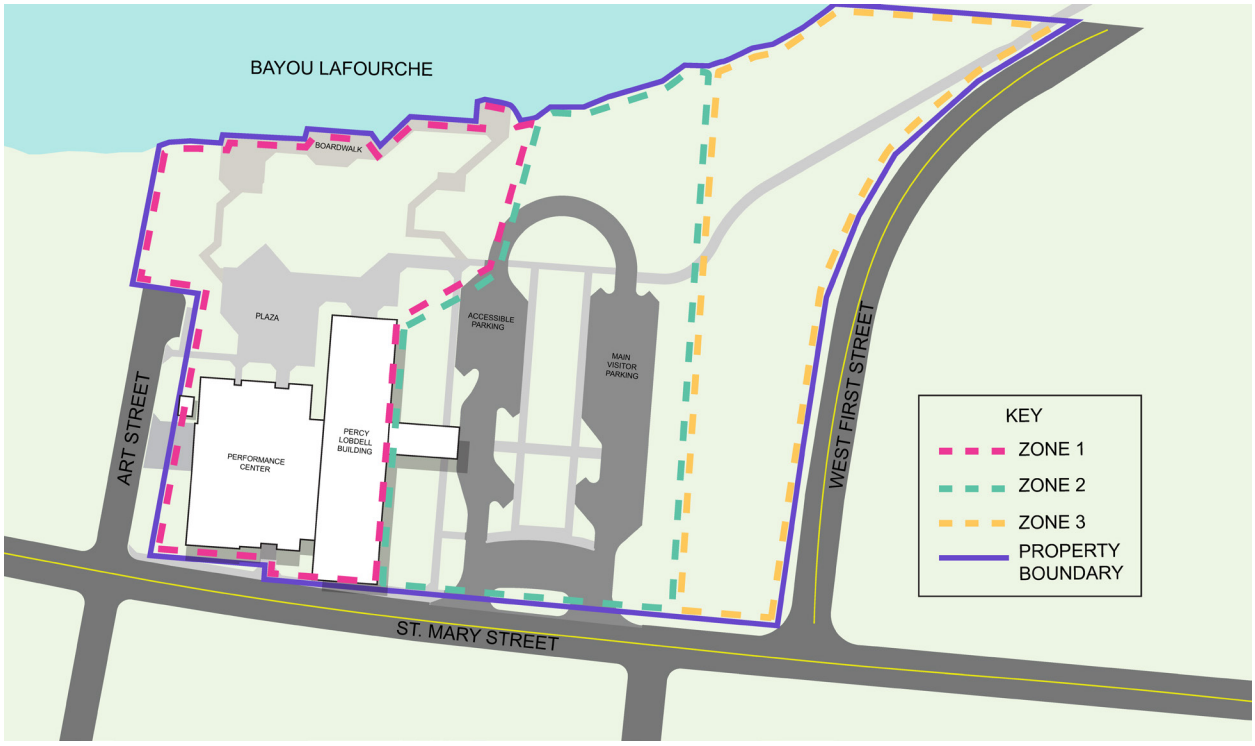

Figure 3.8: The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit consists of three zones defined by spatial characteristics (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

The entire site is bound by Bayou Lafourche to the north, W 1st Street to the east, St. Mary Street to the south, and Art Street to the west. The site arrangement of Zone 1 centers around the historic Percy-Lobdell Building, a long narrow structure facing St. Mary Street. The two-story brick building extends approximately 200 feet north from St. Mary Street with the primary entrance of the building on the eastern facade facing the parking area. A sizable brick addition to the historic structure with blocky, rectangular massing occupies the southwest corner of the site. The building massing and circulation form two distinct spaces east and north of the structure. North of the building is an irregular form plaza, lawn, and boardwalk facing Bayou Lafourche. This area has a more dispersed tree canopy and open overhead plane (Figure 3.9).

Zone 2 includes the parking area east of the Percy-Lobdell Building. This area includes large canopy trees with a closed overhead plane that create a sense of enclosure (Figure 3.10).

The open grassy area on the eastern portion of the site is Zone 3. It is outside of the main use areas and currently serves as road frontage along W 1st Street (Figure 3.11). W 1st Street travels west from town toward the Wetlands Acadian Cultural

Figure 3.9: Irregular shaped concrete plaza with brick planting islands in the northwest corner of the site, view to southwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.10: Sense of enclosure created by overhead tree canopy in parking lot area. Also visible are double-light underground-wired streetlamps installed throughout the site near circulation areas (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.11: Informal open grass and gravel area along W 1st Street frontage, view to southwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.12: View to west of multi-use path along Bayou Lafourche. The Percy-Lobdell Building is behind the tree line at the top of the image (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Center site, at which point the road curves south, terminating at St. Mary Street. This frontage area is defined by a tree line along its northern edge on the bayou and along its western edge next to the parking area. The road frontage is approximately 80 feet wide near the parking lot, narrowing to an approximately 25 feet-wide strip of bayou frontage at the northeastern edge of the site. This smaller strip of bayou frontage adjacent to W 1st Street hosts a multi-use path that connects to the main parking area (Figure 3.12). This area provides the most open views out of the site toward the town of Thibodaux to the east.

Features:

- Percy-Lobdell Building/ Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center
- Parking lot
- Plaza, lawn, and boardwalk
- Eastern roadside frontage and multi-use path
- St. Mary Street, Art Street, and W 1st Street

Land Use

The current land use of the site is as an NPS cultural and educational facility, with recreation-related features that facilitate the cultural and educational function of the site. The Percy-Lobdell Building and modern auditorium addition supports educational and cultural center functions. These functions include administrative offices for the public library, offices for the NPS, historical and cultural museum exhibits, and a performance space. Cultural activities include boat tours, historic walking tours, storytelling, live music, French language heritage preservation events, summer camps, and other events.

A 37-space paved parking area supports public access to the site. The sidewalks, multi-use path, boardwalk, and plaza facilitate recreational use of the site. Recreational uses include walking, biking, boating, paddling, picnicking, and special events.

Features:

- Institutional and administrative uses within Percy-Lobdell Building and attached auditorium
- Recreational use of spaces around Percy-Lobdell Building

Topography

The site is almost entirely flat, with an average elevation of approximately 15 feet above sea level. Drain inlets centered within landscape beds and parking aisles indicate subtle low points in the grade. The greatest grade change is found at the banks of Bayou Lafourche, where the elevation drops to 2 feet above sea level. The slope of the site, from the top of the bank to its southern boundary, is less than 1%. The landform of the site was regraded by NPS during major site improvements in the 1990s.

Features:

- Natural bayou
- Natural levee

Cultural Traditions

Cultural traditions at the site include cultural interpretation and heritage preservation, performing arts, and outdoor recreation. The site is dedicated to the interpretation and perpetuation of Wetland Acadian heritage in Louisiana. The cultural center museum facility within the Percy-Lobdell Building interprets Acadian history and lifeways to the public. Park rangers lead walking tours of Thibodaux and boat tours along Bayou Lafourche which interpret the local history. Several heritage preservation activities are regularly hosted on the site including Louisiana music, storytelling, and French/Cajun language circles. The Thibodaux Playhouse puts on performances in the 200-seat theater located on site. The maintenance of the Percy-Lobdell Building (listed on the National Register of Historic Places) is in keeping with the historic preservation tradition of the NPS. The landscape is used recreationally for walking, picnicking, boating, and other outdoor activities.

Features:

- Cultural interpretation and heritage preservation
- Performing arts
- Outdoor recreation

Cluster Arrangement

A single building complex is located in the southwest corner of the site. Surrounding the building are multiple circulation features including stairs, sidewalks, a drive lane and parking area, and concrete plaza (Figure 3.13). The concrete plaza projects from the building on its north facade. Several raised brick landscape planting islands are located within the plaza. A wooden boardwalk connects the plaza to a pier structure overlooking Bayou Lafourche. Brick screening walls adjacent to the building complex enclose mechanical equipment and utilities. A small storage shed is located adjacent to the building on the west side

Features:

- Percy-Lobdell Building, attached auditorium, and small storage building
- Circulation features
- Plaza with planters

Circulation

The circulation features at the site facilitate pedestrian, vehicular, and boating access within and adjacent to the site (Figure 3.14).

Vehicular

City streets

The study area is bounded on the south by St. Mary Street, on the west by Art Street, and on the east by W 1st Street; these city streets are technically outside the property boundaries of the study area. The abandoned right-of-way of Church Street crosses through the study area.

Main entrance and visitor parking lot

The visitor parking area is located on the east side of the cultural center. The concrete parking area provides 45-degree angled parking, with yellow painted parking aisles (Figure 3.15). There are thirty-three parking spaces plus an additional four accessible parking spaces (Figure 3.16). The parking lot is entered and exited from St. Mary Street on the south side of the site. Vehicles enter the site via a one-way traffic aisle, passing by a bus lane/turnabout to the west and continuing north through a double-loaded angled parking area to a curved return lane (Figure 3.17). The traffic aisle then passes through a second double-loaded parking area with ADA designated parking spaces, to the visitor drop-off area/fire lane at the main entrance of the Percy-Lobdell Building. From the visitor drop-off area, the drive lane continues south, passing the bus lane/turnabout a second time, and exiting onto St. Mary Street. A wide landscaped island separates the two parking areas. The traffic aisle and parking area are paved with concrete. The concrete has expansion joints approximately every 15 feet and appears to be in good condition. Flush drain inlets are located in the center of the drive aisle for stormwater drainage. The parking area and drive aisle is lined by a 6” concrete curb with curb cuts for pedestrian circulation.

Art Street service entrance

The service vehicular entrance to the site is located on Art Street, a shared access road at the western boundary of the site that terminates near the bayou. Vehicles enter Art Street via St. Mary Street. The road provides access to waste receptacles, utilities, and loading areas (Figure 3.18). Vehicles park informally along the access road, with some vehicles parked over the curb and into the adjacent

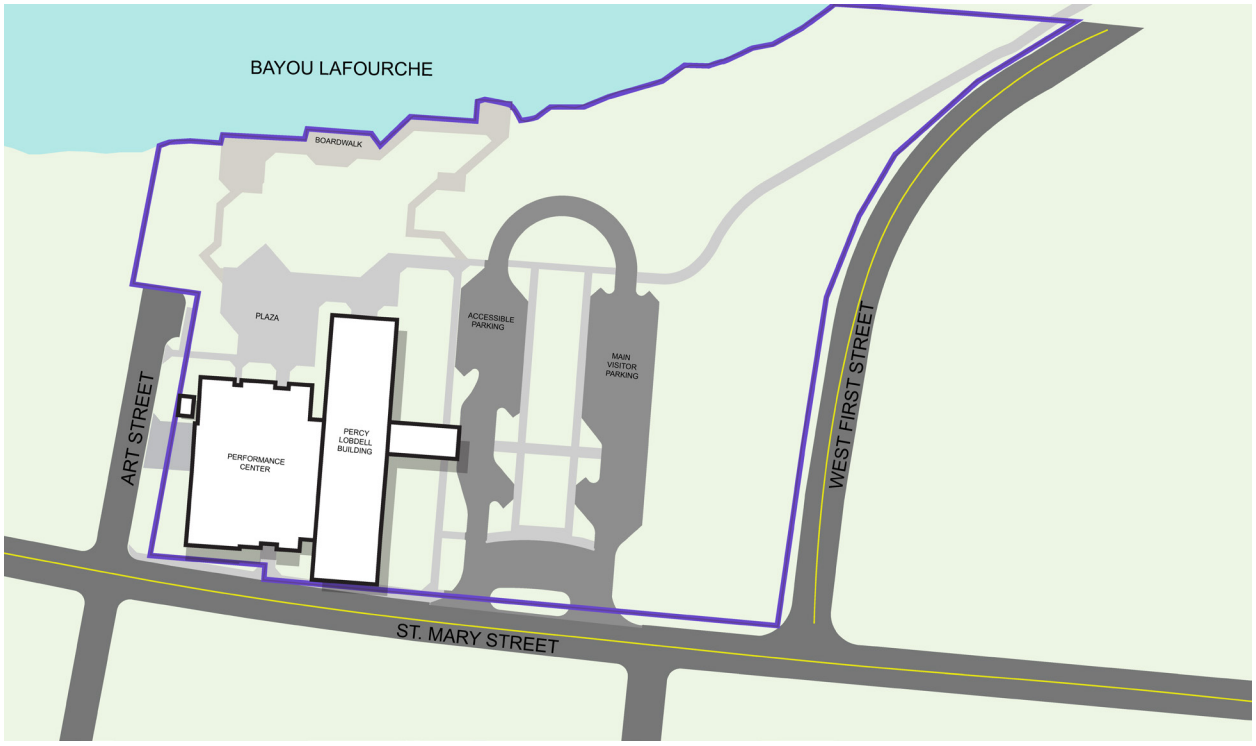

Figure 3.13: This simplified diagram illustrates the cluster arrangement of the building complex (in white) with adjacent circulation features and green space (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

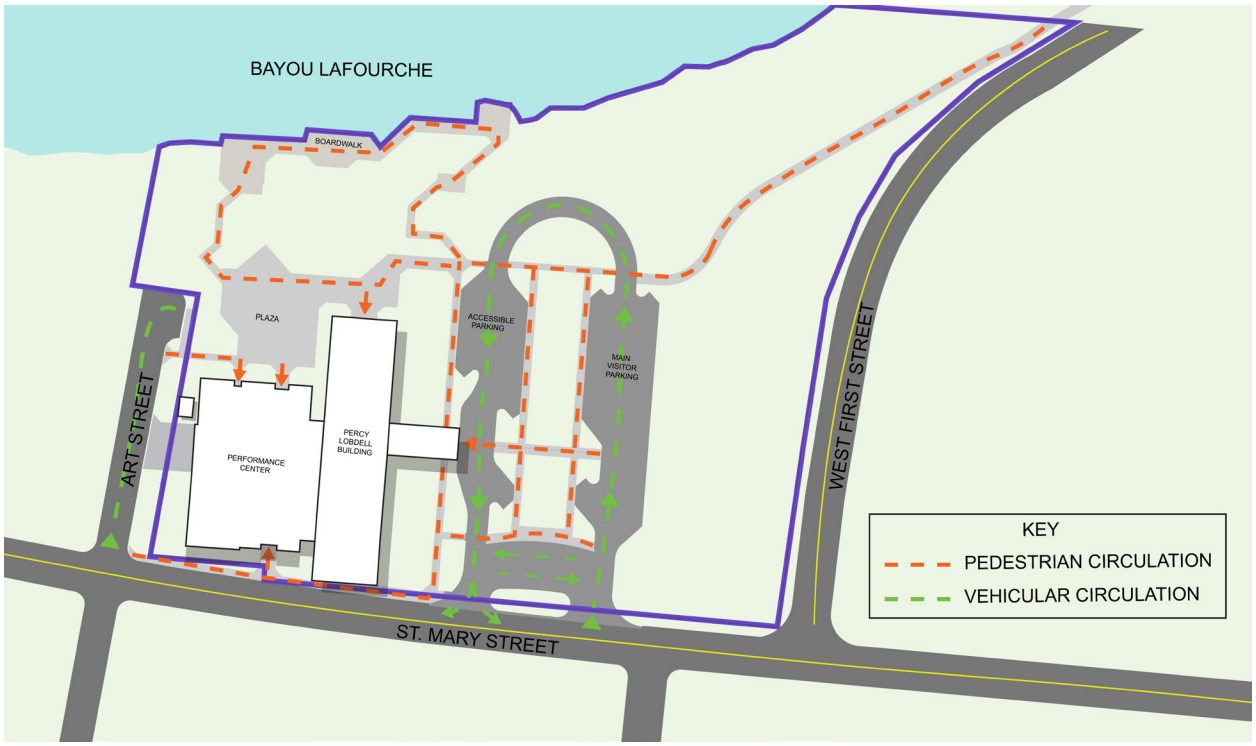

Figure 3.14: Pedestrian and vehicular circulation through the site. Orange arrows indicate building entrances (WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.15: View of parking area looking south toward St. Mary Street (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.17: Vehicular entrance to the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site from St. Mary Street, facing west (Source: WLA Studio, 2017).

Figure 3.16: View to south of accessible parking spaces at the entrance to the Visitor Center. Visible are river birch and magnolia tree plantings to right of image (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.18: View of Art Street looking north toward Bayou Lafourche. Auditorium building on Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site to right of image. Neighboring car wash and service center to left of image (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

landscape area. The road also services the adjacent business.

Informal Parking Spaces along W 1st Street

There are large, informal patches of gravel along the frontage of W 1st Street that appear to be used for parking or as a vehicle pull-off area (See Figure 3.11).

Pedestrian

The pedestrian circulation primarily directs visitors from the parking area to recreation features and the cultural center. Additionally, a multi-use path directs pedestrians and cyclists from the St. Patrick Bridge northeast of the site into the main parking area.

Multi-use path

A concrete multi-use path approximately 7 feet wide begins at the easternmost corner of the property, near the intersection of the St. Patrick Bridge and W 1st Street. The path runs parallel to Bayou Lafourche, between the bayou and W 1st Street (See Figure 3.12). The path continues for approximately 233 yards into the main parking area, connecting with the parking lot pedestrian circulation system (Figure 3.19). The concrete has a broom finish with score joints every 5 feet. The concrete appears to be in good condition, with no visible cracks. A short section of the path includes a metal handrail to protect users crossing the steeper sloped area. The path is lined with streetlights spaced approximately every 60 feet.

Concrete sidewalks

Three longer concrete sidewalks run north to south along the parking aisles of the visitor parking lot. Three east–west sections of sidewalk connect the north–south sidewalks to the cultural center and recreation areas (Figure 3.20). The City of Thibodaux maintains an additional section of sidewalk along the St. Mary Street right-of-way. The concrete sidewalks are approximately 6 feet wide in most areas with expansion joints every 5

Figure 3.19: View to west of multi-use path where it enters the park at the north edge of the parking area (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.20: View to west of east–west oriented sidewalks connecting the parking area to the main visitor activity areas (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.21: Sidewalk on St. Mary Street at the entrance of the site, facing east. The sidewalk terminates at the vehicular entrance to the site, lacking a crosswalk or pedestrian connection to the surrounding neighborhood. Also visible is the main entry signage, at center (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

feet. Access ramps with curb cuts are located in appropriate areas throughout the property, with the exception of the sidewalk right-of-way along St. Mary Street. This section of sidewalk terminates at the vehicular entrance to the site (Figure 3.21). There are no crosswalks or curb cuts to allow the sidewalk along St. Mary Street to continue beyond

Figure 3.22: View to north of sidewalk connecting St. Mary Street to the Main visitor entrance (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.23: Example of settling and wear on sidewalks near the main visitor entrance, view to north (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

the vehicular entrance, although this sidewalk does connect to the north–south sidewalk leading to the main building entrance (Figure 3.22). The concrete is generally in good to fair condition. Some areas show signs of aging, with some visible weathering, settling, and cracking (Figure 3.23).

Metal staircases

Two exterior metal staircases on the eastern facade of the historic Percy-Lobdell Building serve as fire escape exits for the second story of the building. Each staircase has two sets of eleven risers with a central and top landing, and each connect to an exterior door on the building facade. One set of stairs exits to the sidewalk on St. Mary Street (Figure 3.24), while the second staircase exits toward the concrete plaza north of the building (Figure 3.25). The staircases are painted black with a simple handrail and balusters on both sides of the stair. The black paint is rusted and chipping in many areas. The stairs are supported by poured concrete pylons set in a corrugated metal base (Figure 3.26). The stairs are in fair condition.

Figure 3.24: Exterior staircase on the eastern facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building, facing north (Source: WLA Studio, 2017).

Figure 3.25: View to south of fire escape stair on north end of Percy-Lobdell Building. To the left is a brick utility screening wall enclosing HVAC units (Source: WLA Studio, 2017).

Figure 3.26: Poured concrete pylons in corrugated galvanized culvert pipe support exterior fire escape staircases, view to southwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.27: View to north from plaza toward boardwalk, note pedestrian connection to plaza in bottom left of image (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.28: Planting islands with Chinese elm and dwarf palmetto provide a seat wall in the concrete plaza area outside of the auditorium, view to south (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.29: Incomplete power washing has left streaks on the surface of the concrete plaza (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Concrete plaza and planters

A concrete plaza north of the main building provides an open circulation pattern for pedestrian movement. The concrete plaza dates to the major renovation completed by the NPS in the 1990s. The approximately 8,000 square feet plaza utilizes a rectilinear-45- degree formal composition with sharp, abrupt angles for aesthetic effect (Figure 3.9). The plaza allows for movement between other circulation features and building entrances. The plaza also provides direct access to the two entrance points of the boardwalk on the bayou (Figure 3.27). The plaza space is punctuated by raised brick planters that double as seat walls, providing shade as well as informal seating (Figure 3.28). The plaza is constructed of poured concrete

designed in a square grid pattern with score lines every 7 feet. At the time of the site visit, dirt and black algal growth on the concrete surface had been power washed, leaving unsightly streak patterns across the plaza (Figure 3.29). Otherwise, the plaza is in good condition.

Composite material boardwalk and pier

The boardwalk is a meandering, angular feature designed to provide opportunities for observation, relaxation, and recreation. The boardwalk has two 4-feet-wide entry points from the concrete plaza. The boardwalk leads to a pier that overlooks Bayou Lafourche (Figure 3.30). The pier is enclosed by a 3-feet-tall handrail with horizontal side rails. The boardwalk and pier are constructed of a brown colored recycled plastic composite material with a stamped, wood-look finish (Figure 3.31). The boardwalk and pier are in good condition. The pier is supported by wood pilings (Figure 3.32). The pier widens at several points to create larger gathering spaces with benches and waste receptacles (Figure 3.33). Along the pier are two access points for water recreation, including a boat dock and canoe put-in. The boat dock includes a metal ramp that can be raised and lowered for pedestrian access to tour boats that depart from the pier (Figure 3.34).

Figure 3.32: Pressure treated wood pilings support the boardwalk feature, view to north (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.30: View to north of boardwalk and pier overlooking Bayou Lafourche. Waste receptacle with enclosure also visible in foreground (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.33: Seating areas with waste receptacle along the boardwalk feature, view to north (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.31: The boardwalk and pier are constructed of a composite plastic surface stamped with an imitation wood grain (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.34: Retractable ramp provides loading access for visitors participating in boat tours along the bayou (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Building entrances

There are twelve exterior doors to the building complex. The primary visitor circulation into and out of the building complex is through the main entrance portico on the eastern facade. Secondary visitor entrances are through the doors on the north facade that open onto the concrete plaza. These entrances are available to visitors on a limited basis, such as during special events. Additional exterior doors are used by staff only or are inoperable, including the door on the south facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building. Doors on the north facade of the addition/auditorium are used for special events.

Features:

- City streets
- Main vehicular entrance and parking lot
- Art Street service entrance
- Informal parking spaces along W 1st Street
- Multi-use path
- Concrete sidewalks and walkways
- Metal staircases
- Concrete plaza and planters
- Composite material boardwalk and pier
- Building entrances

Vegetation

It appears that existing vegetation is a combination of intentionally planted (anthropogenic) and some naturally occurring vegetation. In programmed areas of the site, the vegetation is primarily intentionally planted. A 1990 planting plan from Hamilton and Associates dating to the NPS' development of the site was apparently executed and is responsible for much of the existing vegetation. Along the bayou and less programmed areas of the site, there appears to be more spontaneous vegetation. This vegetation includes a mixture of regionally native and non-native plants. Overall, existing vegetation is mature, with large canopy trees and ornamental shrubs. A few newer plantings were recently added along the multi-use path near the northeast corner of the study area. Much of the site is covered by mature canopy, creating large areas of deep shade. Turf exists in open areas and under breaks in the canopy. A selection of mixed landscape plantings surrounds the building complex. Shrubs are found as understory plantings in areas too shaded for turfgrass. The following descriptions organize the vegetation description into areas based upon groups of vegetation in the landscape.

Figure 3.35: View to north of central landscape median between parking areas with live oak trees and azalea understory shrubs (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.36: Azaleas make up the understory of the landscape medians surrounding the visitor parking lot (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Landscaped Areas from the 1990 Planting Plan

Live oak canopy in parking area

The parking area features a canopy of mature live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), which are quite large despite the slow growth rate of the species. The trees are healthy and appear to receive periodic pruning. The parking area has a large central landscape median with a raised curb, sidewalks, and parking bump-outs. The central landscape median is planted with live oak and bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), in a non-uniform arrangement (Figure 3.35). Clumps of natural form azalea (*Rhododendron indicum*) are found throughout the median understory (Figure 3.36). A smaller landscape island planted with crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*), defines the southern boundary between the parking area and St. Mary Street (Figure 3.37). The eastern edge of the parking area is defined by a row of live oaks, which are underplanted with a hedgerow of pittosporum *(Pittosporum tobira*), as well as pampas grass

(*Cortaderia selloana*) and azalea (Figure 3.38). A clump of bald cypress marks the vehicular entrance at the southeastern corner of the site. Another stand of bald cypress defines the northern boundary of the parking area (Figure 3.39).

Figure 3.37: Crape myrtle trees and turfgrass in the landscape median at the entrance to the site, view to west (Source: WLA Studio, 2017).

Figure 3.38: Row of live oaks with Japanese pittosporum understory shrubs east of visitor parking area, view to south (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.39: Bald cypress trees planted during site development in the 1990s, view to north (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Cultural center and visitor entrance plantings

Between the eastern side of the building complex and the western edge of the parking area, a 40- to -50-feet-wide landscape area accents the main entrance to the building. The entrance alcove is lined with sago palm (*Cycas revoluta*), dwarf palmetto (*Sabal minor*), and Indian hawthorn, (*Raphiolepis indica*) (Figure 3.40). North of the entrance alcove are river birch (*Betula nigra*), yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*), and southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) (Figure 3.16). The south face of the building complex is lined with crape myrtle trees underplanted with a hedgerow of azalea along the St. Mary Street right-of-way (Figure 3.41).

Plaza and boardwalk plantings

On the north side of the building facing the plaza, several landscape beds planted with sago palm line the entrances (Figure 3.42). The plaza has several raised planter islands with Chinese elms (*Ulmus parvifolia*) and dwarf palmetto (Figure 3.28). A mix of weedy herbaceous species have colonized the

Figure 3.40: Dwarf palmetto and sago palms are planted south of the visitor entrance, view to north (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.41: Crape myrtles planted with azalea shrubs along the St. Mary Street sidewalk, view to east (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

raised beds and some of the adjacent landscape beds, lending an unkempt appearance (Figure 3.43). Beyond the plaza is an open, mowed lawn between the plaza and boardwalk structure planted with bald cypress and red maple (*Acer rubrum*) (Figure 3.44). The lawn is composed of mixed grasses and weedy herbaceous species, clipped low for a uniform appearance. Dwarf palmetto line the edge between the boardwalk and lawn. At the far western edge of the boardwalk area, a few southern magnolia and yaupon holly are planted at the water's edge.

Spontaneous Vegetation

Mixed Woods along Bayou Edge

Beyond the boardwalk area to the northeast, vegetation along the bayou edge features a naturalized buffer of mixed trees and woody undergrowth. Sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), privet (*Ligustrum sp.*), dwarf palmetto, pampas grass, southern magnolia, and some weedy herbaceous plants are present in the approximately 40- to 50-feet-wide buffer that continues from the eastern edge of the boardwalk to the property boundary at the St. Patrick bridge (Figure 3.45).

Grassy area along W 1st Street Frontage

An open, mowed area of weedy groundcover mixed with gravel and exposed sandy soils makes up the frontage alongside W 1st Street at the eastern boundary of the property (See Figure 3.11). This area appears to be used at times for overflow parking. A set of movable metal barriers is stored adjacent to the grassy area.

Features:

- Live oak canopy in parking area
- Cultural center and visitor entrance plantings
- Plaza and boardwalk plantings
- Mixed woods along bayou edge
- Grassy area along W 1st Street frontage

Figure 3.42: Sago palms at the north entrance to the auditorium building, view to south (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.44: Lawn area between the plaza and boardwalk. Visible are dwarf palmetto planted alongside bald cypress and red maple trees (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.43: Landscape beds between the sidewalk and boardwalk at the north end of the site, view to east (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.45: Naturalized area along *batture* area of Bayou Lafourche within the project area (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Buildings and Structures

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit includes both historic and modern buildings and structures. The primary historic structure is the Percy-Lobdell Building. The historic Percy-Lobdell Building is described in detail in a HSR completed by WLA Studio in 2019. The Percy-Lobdell Building and its modern additions serve as the cultural and interpretive facilities of the site. Smaller accessory structures serve the utility and maintenance needs of the facility. Landscape structures and site furnishings facilitate circulation and recreation activities within the site.

Historic Percy-Lobdell Building and Modern Additions

The following is a brief description of the building complex in its current form. The historic portion of the Percy-Lobdell Building is a two-story brick structure, rectangular in plan, with approximately 18,000 heated square feet. The original front entrance is located on St. Mary Street (Figure 3.46). A contemporary brick portico added to the eastern facade of the building is now the primary entrance to the building (Figure 3.47). The portico was added as part of modifications made during major renovations in the early 1990s, when the NPS converted the site to its current park function. The first floor windows of the building are obscured by closed and secured metal shutters. The second story windows are contemporary replacement windows. Doors are contemporary commercial doors, with the exception of the wooden doors on the southern facade. Two styles of metal awnings cover building entrances on several sides of the building (Figure 3.48).

The historic structure was expanded with an addition to the west during the 1990s renovations, more than doubling the original footprint of the building. The architecture firm Hamilton and Associates designed the addition and the entrance portico on the east facade. The brick auditorium addition has both single and two-story sections with a mixed roofline. It was completed in 1992. The additions are institutional in appearance, with no apparent reference to the Percy-Lobdell Building in the design (Figure 3.49). The brick walls of the addition have minimal ornamentation and few windows.

Figure 3.46: The southern facade and original front entrance to the Percy-Lobdell Building along St. Mary Street, view facing north (Source: WLA Studio, 2017).

Figure 3.47: Entry portico addition on the east side of the Percy-Lobdell Building, looking west from parking area (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.48: North face of the original Percy-Lobdell Building, with metal-roofed awnings and contemporary doors and windows, view looking south. Painted metal shutters enclose openings on the ground story (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.49: Windowless west face of the auditorium addition to the Percy-Lobdell Building. Visible is a loading area, commercial dumpster, storage building (left), and brick enclosure for mechanical equipment (right) (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.50: Obscured by overgrowth, the remains of an unidentified concrete structure sit at the water's edge along the bayou, view to east (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Concrete Plaza and Planters

The concrete plaza and planters are described above in Circulation; see page 73.

Composite Material Boardwalk and Pier

The composite material boardwalk and pier are described above in Pedestrian Circulation; see page 73.

Accessory Structures

Storage shed

A small, prefabricated storage shed is located adjacent to the mechanical equipment on the west side of the complex (Figure 3.49). The shed is made of a wood-composite panel material, painted off-white. It has asphalt shingle roofing. The shed has two hinged doors that face the concrete loading area connecting to Art Street.

Brick utility screening walls

Three areas of the site are enclosed by brick screening walls to obscure views of mechanical equipment. On the east side of the building complex, two brick screening walls, approximately 4 feet tall by 25 feet long, enclose HVAC equipment on three sides (See Figure 3.25). On the west side of the complex, three brick walls approximately 7 feet high and 40 feet long enclose mechanical equipment against the side of the building (Figure 3.49). A metal double access gate, painted green, provides access to the equipment in this enclosure.

Unidentified concrete ruin

An unidentified concrete structure is located on the levee banks at the northeast corner of the site. This feature, which likely was a foundation or pad for an unidentified purpose, is currently being overtaken by vegetation and is hardly visible from the main circulation of the site (Figure 3.50).

Drainage Structures

Drop inlets to stormwater conveyance system

Stormwater is managed on the site through a system of drain inlets in parking areas and planter beds (Figure 3.51). An underground stormwater conveyance pipe, approximately 12 inches in diameter, is located beneath the main visitor parking area. This structure runs north to south, with drop inlets located along the conveyance. Additional drop inlets within low areas of landscape plantings throughout the site presumably connect to this conveyance. The conveyance drains to Bayou Lafourche, exiting a wing wall structure along the levee northeast of the site.

City manhole and sewer drain inlets

City sewer drain inlets convey stormwater along the southern perimeter of the site, with a manhole cover located in the southwest corner of the site (Figure 3.52). These systems are managed by the City of Thibodaux.

Figure 3.51: Drop inlets installed in pavement (image center) to convey stormwater, view to northeast (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.52: Drop inlets installed in planter beds (image center) to convey stormwater, view to northeast (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.53: Gas meter on the southwest corner of the Percy-Lobdell Building (image center), view to east (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.54: Gas utility access and stormwater drop inlet at the corner of Art Street and St. Mary Street within the site boundaries, view to south (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.55: Irrigation heads installed in raised planters are in disrepair (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Utilities

In addition to the drainage structures, there are multiple utility features and mechanical equipment on the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site. These features are located across the site and are noted in Illustration 3.1: Existing Conditions. Features include:

- Gas meter (Figure 3.53)
- Utility access covers (Figure 3.54)
- Irrigation: some raised planter beds are equipped with irrigation sprinkler heads, many of which are in poor condition (Figure 3.55)
- HVAC & Mechanical Equipment (See Figure 3.25)
- Overhead Power Lines.

Features:

- Percy-Lobdell Building, attached portico, and auditorium addition
- Concrete plaza and planters
- Composite material boardwalk and pier
- Accessory structures
- Drainage structures
- Utilities

Views and Vistas

Views into the cultural landscape from outside the property boundary are limited by the overhead canopy of mature live oaks and bald cypress, the flat terrain, and building massing. Much of the site is not visible from the street. From within the site, these same factors constrict views to a limited, inward perspective.

Passing the unit from St. Mary Street, the entry signage is not particularly prominent and could be missed by motorists (See Figure 3.21). The building massing prevents views into the site when approaching from the west. An uninterrupted row of live oaks along the eastern edge of the parking lot prevents views into the interior of the site when approaching from the east. Within the site, canopy trees and large shrubs restrict the field of vision. From the northwest corner of the site, the adjacent commercial buildings are visible (Figure 3.56). The most significant vistas are available along the boardwalk pier, providing views across and down the bayou (Figure 3.57). Several hundred yards of bayou can be seen in either direction from the pier. The multi-use path leading into the unit from the northeast provides an open field of vision across the open space east of the trees lining the parking area (See Figure 3.12).

Features:

- Limited views into site from perimeter
- Limited views across the interior of the site
- Boardwalk bayou views

Small-Scale Features

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center landscape contains various small-scale features, most of which relate to visitor services such as site regulation and orientation.

Monuments and Commemorative Markers

Confluence of Bayous historical marker

A historical marker sponsored by the Lafourche Heritage Society marks the "Confluence of Bayous" (Figure 3.58). The sign reads: "Near here was the prehistoric fork of Bayou Lafourche and Bayou Terrebonne. Acadians settled the area in 1785 and were joined by earlier French, German, Spanish, and American settlers. The village of Thibodauxville was started on the high banks of the two bayous. Nearby is the Percy-Lobdell Building, ca. 1912, site of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve." The sign is constructed of cast iron and is in good condition.

Signs

Numerous signs are located within the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center landscape and include the following:

Park identity sign

A ground-mounted visitor information sign is installed at the park's entrance along St. Mary Street (Figure 3.59). The sign reads "Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve" in raised metal lettering, with a large-scale NPS Arrowhead Symbol on the panel adjacent to the header text. This design varies from the typical header bar arrangement now found standard on NPS visitor information signs of this type. Two white

Figure 3.56: The concrete plaza north of the main building has open views of Art Street and the adjacent businesses to the west of the site (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.57: View of Bayou Lafourche, facing west, from the boardwalk pier (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.58: View of Historical Marker describing the historic confluence of Bayous Lafourche and Terrebonne in visitor parking area, view to northeast (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.60: Signage for the Acadian Cultural Center, Public Library, and Performance Center at the entry portico on the east face of the Percy-Lobdell Building, view to north (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.59: NPS entry signage visible from St. Mary Street, view to northeast. The sign is illuminated by an underground-wired spotlight (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.61: White waste receptacle on the boardwalk, view to north (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

metal panels are inset upon a rectangular brick freestanding wall set atop a concrete footer. The sign is approximately 7 feet in height and 10 feet in width. It is in fair condition, with visible rust staining. The sign is lighted by ground-mounted spotlights. One of the spotlights is currently missing.

Acadian Cultural Center sign
A brick and concrete sign for the Acadian Cultural Center is located on the edge of the sidewalk south of the main visitor entrance portico to the historic Percy-Lobdell Building (Figure 3.60). The sign is installed in front of three flagpoles. The sign is supported by two brick columns on either end with a central white painted concrete face. The brick columns are stuccoed with a thin layer of concrete. The concrete portion of the sign is rectangular with an added central pediment motif. Raised metal lettering describes the three building functions within: the Acadian Cultural Center, Public Library, and Performance Center. The sign is one-sided. The sign features are placed on a concrete base. It is in fair condition, with visible staining and weathering.

Directional, parking, and regulatory signs
There are a variety of directional and parking signs distributed for motorists on site. These signs include:

- Metal directional signs reading “Do Not Enter” in the parking area to enforce one-way travel
- Metal “Reserved Parking [ISA Symbol]” signs marking accessible parking spaces
- Metal signs by the multi-use path reading “Heavy Equipment Access”
- No fishing signs mounted on the boardwalk pier

Flagpoles
There are three flag poles on the site. The aluminum poles are approximately 25-feet tall.

Figure 3.62: Park bench seating for visitors on the boardwalk (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.63: Underground-wired single-lamp streetlights are installed near circulation areas (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Benches

There is a single kind of bench installed on site. The benches, six in total, are all located along the boardwalk/pier area. The benches are constructed of recycled plastic with a wood-look seat and back rest with black arm rests and supports (Figure 3.61).

Lighting

A combination of underground-wired, building exterior, and solar-powered lighting is located throughout the site.

Underground-wired streetlights

In-ground wired aluminum streetlights line the circulation routes throughout the site. Approximately 15 feet in height, the lamps are brown with a poured concrete base. Produced by Sternberg Lighting company, these lamps are a gooseneck design with a flared rounded shade (Figure 3.62, Figure 3.63). There are both single-lamp and double-lamp models on the site (See Figure 3.10). A single pole narrows toward the top, curving into a candy-cane shape. There are approximately twenty of these lights along the parking area and sidewalk toward the visitor entrance and around the boardwalk/plaza area. The lamps appear to be dated but otherwise in good condition.

Underground-wired spotlights

Throughout the site are below-ground wired spotlights installed to illuminate signage and planting areas (Figure 3.59). The spotlights are approximately one foot in height and width and boxy in appearance. An aluminum pole projects from a concrete base, upon which a curved-back lamp box is affixed with an adjustable mounting piece. The lamps are brown in color and appear

Figure 3.64: The underground-wired streetlights were produced by the Sternberg Lighting Company, as can be seen on the base of the lamps (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

to be in fair to poor condition. At least two of the spotlights were missing from the base and are assumed to have been damaged or failed.

Solar-powered streetlamps

The area along the multi-use path leading in the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site is lined by solar-powered aluminum streetlights spaced approximately 60 feet apart (Figure 3.64). Produced by "Sol by Sunna Designs," the lamps are approximately 25 feet in height and are painted a dark gray color (Figure 3.65). The lamps are a constructed of a simple pole with a horizontal projection housing a small LED lamp. There are ten of these lamps in total. These lamps differ in style from the lamps within the main area of the site and appear to have been installed more recently.

Wall-mounted gooseneck lamps

Affixed to the exterior of the building, gooseneck downward facing sconces are installed to illuminate the building entrances and sidewalk areas (Figure 3.66). They are black-painted, metal

construction with a wide industrial style shade; the sconces appear to be in fair condition.

Other

Other small-scale features include:

- One freestanding aluminum bike rack on east side of the main entrance, within the median island in the parking area (Figure 3.67)
- Two water spigots, near the boardwalk area in the northwest corner of the site (Figure 3.68)
- Numerous waste receptacles across the site. There are two styles of receptacle, a rounded-top design with picket enclosure (See Figure 3.30), and a white style with no enclosure (See Figure 3.69)
- Metal dumpsters on the western side of the building complex (See Figure 3.49)

Features:

- Monuments and commemorative markers
- Signage
- Flagpoles
- Benches
- Lighting
- Other features

Archeological Sites

This report does not include the archaeological record of the site. Please refer to the previous archaeological surveys conducted in 1988 by Babson and Orser and 1992 by Coastal Environments, Inc (fieldwork conducted in 1989) for a detailed analysis of archaeological resources on the site. The 1992 "Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center..." report produced by Coastal Environments, Inc detailed the presence of multiple below-ground remains of structures, waste middens, and other features throughout the site mostly from the industrial period of use between the late 19th and late twentieth centuries. Multiple sites were excavated, revealing building foundations, rubble and debris that support findings from the firm's historical research. These features were documented and reburied or destroyed during the park's site development in the early 1990s. The entire site area was not completely surveyed in either study. It is likely that unknown features remain to be discovered.

Figure 3.65: Modern solar streetlights illuminate the multi-use path along Bayou Lafourche, view to east (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.66: Solar lighting along the multi-use path was manufactured by the Sol by Sunna Design company (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.67: Gooseneck-style industrial lighting is installed along the exterior of the Percy-Lobdell Building (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.68: Bike rack located nearby the entrance to the visitor center, view to northeast (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 3.69: Water spigot (center) located in northwest lawn area between the plaza and boardwalk, view to southwest (Source WLA Studio, 2020).

BAYOU LAFOURCHE

REMNANT CONCRETE

COMPOSITE DECKING, TYP.

BOARDWALK

STAIRS

BENCH, TYP.

LAWN

SPIGOT, TYP.

LIGHTPOLE, TYP.

RAISED BRICK PLANTER, TYP.

CONCRETE PLAZA

PERCY LOBDELL BUILDING

PERFORMANCE CENTER

ART STREET

STORAGE BUILDING

CONCRETE PAD

DUMPSTER

MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

GAS

AZALEA

CRAPE MYRTLE

GAS

SECURITY CAMERA

METAL STAIRS, TYP.

CONCRETE STEPPING STONES, TYP.

TRASH RECEPTACLE, TYP

HVAC

SPOTLIGHT, TYP.

AZALEA

SIGN & FLAGPOLES

BIKE RACK

HISTORIC MARKER

INDIAN HAWTHORN

AZALEA

ASPHALT PARKING LOT

NPS SIGN

HVAC

BRICK ENCLOSURE, TYP.

PAMPAS GRASS

PALMETTO

SWEET GUM, LIGUSTRUM

PALMETTO

CONCRETE WALKWAY

INDIAN HAWTHORNE, RAISED BED

INDIAN HAWTHORN

MUHLY GRASS

LOOSE GRAVEL AREA

10' TALL PITTOSPORUM

WEST FIRST STREET

PAMPAS GRASS

AZALEA

APPROXIMATE PROPERTY BOUNDARY

CONCRETE CURB, TYP.

ST. MARY STREET

0' 50' 100'

North

KEY

SITE FURNISHINGS AND UTILITIES

- TRASH RECEPTACLE
- SIGN
- BENCH
- SPOTLIGHT
- STREETLIGHT
- DRAIN INLET
- FIRE HYDRANT
- POWER POLE
- GAS ACCESS
- GAS METER
- WATER SPIGOT
- MANHOLE
- POWER LINE
- DRAINAGE LINE

PLANT SYMBOLS

- SAGO PALM
- HOLLY
- MAGNOLIA
- CRAPE MYRTLE
- RIVER BIRCH
- WILLOW
- BALD CYPRESS
- RED MAPLE
- ELM
- SYCAMORE
- LIVE OAK

Credits:

1. WLA Studio

Illustration 3.1

Existing Conditions

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historic Park & Preserve
Cultural Landscape Report
MAY 2023

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Analysis and Evaluation

Introduction

For cultural landscapes such as the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit, documenting existing conditions and analyzing and evaluating natural and human-made historic resources is critical in the development of a strategy for their management and treatment. Cultural landscape analysis involves two primary activities: evaluating historic significance and assessing historic integrity. Both use criteria determined by the National Register of Historic Places, which has developed nationally recognized methods for evaluating the significance and integrity of historic buildings and landscapes. The evaluation of historic significance identifies the important historical associations of the property, as well as its architectural, archeological, and social value. The property's significance is tied to a discrete period of time (period of significance) in which its important contributions were made and the broader historic contexts (historic context themes) within which the activities that occurred on the property may be placed.

The analysis and evaluation section considers the site's history within recognized historic contexts to determine its contribution to the broad patterns of American history. It is important to note that historic resources, particularly cultural landscapes, change over time. As a result, a cultural landscape may have several areas of historical significance and multiple periods of significance. In order to determine whether a landscape feature contributes to the historic significance of the landscape at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit, this chapter compares the existing conditions of landscape features to its understood historic state. The objective of this analysis is to identify the specific features associated with the historic periods and assess to what degree they continue to convey their historic significance.

To aid in this assessment, landscape features are categorized based on their contribution to our understanding of the historic character of the landscape during the period or periods of significance.

These categories are:

- Contributing
- Non-contributing
- Missing
- Undetermined

Refer to Appendix A, Cultural Landscape Features Table, for a complete list of cultural landscape features present throughout the site's history, their date of origin, and contributing status. Contributing landscape features survive from the periods of significance and continue to reflect their historic appearance and function. Non-contributing landscape features include those added to the site since the periods of significance or that no longer retain enough physical integrity to convey their historic appearance or function. Missing features existed during the period of significance but have been removed, destroyed, or cannot be recognized in their current condition. Undetermined include features whose age cannot be determined or whose contribution to the historic landscape is unknown.

The process to identify landscape elements follows a National Park Service methodology that categorizes all landscape elements as one of thirteen landscape characteristics:

- Archeological Sites
- Buildings and Structures
- Circulation
- Arrangement of Buildings
- Constructed Water Features
- Cultural Traditions
- Land Use
- Natural Systems and Features
- Small-Scale Features
- Spatial Organization
- Topography
- Vegetation
- Views and Vistas

Landscape characteristics are the "tangible and intangible aspects of an inventory unit which have either influenced the history of the development of

the landscape, or are products of its development, respectively."[320] Further, "these aspects individually and collectively give a landscape its historic character and aid in the understanding of its cultural importance."[321] Based on this understanding of the landscape, National Register of Historic Places methodology aids in establishing a site's significance.

National Register Status

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 authorized the creation of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The National Park Service is responsible for maintaining the list and coordinating with public and private entities to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

Several buildings within the incorporated limits of the City of Thibodaux, which includes the site area, were listed within a Multiple Resource Area designation called the Historic Resources of Thibodaux with a Local Level of Significance on March 5, 1986. The form was prepared by the National Register staff within the Division of Historic Preservation for the State of Louisiana.[322]

In a continuation sheet for the Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area), the Percy-Lobdell Building is identified as a contributing resource in the areas of commerce and architecture.[323] The documentation for the Percy-Lobdell Building was accepted by the National Register of Historic Places on March 5, 1986. As of the 1986 nomination, the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area included "fifteen individual buildings ranging in date from the antebellum period through the 1920s."[324] Of those fifteen structures in the town of Thibodaux, the Percy-Lobdell Building is the only listed structure within the project area.

The National Park Service has developed criteria for evaluating historic resources to determine their eligibility for listing on the National Register. The National Register Criteria for Evaluation examine a property's age, integrity, and significance. To be considered historic, a property typically needs to be at least fifty years old. To possess integrity, a historic landscape needs to look and feel to some degree how it did in the past. The categories of integrity used to evaluate a property include location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association. The property must also be associated with historical events, activities, or developments that were important in the past. The National Register identifies the type of significance of a property based on the following criteria:

- Criterion A: Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- Criterion B: Association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- Criterion C: Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- Criterion D: Yielding or potential to yield information in history or prehistory.

A site may be significant in any or all of these four criteria. Based on these criteria, a statement of significance can be drafted for a site.

320. Robert R. Page, *National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, January 2009), 7-4.
321. Page, *National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory Professional Procedures Guide*, 53.
322. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination Form for 'Historic Resources of Thibodaux' NRIS # 64000628, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73972656."
323. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission for 'Percy-Lobdell Building' NRIS # 86000431, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73972654.
324. Ibid.

Period of Significance

The National Register of Historic Places (NR) identifies the period of significance for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area to be 1850-1920s. The start date includes the earliest, historically significant structures in the Multiple Resource Area. The end date is not specifically justified in the NR Statement of Significance. The nomination dates the Percy-Lobdell Building as circa 1900. Research suggests a construction date of 1905-1906. For the sake of analysis of the cultural landscape of the entire site, this CLR recommends a period of significance of 1846-1921 for the JELA Wetlands Acadian Center landscape. This period of significance begins with creation of the parcels that form most of the study area and extends to 1921, when the Interstate Wholesale Grocers, Inc. purchased the Percy-Lobdell Company and before the Thibodaux Boiler Works facility was demolished.

This period of significance is appropriate for the site and building because it includes the platting of the site, the construction of the building (the only existing historically significant resource), the peak of the industrial/mix-use of the property (its NR area of significance), and it conforms, mostly, to the existing National Register of Historic Places' period of significance for the Percy-Lobdell Building.

Statement of Significance

The National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area states:

> Thibodaux's architecturally significant resources are all outstanding examples of their particular style on the local level. Taken as a whole, they by far represent Lafourche Parish's finest collection of historic buildings. In addition, three buildings, are being nominated as exemplars of Thibodaux's historic role as the commercial focal point of the parish.[325]

The Percy-Lobdell is one of three buildings nominated as a "commercial focal point of the parish." The nomination goes on to describe the significance of the Multiple Resource Area as a whole:

> The architectural superiority of Thibodaux's historic buildings within Lafourche Parish is obvious to even the most casual observer. Taken as a whole, the fifteen proposed buildings and four listed buildings represent the architectural apex of the parish. Other collections pale in comparison. There are fourteen communities in the large rural parish of Lafourche along with numerous plantation complexes. But no other locale can even begin to approach Thibodaux in terms of number, quality and variety of architectural landmarks. The other communities are characterized almost exclusively by typical late nineteenth-early twentieth century small town buildings. Thibodaux contains four first-rate Greek Revival buildings whereas other communities in the parish have none. Even plantation complexes in the area have only a single Greek Revival residence. In contrast to the small, pedestrian, largely unadorned commercial buildings found in other Lafourche Parish communities, Thibodaux's noteworthy examples feature impressive Italianate, Beaux Arts, and neo-classical styling. As noted elsewhere, the three Italianate nominees are the only examples of the style in the parish, and the Citizens Bank of Lafourche and the Grand Theatre are the parish's only exemplars of the high style eclectic architectural trends of the early twentieth century. The significance of Thibodaux's Queen Anne Revival residences has already been explained, but suffice it to say that examples of the style in other communities in the parish are ordinary in comparison. No other community has a turreted Queen Anne Revival residence, while Thibodaux has five noteworthy examples. (There is one other impressive Queen Anne Revival residence in the parish and it is outside the Thibodaux city limits and hence could not be included in the multiple resource area.)[326]

325. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination Form for 'Historic Resources of Thibodaux' NRIS # 64000628, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73972656," Section 8.

326. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination Form for 'Historic Resources of Thibodaux' NRIS # 64000628, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73972656," Section 8 Page 2.

The National Register of Historic Places considers the Percy-Lobdell Building to be locally significant under Criteria A and C. The areas of significance include history and architecture.

The Percy-Lobdell Building is locally significant under Criterion A for its role in the commercial development of the area as the only standing major commercial building left from Thibodaux's commercial boom period 1890-1916. According to a separately submitted continuation sheet for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area:

> The Percy-Lobdell Building is locally significant in the area of commerce as Thibodaux's only remaining historic warehouse. It is the sole representative of all the important warehousing aspect of the city's historic role as a commercial, service, and distribution center for Lafourche Parish. The Percy-Lobdell Company was involved in the wholesale distribution of groceries and feed, as evidenced by Sanborn Insurance Company maps. Of the seven major warehouses shown on the 1916 map, Percy-Lobdell is the only one remaining. Its pivotal role is very evident not only in its warehouse appearance but also in its location adjacent to Bayou Lafourche and a railroad line.[327]

The Percy-Lobdell Building is locally significant under Criterion C due to its architectural integrity and stylistic rarity as a false front commercial Italianate building in Lafourche Parish. According to the continuation sheet for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area:

> The Percy-Lobdell Building is also locally significant in the area of architecture. There are undoubtedly over one hundred commercial buildings in Lafourche Parish which are fifty years old or older. Most of these are either simple late nineteenth-early twentieth century plantation stores or examples of the "commercial vernacular," the latter being a diluted, sometimes much diluted, version of the urban Italianate style. Of course, the grandest commercial buildings in the parish feature the most elaborate Italianate styling. The Percy-Lobdell Building is one of only three false front Italianate commercial buildings in Lafourche Parish which retain their architectural integrity. Others have been modified beyond recognition.[328]

The Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area nomination focuses on buildings; it is the only category noted on the nomination form. The continuation sheet for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area that provides additional information on the Percy-Lobdell Building does discuss the cultural landscape as it relates to the building's historic significance. The continuation sheet reads in part: " Of the seven major warehouses shown on the 1916 [Sanborn] map, Percy-Lobdell is the only one remaining. Its pivotal role is very evident not only in its warehouse appearance but also in its location adjacent to Bayou Lafourche and a railroad line." A hand-drawn site map attached to the continuation sheet states "the boundaries were drawn to encompass the significant resource. Very importantly, they recognize its historical relationship with the bayou and railroad."[329]

Analysis of Landscape Characteristics

Refer to Appendix A, Cultural Landscape Features Table, for a complete list of cultural landscape features present throughout the site's history, their date of origin, and contributing status.

Natural Systems and Features

Historic Condition

Bayou Lafourche and its corresponding landforms influenced the development of the Thibodaux region and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site. More generally, the natural levee adjacent to the bayou provided high ground relatively protected from seasonal floods. American Indians occupied these areas, taking advantage of the natural resources made available in the bayou and along its banks. The levee also offered cultivable soils and suitable building sites, which early European settlers utilized to establish homesteads and farms. During the period of significance (1846-1921), these attributes of the natural systems continued to influence development patterns. The bayou, for example, functioned as a major transportation corridor, which influenced the

327. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission for 'Percy-Lobdell Building' NRIS # 86000431, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73972654.

328. Ibid.

329. Ibid.

siting of cities like Thibodaux and the siting of commercial buildings like the Percy-Lobdell Building. Prior to the beginning of the period of significance, the subject area had already been the location of a small farm and sugar plantation. The area was laid out into city lots in 1846 and developed as a commercial and residential area over subsequent decades. By the time of the construction of the Percy-Lobdell Building in 1905-1906, the study area had been largely developed and the natural systems altered with the removal of plant communities, construction of artificial levees, and the disturbance of native soil during the construction of buildings. The damming of Bayou Lafourche in 1904 regulated water levels in the bayou, eliminating its natural flooding cycle. During the study areas' use as an industrial site, chemicals, including petroleum products, leached into the site's soil. These chemicals were encountered during archeological excavations in 1989. As a result, the natural systems of the area were heavily altered prior to the end of the period of significance in the 1920s.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

The modification of the natural systems in the study area that began prior to the historic period continued in the post historic period. This includes the continued management of the water levels on Bayou Lafourche that alter natural flooding cycles. The native soil profile has been heavily modified by continued development and redevelopment of parcels within the study area, including the development of the site into an NPS site in the 1990s. Some plants native to the region were planted during the development as an NPS site and some native plants have colonized the riparian area along the bayou.

Summary

Development of the site began prior to the historic period and so a human-modified natural system is characteristic of the site during the historic period of significance. The landscape features that reflect this condition include a modified levee (which changed in height over time), altered flow of water in Bayou Lafourche, disturbed soils, and a reduction of naturally occurring flora and fauna. Because this condition persists to today, the present natural systems and features contribute to the historic significance of the site.

Spatial Organization

Historic Condition

During the historic period, the spatial organization of the study area was influenced by parcel ownership, rights-of-ways and transportation infrastructure, and land use. The first partitioning of the study area came as a land grant which was given to the Hamon family in 1785. This long lot, 6 arpents wide by 40 arpents long, was sold multiple times as undeveloped agricultural land. The eastern boundary of the land grant may have followed the old Church Street alignment just east of the current parking lot. Planter Seth Guion

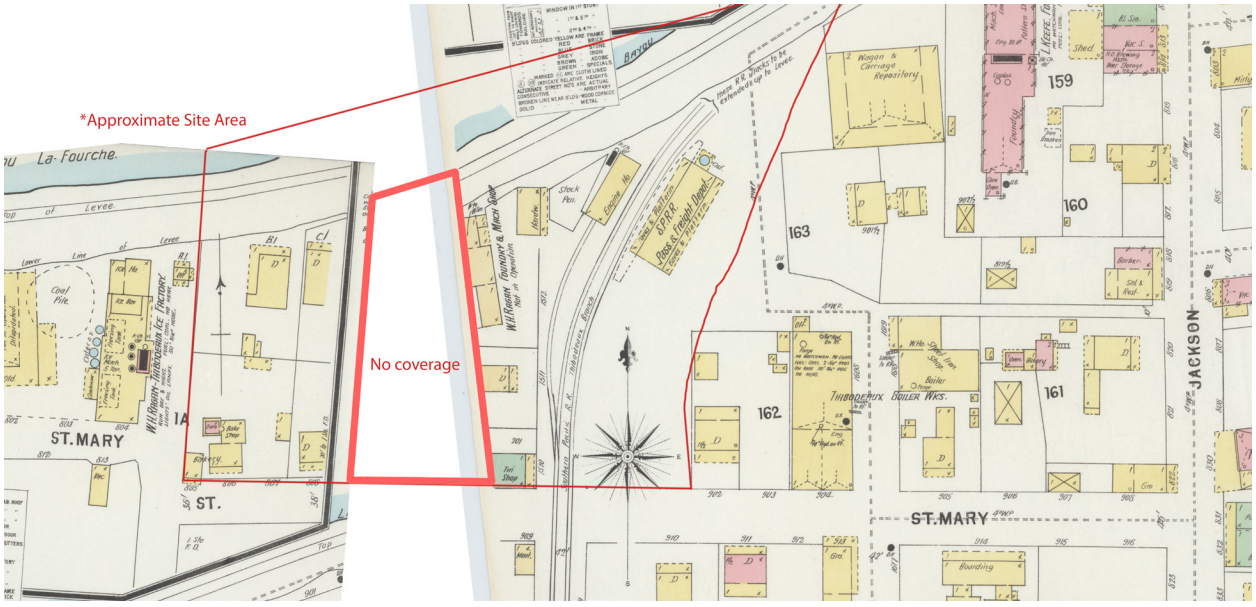

Figure 4.1: Modified portion of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1898. This image combines two sheets to show the site area, indicated in red. A large portion of the site area is excluded from the map (Source: Library of Congress).

subdivided the majority of the study area, a small portion of his sugar plantation, into six parcels in 1846. Four of the six parcels contained within the site developed spatial organization patterns independent from each other, including clusters of primary and accessory structures contained within their respective parcel boundaries. Two of the six parcels shared ownership during portions of the historic period and thus developed as if they were a singular site. The spatial organization of the individual parcels changed repeatedly throughout the historic period as ownership and land use evolved within the study area. Major structures on the site were oriented toward either the railroad, bayou, or streets, depending on the building's function.

The south bank of Bayou Lafourche first was built up with an artificial levee with a public road atop it, then later regraded following the damming of Bayou Lafourche. Different configurations of rail lines ran through this corridor throughout the historic period.

Residential structures faced both St. Mary Street, the bayou, and the railroad in the late 1800s. The 1898 Sanborn Map shows four residential dwellings on three of the lots. Two of the dwellings face the bayou and the Public Road along the bayou. One of the dwellings faces the railroad on Church Street on the east side of the project area. One dwelling, in the approximate location of where the Percy-Lobdell Building is today, faces St. Mary Street. All the residential dwellings shown on the 1898 Sanborn Map have front porches, confirming the primary orientation of the buildings (Figure 4.1).

The 1898 Sanborn Map also shows internal divisions of some of the lots, suggesting that fences may have delineated internal boundaries in the lots (Archeology in 1989 found evidence of fence posts around residential lots). The map also shows that accessory structures were arranged either close to the lot's primary structure or at the periphery of the site boundaries, such as along fence lines. Accessory structures such as privies or stables were in multiple cases located back-to-back on adjacent lots.

Another building at the corner of St. Mary Street and Ice Street, on the parcel adjacent to and west of the current location of the Percy-Lobdell Building, was a bakery in 1898. It had several

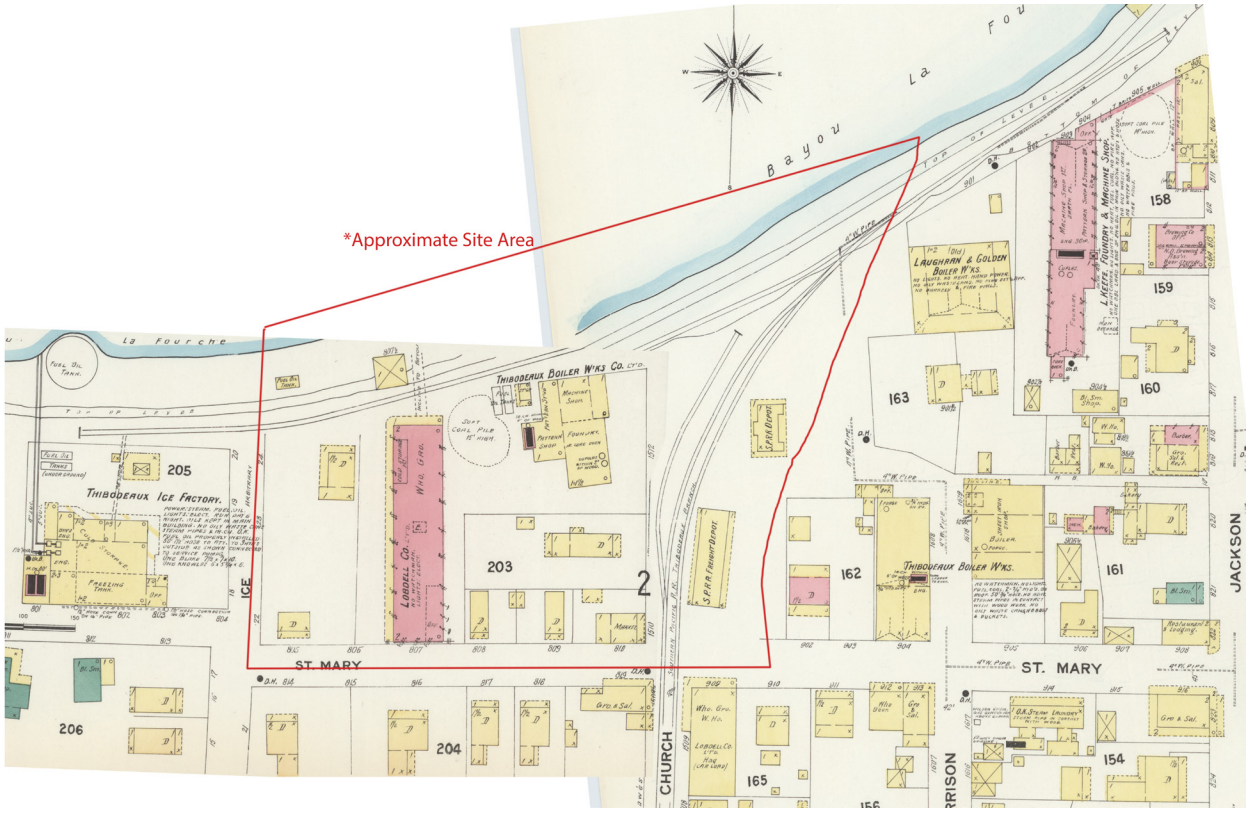

Figure 4.2: Modified portion of Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1907. This image combines two sheets to show the earliest complete historical picture of the entire site area, indicated in red (Source: Library of Congress).

structures clustered together on the corner and two smaller structures, either sheds or stables, located along the east and north property lines. Several of these structures were removed prior to 1907 and the main bakery building became a residential dwelling.

Five other commercial/industrial buildings existed in the study area as of 1898, including a tin shop, the Ragan Foundry and Machine Shop, and the Southern Pacific Railroad depot, engine house, and stock pen. These were all on the east side of the study area and fronted the railroad tracks.

A railroad spur replaced the Public Road between the lots and the bayou on the north of the site in the first decade of the 1900s. As seen on the 1907 Sanborn Map, the Percy-Lobdell Building, which spanned the entire depth of the block, interacted with both the railroad/bayou to the north and St. Mary Street to the south (Figure 4.2). The 1907 and subsequent Sanborn Maps show that loading and shipping occurred on the railroad side of the building, as well as on the bayou. The office was on the southside, suggesting that some commercial traffic arrived by automobile, entering the building from St. Mary Street.

Commercial and railroad development overtook the residential buildings along the Public Road in the northwest corner of the study area, leaving only the residences facing St. Mary Street by the end of the historic period. The engine house and stock pen shown on the 1898 Sanborn Map were gone by 1907. A new depot stood in the general location of the earlier one and a second depot appeared in the southeast corner of the study area by this time. This depot was for receiving freight. The Ragan Foundry complex had become part of the Thibodeaux Boiler Works operation by 1907. Their building, which consisted of several attached structures, practically filled the majority of the parcel but appears oriented north toward the railroad spur.

While the west, north, and east sides of the study area became increasingly dedicated to industrial uses in the first decades of the 1900s, a stretch of parcels along the south side of the study area, along St. Mary Street, continued to be primarily residential. Just east of the Percy-Lobdell Building,

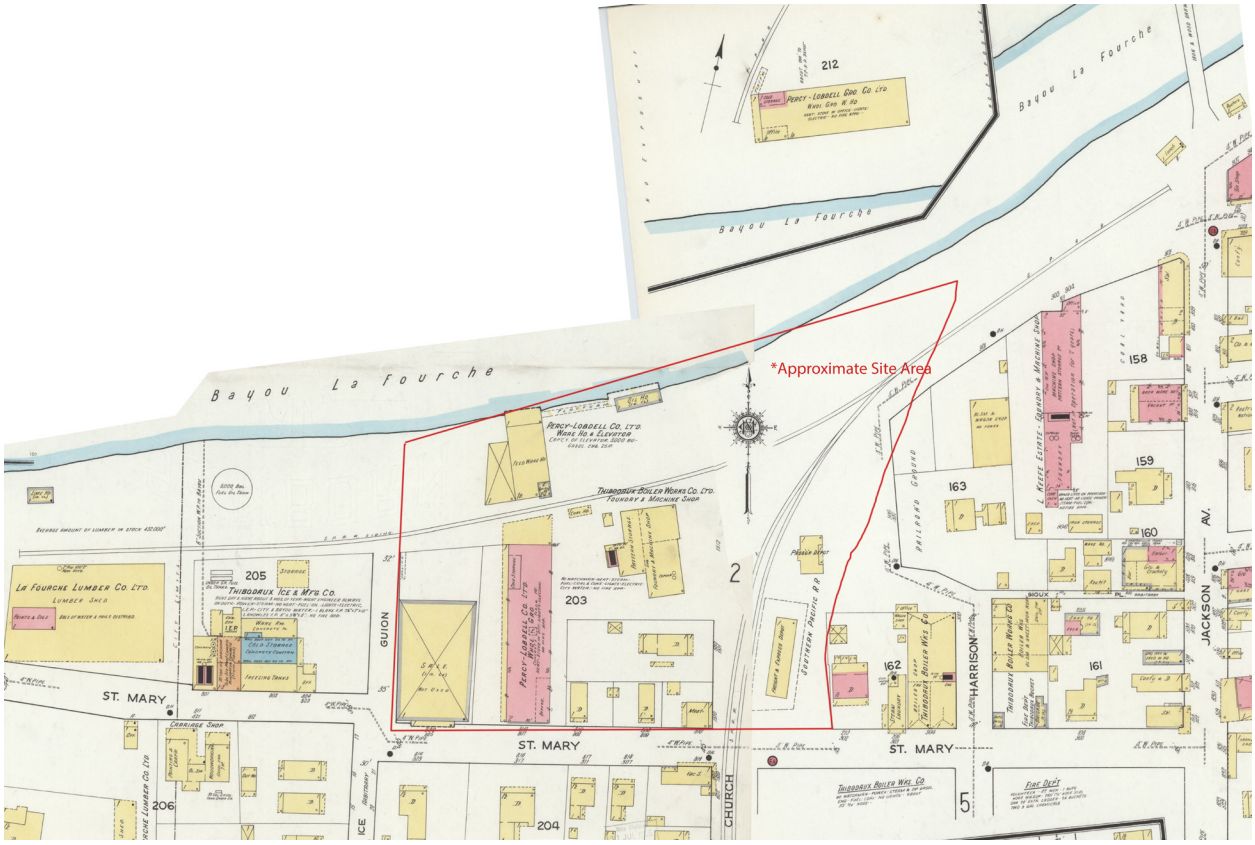

Figure 4.3: Modified portion of 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map combines two sheets to show the entire site area, indicated in red (Source: Library of Congress).

two dwellings fronted St. Mary Street and a third dwelling fronted the railroad and Church Street. Another commercial building sat on the corner of Church Street and St. Mary Street. This was the location of the tin shop seen in the 1898 Sanborn Map; it was a market by 1912 and a meat market by 1916.

Based on the 1916 Sanborn Map, the study area consisted of a total of eleven primary structures and approximately seven secondary structures. By this time, the majority of the buildings in the study area featured industrial or commercial uses. They were larger in scale than the three residential structures left in the study area. The commercial and industrial buildings were comparable in scale to the existing Percy-Lobdell Building, the only remaining structure from the historic period (Figure 4.3).

Toward the end of the historic period the Percy-Lobdell Company began to acquire parcels surrounding their main building, although this largely did not affect the spatial organization of the overall study area until after the historic period. The organization of buildings continued to reflect the early division of the study area into six parcels. The larger parcels (Lots 200, 203, 204, and 205) contained the larger industrial buildings, including the Percy-Lobdell Building, its adjacent warehouse to the west, and the Thibodaux Boiler Works to the east. The small parcels (lots 201 and 202) were the sites of small residential and one small retail structure. On the eastern edge of the study area, the railroad line and associated buildings occupied an area outside of the lots from the 1846 subdivision that comprise a majority of the study area.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

During the first few decades after the end of the historic period, the only major change in the spatial organization of the study area was the removal of the Thibodaux Boiler Works complex. The site of the boiler works, Lot 200, became the location of the Gulf Oil distribution facility and held multiple smaller structures but no primary structure. As with other structures located in that area during the historic period, the Gulf Oil structures were oriented toward the railroad spur along the bayou. The general spatial arrangement of structures within the study area otherwise largely remained unchanged until the warehouse west of the Percy-Lobdell Building was torn down in the 1970s. This event was the first of several changes over the following twenty years that fundamentally changed the spatial organization of the site. These changes include site renovations overseen by the Friends of the Library in 1986 and by the NPS in 1991 and 1996.

A map drawn as part of archeological investigations completed in 1989 shows more open space than during the historic period because of the loss of several buildings.[330] The Percy-Lobdell Building survived, but none of its ancillary buildings remained, including the warehouse on the bayou or loading docks adjacent to the main building. The warehouse to the west of the Percy-Lobdell Building had by this time burned and its footprint converted to a gravel parking lot. The Gulf Oil building that first appears on a 1927 Sanborn Map survived to 1989. The Thibodaux Feed and Seed Store occupied the location of the former railroad express office/depot. The railroad express office/depot was destroyed by fire in 1972 and the feed and seed store appears to have built a similarly-oriented building on the footprint of the railroad express office/depot building. According to a 1996 archeological report, the Thibodaux Feed and Seed Store was removed around 1994. Wayne's Feed Store was operating out of a former Thibodaux Boiler Works building close to the bayou in 1989. This building was removed by 1994.[331] Two residential dwellings also remained, but their footprints had changed, likely because of additions to the main mass of the buildings. Despite these changes, the overall mass/void created by existing buildings and open space continued to make legible the historic organization of the study area into several individual lots.

After removing the surviving buildings on parcels adjacent to the Percy-Lobdell Building, the National Park Service reorganized the entire study area to center around the Percy-Lobdell Building,

330. See Figure 2 on Page 3 in Thurston Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," Cultural Resource Survey (Thibodaux, LA, 1992), JELA Archives.

331. Thurston Hahn, "Archeological and Historical Investigations of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Addition, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana," Cultural Resource Survey (Thibodaux, LA, 1996), 74, JELA Archives.

obscuring any evidence of the historic subdivision of the site into individual lots.

Summary

At present, the site functions as a singular property with features centered around the Percy-Lobdell Building. Because the spatial organization of the site was historically characterized by clusters of buildings organized within individual parcels during the historic period, the cultural landscape of the site today does not possess integrity of spatial organization.

Land Use

Historic Condition

Before the 1840s, the land use of the site and surrounding area was primarily agricultural.[332] After city lots were laid out in 1846, land uses on the site included commercial, transportation, and residential. The site remained under these broad categories of land use throughout the historic period of significance (1850-1920s), even as parcel ownership changed. Commercial uses include a cooperage, tinsmith, foundry, boiler fabrication, grocery warehousing and distribution, livestock stabling, and retail businesses including a market and bakery. Oil and gasoline storage and distribution facilities were also present during the historic period. Landscape features associated with commercial land use during the historic period include buildings, sheds, coal pits, warehouses, loading platforms, and oil/gasoline storage drums. Residential uses included multiple single-family dwellings. Landscape features associated with residential land use include dwellings, fences, and outbuildings. Landscape features associated with transportation uses include Bayou Lafourche, the Public Road along the levee, railroad spurs along the north and east boundaries of the site, the main railroad line into Thibodaux, two railroad depots, and the surrounding street network.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

The site continued to be used for residential, transportation, and commercial land uses until the site was redeveloped for recreational and institutional land uses by the Thibodeaux Friends of the Library group in the late 1980s and the NPS in the early 1990s. In the late 1980s, the Percy-Lobdell Building was converted into a community performance space and library. The parking lot for the library was west of the Percy-Lobdell Building, on the corner of St. Mary Street and Art Street. Up until the 1990s, two residential houses stood east of the Percy-Lobdell Building on St. Mary Street. Also present prior to the redevelopment of the site, a corrugated steel storage building and several storage tanks from the Gulf Oil facility occupied the northeast corner of the site. There were multiple concrete slabs and concrete walls distributed across the site, remnants of former commercial/industrial land uses, including what may have been a portion of the loading platform of the spur rail line. But the NPS removed all these features in the 1990s, leaving only the Percy-Lobdell Building and a concrete foundation along the bayou that may relate to a gasoline warehouse that dated to the 1910s. The Southern Pacific train depot remained in use until 1971 and the NPS removed most evidence of the train tracks by the mid-1990s. The curving alignment of present-day 1st Street and the east property boundary follows the curvature of the former rail line through this area.

Summary

The historic Percy-Lobdell Building is the only remaining visual evidence of the site's previous commercial land use. A concrete foundation along the bayou is completely obscured by vegetation on the banks of the bayou and does not reflect its historic use. There is no remaining evidence of residential land use on the site. Transportation land use on the site is restricted to modern parking areas within the site. The only surviving historic transportation features are technically outside the boundary of the study area and include the bayou and streets adjacent to the site. There may be some remains of railroad tracks, but most were removed. Because the current land use was not present during the historic period and because historic land uses are not reflected in the current site, the cultural landscape does not possess integrity of land use.

332. Hahn, Historical and Archaeological Investigations, 1992, 38.

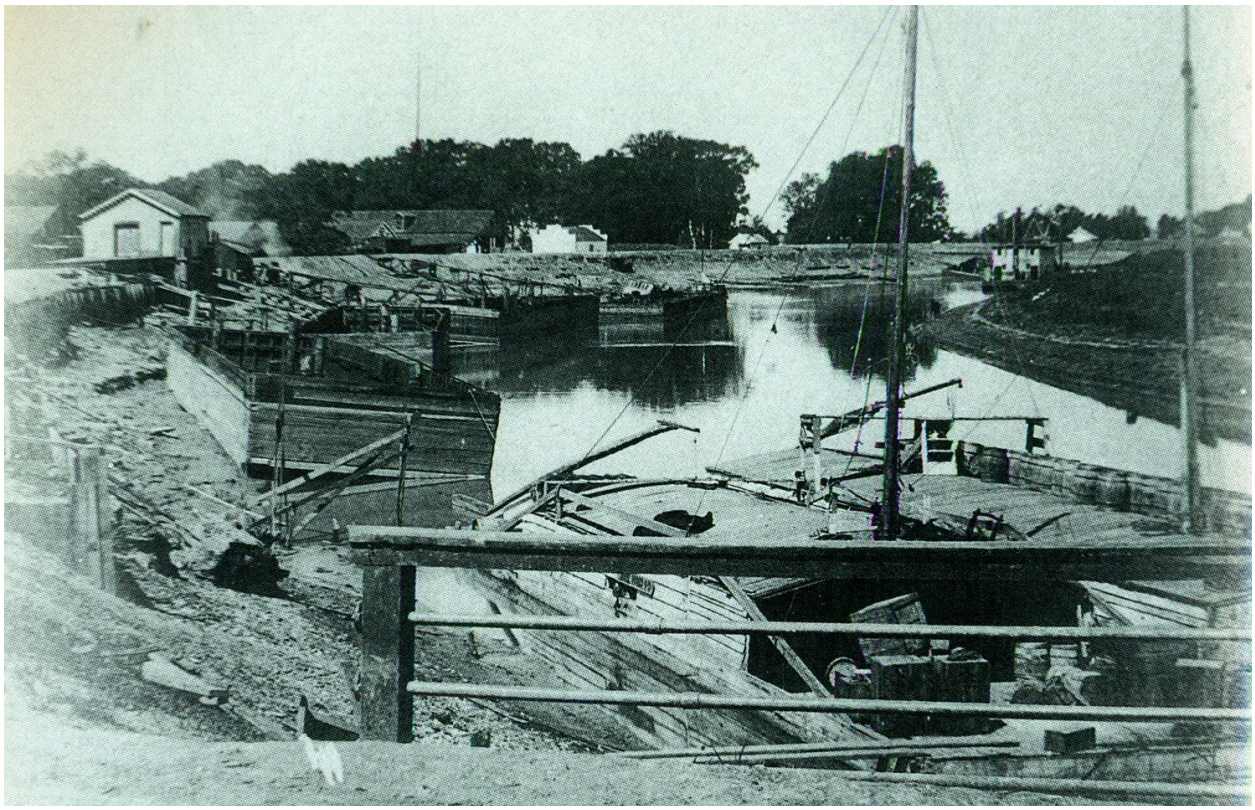

Figure 4.4: Undated image circa 1890-1900 of Bayou Lafourche shows the heavy use of the bayou by flatboats and other vessels (Source: NPS).

Figure 4.5: Undated image circa 1905 looking west toward the Thibodaux Ice and Manufacturing Company. The Public Road along the top of the levee is visible (Source: NPS).

Topography

Historic Condition

Prior to the historic period, natural levees along the bayou were built over by human-made levees that raised the height of the bayou's banks in an effort to reduce flooding. These artificial levees were unreliable and required constant maintenance. The levee had steep banks sloping both toward the bayou and the ground behind the levee. It rose several feet above the ground plane, which would have obscured views of the bayou. The artificial levee appears in a photograph dated circa 1890-1900 showing the bayou near the study area (Figure 4.4). The levee appears to be reinforced on the bayou side by a vertical bulkhead-like structure constructed from wooden timbers. The artificial levee may be under construction at the time of the image. Earth is piled up behind the bulkhead in the foreground of the image. The top of the levee appears level, wide, and raised several feet above the grade of the land between the bayou and adjacent buildings. The top of the levee was used for many years as the route of a road known as the Public Road. The Public Road atop the levee crossed the northern boundary of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site (Figure 4.5). Between 1912 and 1916 the elevated levee was removed because damming the bayou reduced the risk of seasonal flooding. The Public Road was also removed and replaced with a railroad spur. These changes resulted in a flatter grade leading from the building within the study site to the bayou's edge.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

Following the historic period, the site remained relatively flat, with uneven slopes down to the bayou edge at the north end of the site. During the NPS's redevelopment of the site in the 1990s, the irregularities along the bayou edge were smoothed out and vegetated.

Summary

The site remains relatively flat, sloping down to the bayou at the northern edge as it had toward the end of the historic period and after the removal of the levee. Because the topography of the site is relatively similar to that of the historic period, the site retains integrity of topography.

Cultural Traditions

Historic Condition

Prior to the period of significance, the site was part of a small-scale farm with crops and livestock owned by Acadian Guillaume Hamon. Acadian farming traditions likely occurred on the site, but archeological and historical evidence from this period is limited. Coastal Environments, Inc., an archeological firm, completed an investigation of the site in 1989. They found no evidence of a dwelling from the Hamon period. A 1996 report from the same group surmised that the Hamon dwelling was likely located on the east side of 1st street, outside of the study area. In fact, the archeologists "encountered very little evidence of late-eighteenth or early nineteenth century occupation."[333]

The site converted from being part of a single rural farmstead to urban land partitioned by roads and parcel lines when the site was laid out as part of Thibodaux in 1846. As far as the physical landscape at the Wetlands Acadian Center, commerce and industry are the prevailing cultural traditions that influenced the development of the site during the historic period. Activity on the site during the historic period of significance (1850-1920s) centered around industry and skilled trades that utilized the adjacent bayou, roads, and railroad as transportation networks. The west side of Thibodaux, including the study area, was developed as an industrial district with a few residential structures in among industrial buildings. The kinds of industry found within the boundaries of the study area during the historic period includes shipping and distribution of goods, warehousing, industrial fabrication, retail markets, and livestock stabling activities. The specific businesses changed throughout the historic period but retained the tradition of commercial use. The tradition of residential use was apparently secondary to commerce in the early part of the historic period. Residential traditions seemed to serve a supporting role to commercial traditions on the site in the early part of the historic period. Records indicate that business owners and workers occupied some of the residential dwellings during the historic period.

333. Thurston H. G Hahn III, H*istorical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana* (New Orleans: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, 1992), 191.

Research into the origins of people documented living or working within the boundaries of the study area shows them coming from a diversity of backgrounds. George Guion, for example, was born in Mississippi. George Anderson, who built a home next to the eventual site of the Percy-Lobdell Building, is listed in the 1850 census as being born in Ohio. Edward Hays, who operated a cooperage on the site in the 1850s, was from Ireland; as was Patrick Hogan who built a machine shop in the northeast corner of the study area. Antoine Federine, who operated a bakery at the corner of St. Mary Street and current Art Street, was born in Louisiana in 1872. His mother was from Louisiana and his father moved to the United States from France in 1857. Federine's wife, Alice, was also from Louisiana; her parents were from Louisiana and Ireland. The parents of William Jefferies, who bought the bakery building, were from England. Patrick Gary, who built a sawmill on the eventual site of the Percy-Lobdell Building, was born in Virginia. Steamboat Captain Ferdinand Streck, who briefly owned the parcel where the Thibodaux Boiler Works eventually built, was Russian. Peter Percy was born in Louisiana; his father was also from Louisiana and, according to the 1910 federal census, his mother was born in Michigan. John Lobdell was from Louisiana, as was his mother; his father was born in New York.

The diverse origin of the site's former residents is emblematic of Louisiana's reputation as a cultural 'melting pot,' a place where people from many cultures lived, worked, and married, influencing the development of a unique regional heritage.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

Following the historic period, commercial and industrial activities continued on the site through the 1970s. The Percy-Lobdell Building was used for warehousing goods until the 1960s, while industrial production gave way to fuel distribution shortly after the historic period. Both operations involved the shipping and receiving of goods, which was facilitated by the site's proximity to the bayou and railroad lines. The railroad remained active on the site into the 1970s and was formally abandoned in the early 1980s. Warehousing activities continued on site near the railroad tracks until NPS purchased the site. Various other commercial and industrial activities took place on the site, leaving behind contaminated soils, refuse, and debris.

Cultural traditions on the site evolved when the site became a cultural center in the 1990s. The cultural traditions of historic preservation, cultural interpretation, cultural heritage conservation, visual and performing arts, and outdoor recreation became the central influences steering redevelopment of the site. The NPS adapted the site to prioritize the programming needs for its use as a cultural center, library, performance space, and museum. The NPS added a performance center addition on the west side of the Percy-Lobdell Building to house performances of the Thibodaux Playhouse, Inc., a contemporary local performance troupe. The group still holds performances in the building as of 2022. The Friends of the Library and NPS altered the interior of the Percy-Lobdell Building to house the Thibodaux Public Library and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center exhibit space (The library relocated offsite in 2012). The NPS added a parking lot, plaza space, boardwalk and boat platform to accommodate public visitation and cultural activities. The adaptive reuse of the Percy-Lobdell Building into its current form allowed for the continued utility of the site after its commercial function was no longer viable. The influence of outdoor recreation as a valued cultural tradition instigated the conversion of the industrial appearance of the site to a park-like setting. Cultural programming activities currently hosted on the site include both boat and walking heritage tours led by NPS interpretive rangers, weekly French language group discussions, weekly regional musical performances, and art exhibitions.

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center interprets the historic cultural heritage of Acadians and Cajuns in its museum exhibits. Many historians have described the cultural traditions associated with Acadians and Cajuns. Clifford Clark summarizes them as a rural lifestyle, where "the Cajuns established a noncommercial barter-level economic system involving subsistence activities ranging from hunting, fishing, trapping to gardening."[334] Carl Brasseaux reminds us that Acadian culture was not monolithic, people responded differently to their situation, some pursued economic security while others maintained social and economic isolation from the surrounding society. The Acadian *petits habitants*,

334. Clifford Clarke, Assimilationist Views of an Ethnic Region: The Cajun French Experience in Southwest Louisiana," *Social Science Quarterly* Vol. 69, No. 2 (1988), 436.

those small-farmers pursuing a subsistence lifestyle, are perhaps the group most identified as the classic Cajun. They, according to Brasseaux, valued "economic self-sufficiency and group solidarity."[335] These values generally resulted in social isolation and a life of relative simplicity disconnected from the materialism associated with consumer culture. Brasseaux describes various aspects of Acadian folk life in the 1800s, which included small-scale farming, fall harvest gatherings with meals and songs, days spent hunting and fishing, meals made from home-grown vegetables, and dressing in simple, sometimes homemade, clothes. The small farmer had to make most of their agricultural implements and construct their own homes. They commonly cut cypress trees from the swamps to construct a frame for a building. They filled the frame with *bousillage*, a mixture of moss and mud, then covered the waddle with exterior weatherboards. The typical Acadian house was surrounded by a cypress post fence, or double *pieux*. A picket fence may surround the house to keep chickens from nesting below the raised structure. Another fence would surround a barn and barnyard.[336] Museum exhibits are interpreted in a mixture of French and English, and depict implements of traditional Acadian and Cajun lifeways.

Summary

The Percy-Lobdell Building is the only remaining evidence of influence of commercial traditions on the site. The building's architectural form conveys the historic function of the structure. Evidence of the influence of commercial and residential traditions in other areas of the site are no longer present. As cultural traditions on the site have evolved to reflect the values and needs of the present community and no longer reflect the historic traditions, the site does not retain integrity of cultural traditions.

335. Carl A. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun: Transformation of a People, 1803-1877* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi,1992), 21.
336. Brasseaux, *Acadian to Cajun,* 27-29.

Cluster Arrangement

Historic Condition

During the period of significance, clustering of structures was related to parcel ownership and defined by land use. Clustering of structures related to the cooperage present in the early historic period is unknown. The 1898 Sanborn indicates a residence/bakery occupied several closely clustered structures in the southwest corner of the site, near the present intersection of St. Mary Street and Art Street. The Percy-Lobdell grocery operation constructed several buildings and structures on their parcel beginning in the early 1900s. In addition to the main Percy-Lobdell Building, other structures included warehouses along the bayou and west of the Percy-Lobdell Building. Other features, like grain elevators, loading ramps, and railroad spurs relate to the loading and transfer of goods. The Thibodaux Boiler Works operation exhibited clustering of several structures, some with shared walls. The structures housed various functions of the business, including a foundry, machine shop, pattern shop, storage buildings, fuel oil tanks, and a coal house. The owner's residence was located to the south of the main cluster, fenced off from the commercial operation. Parcels in residential use exhibited clustering of the residential structure with a privy and sometimes a stable or small outbuilding. Several structures related to the railroad remained clustered toward the northeast corner of the site throughout the historic period. East of the main railway line, at the end of the historic period, two railroad depots were clustered together along the side of the tracts. One functioned as a passenger depot, the other served as a freight depot. The Gulf Oil facility that replaced the Thibodaux Boiler Works operation at the end of the historic period exhibited a cluster arrangement of several smaller structures at the edges of the parcel with an open central space. At the end of the historic period, twelve primary structures and several smaller outbuildings existed within the boundaries of the study area. The Percy-Lobdell Building, its adjacent warehouse, and the grain warehouse on the bayou were clustered in the western third of the study area. Two residential buildings, a market, and an automobile repair garage were clustered in the southern half of the study area along St. Mary Street and Church Street. Two railroad buildings were clustered on the east side of the railroad along the eastern edge of the study area.

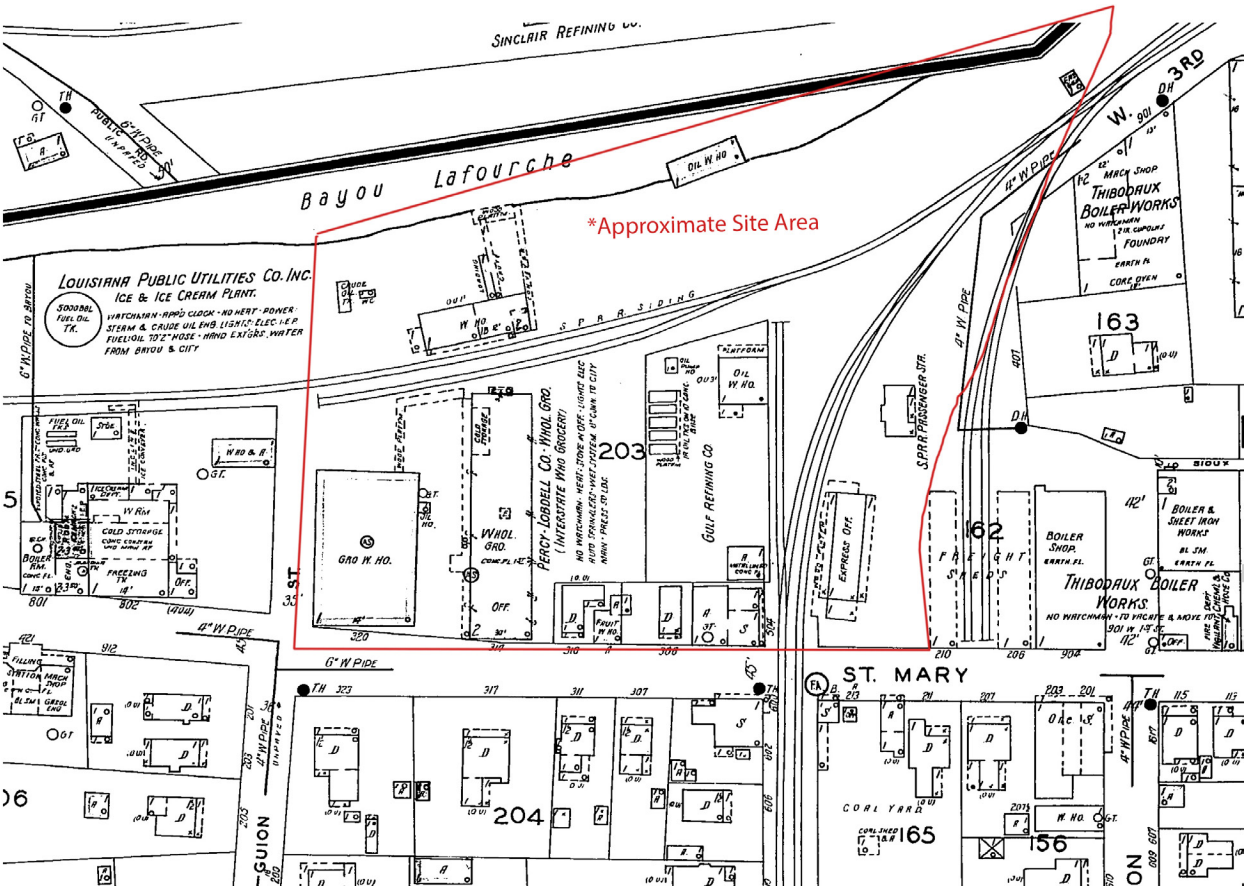

Figure 4.6: Portion of the 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the site area indicated in red (Source: Library of Congress).

Post Historic and Existing Condition

The removal of the Thibodaux Boiler Works complex and construction of the Gulf Oil facility between 1916 and 1927 was the last significant change to the arrangement of the site until NPS redeveloped the site in the early 1990s. The boiler works had essentially filled the parcel on the northeast corner of the study area. The Gulf Oil facility, on the other hand, featured a small, frame constructed warehouse and a gasoline storage structure along its western property line. These buildings survived until 1989 and appear in an archeological survey map from that year. The Gulf Oil buildings were removed by the NPS and are missing on a survey prepared for the NPS the following year. Another cluster of buildings associated with the Thibodaux Boiler Works and Drexel Motor Company appear on the banks of the bayou, north of the railroad spur, between 1932 and 1949 (**Figure 4.6**, Figure 4.7).

When the NPS began its development of the site in the early 1990s, there were fewer buildings and structures in the study area. The Percy-Lobdell Building was alone on its parcel by this time; the warehouse on the bayou that survived into the late 1940s was gone (Figure 4.8). The former railroad Express Depot on the southeast corner of the site had burned in the 1970s and the Thibodaux Feed and Seed Store was apparently constructed in the same location, possibly on the same foundation. A corrugated steel building, on a concrete slab, existed in the northeast corner of the study area in 1990. This may have been part of the Drexel Motor Company repair shop that appears on a 1949 Sanborn Map. The building was last used as the Wayne's Feed Store before being demolished by NPS in 1994.

Two residences along St. Mary Street survived into the 1990s, a one-story midcentury brick house with an associated garage and a two-story side-gabled bungalow appearing to date to the 1920s.

The site plan developed by architecture firm Hamilton and Associates in 1990 shows that the NPS reorganized the site to function as a single parcel instead of several independent parcels.

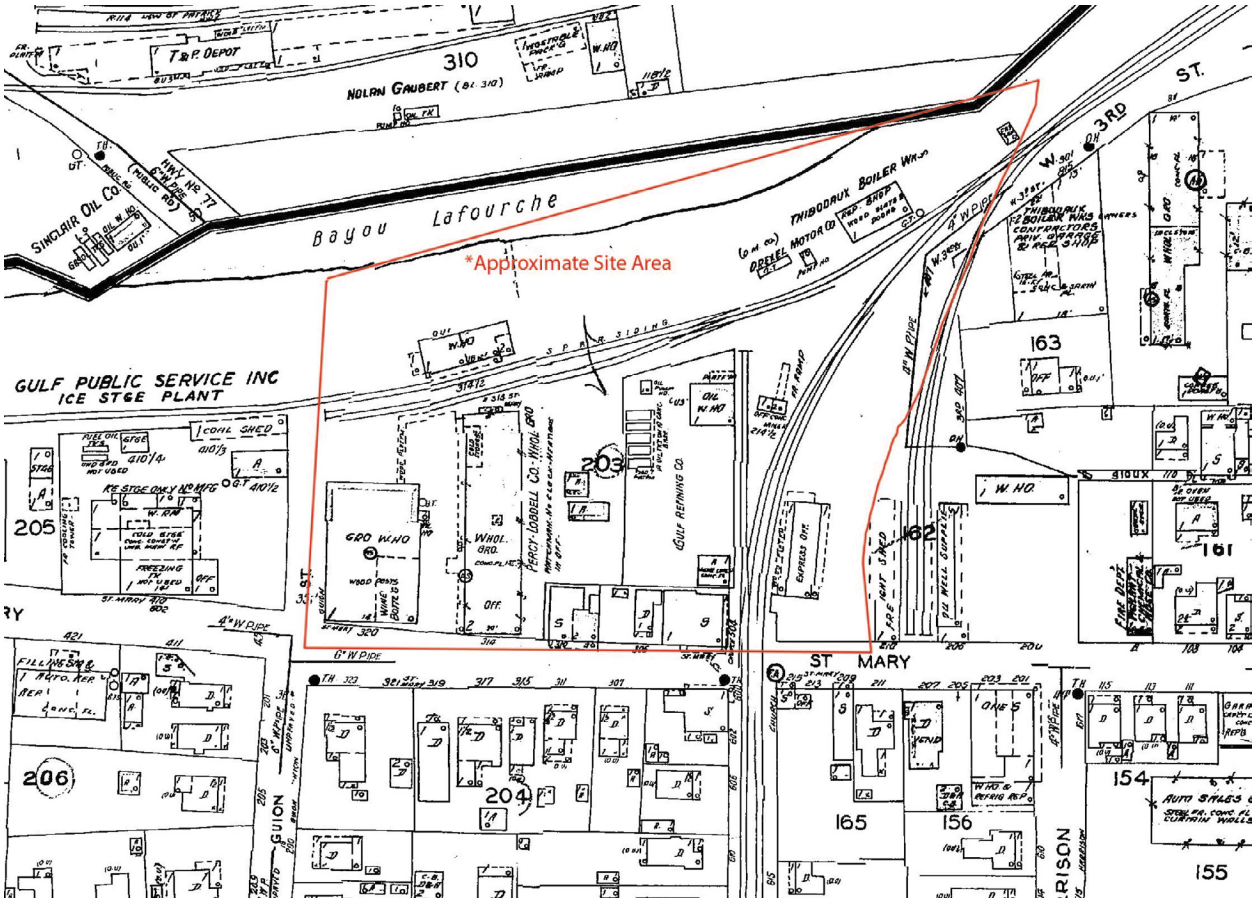

Figure 4.7: The same 1932 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map updated circa 1949 indicates that Thibodaux Boiler Works added a repair shop in the northeast corner of the site. The site area is indicated in red (Source: Library of Congress).

The plan shows that the NPS removed the two residential structures and eliminated any remains of other buildings. Their plan essentially shows existing conditions as of 2020, with the entire site focused on the Percy-Lobdell Building and attached auditorium. The parking lot and pedestrian circulation infrastructure wrap around the east and north sides of the building. A line of vegetation along the east side of the parking lot, along the abandoned right-of-way of Church Street, visually separated the site from the town of Thibodaux (Figure 4.9).

Summary

In the historic period, the site was arranged with multiple primary structures, each with accessory structures, located on individual parcels. The site now is now arranged around a single primary structure. Because the organization of the site no longer exhibits an arrangement of structures related to independent parcel boundaries, the site does not retain integrity of cluster arrangement.

Circulation

Historic Condition

During the early decades of the historic period of significance (1850-1920s), circulation on the site related strongly to the bayou. The bayou was a physical barrier as well as a thoroughfare that defined circulation within and through the site. Boat traffic moved through the bayou north of the site, docking along the side of the bayou to deliver and receive goods. In the historic period, a constructed levee alongside the bayou also served as a barrier and thoroughfare. A public road traveled along the top of the levee for much of the historic period, bringing vehicular and pedestrian traffic through the site. Around 1905, the Public Road was abandoned, redirecting through-traffic to St. Mary Street at the southern boundary of the site. Vehicular circulation entered the site from St. Mary Street to the south, from Ice (Art) Street to the west, or from Church Street to the east. The location of access points and parking areas are not shown on historic Sanborn Maps. The Thibodaux Boiler Works had facilities in several locations on the west side of Thibodaux, including

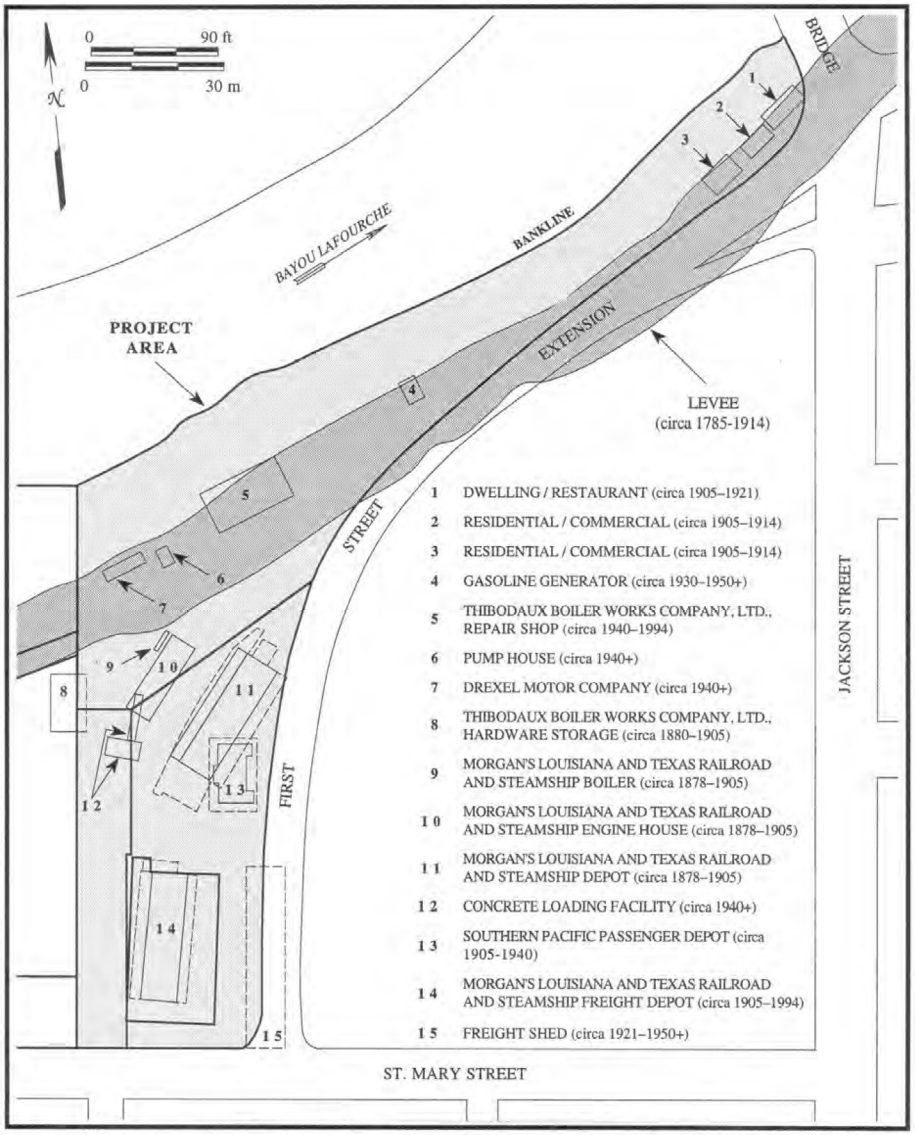

Figure 4.8: Graphic from 1996 CEI Archeological Report depicting known structures on the eastern portion of the study area. Note the listed dates of item 14 conflict with the report text (JELA WACC Archives).

a complex in the northwest corner of the study area. A photograph from the late 1800s of one of their buildings (it is not clear if it is the one in the study area) shows the area in front of the building covered in rutted mud. A wooden boardwalk laid on the ground provided a place for pedestrians to walk out of the mud.[337] This would likely have been a typical condition of the landscape around the commercial buildings in the study area during this time and prior to paving. A resident of Thibodaux, writing in 1890, described the dirt streets:

> The lack of sidewalks and banquettes was seriously felt in the town, heavy alluvial deposits which adhered to the shoes and feet with remarkable tenacity, rendering promenades in rainy weather anything but pleasant and agreeable. In order to alleviate this annoyance, the Council ordered the purchase of flatboats, with gunwales and lumber of which sidewalks could be constructed.[338]

According to a history of Lafourche County, "wooden sidewalks were very much the rule up until the early twentieth century."[339]

Other pedestrian circulation features within the site included loading ramps and boardwalks leading to the bayou and railroad from the Percy-

337. Theriot, *Lafourche Parish*, 56.

338. Lafourche Historical Society, The Lafourche Country II (Thibodaux, LA: Lafourche Historical Society, 1996), 125.

339. Ibid.

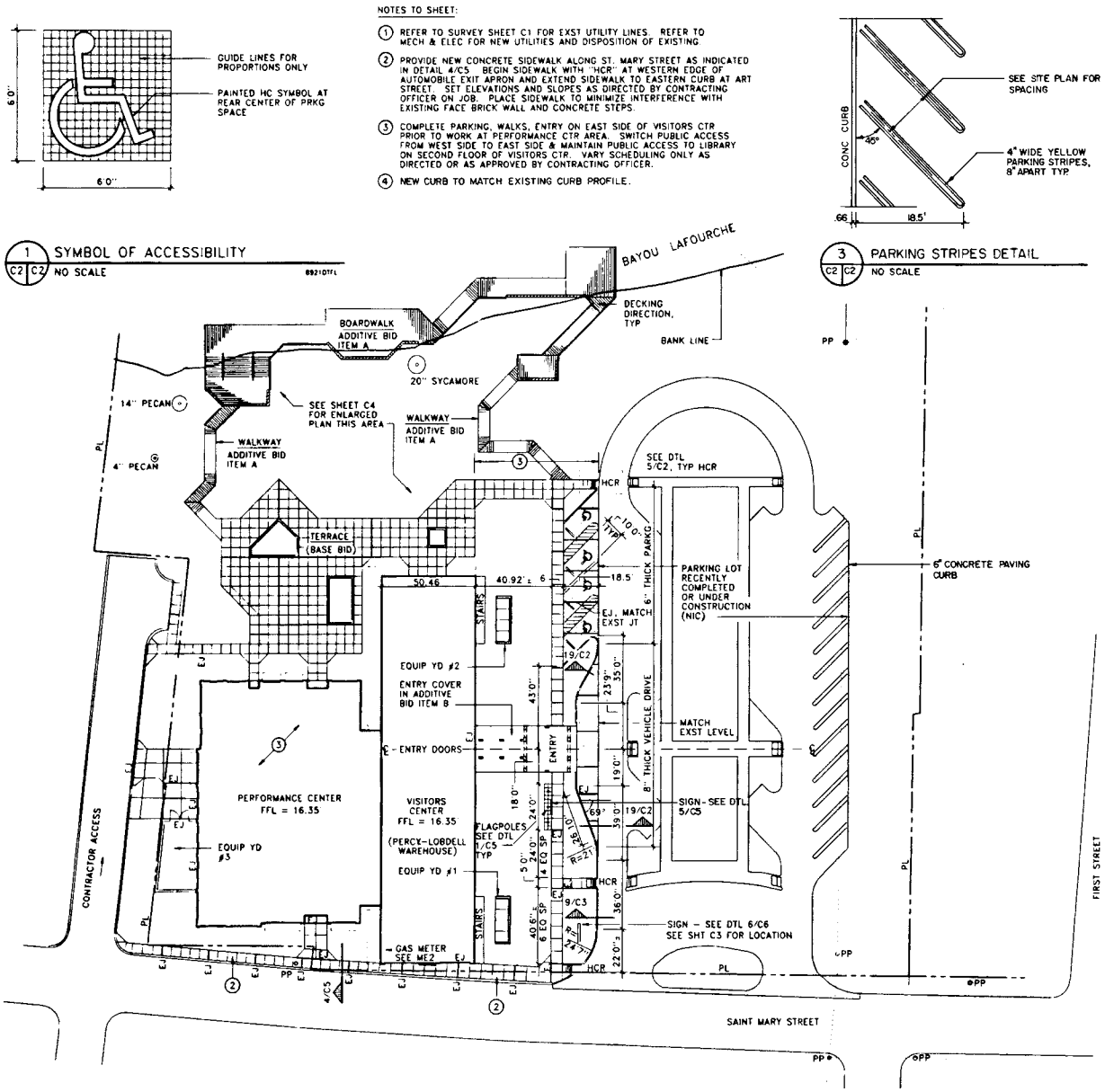

Figure 4.9: Portion of As-Built Site Plan by Hamilton & Associates architectural firm, 1990. The site renovations were completed after NPS acquisition of the site and included the addition of a performance center, entry alcove, plaza, parking areas, and landscaping around the original Percy-Lobdell Building (Source: NPS).

Lobdell Building. The Percy Lobdell Building had a large awning extending off its north facade that wrapped around the west side of the building. This was presumably used as a pedestrian space. The 1912 Sanborn Map shows an inclined platform leading from the north facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building to the warehouse on the bayou. By 1916, as seen on the Sanborn Map from that year, a boardwalk platform extended north from the Percy-Lobdell warehouse on the bayou connecting to an oil warehouse located a short distance downstream.

Aerials from the 1950s and 1960s appear to show light colored paving surrounding the Percy-Lobdell Building and other commercial buildings in the study area (Figure 4.10). An archeology report from the 1980s documented high amounts of gravel distributed across the site. The archeology report also documented the remains of a north–south oriented paved asphalt drive located on the east side of the Percy-Lobdell Building which connected to St. Mary Street. It is unknown when the drive was paved, but it is likely that this drive as well as a corridor on the west side of the building were open to vehicular and pedestrian movement for the daily operation of the grocery warehouse.

Figure 4.10: 1961 aerial of Thibodeaux, LA. Percy-Lobdell Building is visible in middle of image (Source: www.earthexplorer.usgs.gov).

A branch line of the Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad and Steamship Company entered the study area in 1879. This line followed Church Street north until it crossed St. Mary Street, where it began to curve to the northeast and ended near the bridge across the bayou at Jackson Street. The Southern Pacific Railroad leased the tracks of the Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad beginning in 1885. By 1898, Southern Pacific had a combined passenger and freight depot located within the study area, near the northeast corner of the site. Two rail lines passed in front (west) of the depot before continuing another block northeast.

Sometime between 1905 and 1907, the Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad and Steamship Company built a spur line, known as the Levee Track, from Church Street to the Thibodeaux Ice Factory that passed through the study area and north of the Percy-Lobdell Building. In 1919, the Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad and Steamship Company constructed a second railroad spur, this on including a scale, to the rear (north) side of the Percy-Lobdell Building.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

The circulation features of the site remained relatively unchanged until the site was redeveloped in the 1980s and 1990s. Bayou traffic slowed over the 20th century following the damming of the bayou at Donaldsonville, which reduced the bayou's function as a shipping corridor. The bayou remains a physical barrier at the northern boundary of the site, with a reduced volume of boat traffic passing the site. Boats occasionally dock at the boardwalk on the northwest corner of the site.

Both Southern Pacific depot buildings survived for several decades after the end of the historic period. The Southern Pacific freight depot remained in use until 1971. The railroad line that followed Church Street into town and the spur line that passed to the north of the Percy-Lobdell Building was

removed sometime in the late 1980s because they do not appear in a survey of the property at that time, but they do appear on a map of Thibodaux from circa 1980. An aerial from 1961 shows railcars on the spur line north of the building, indicating that the spur was still actively used at that time. W 1stStreet first appears on a 1932 map of Thibodaux running parallel and east of the mainline into town. This road appears in a 1942 aerial photograph of Thibodaux (Figure 4.11). It is a continuation of Market Street that turns southwest to pass behind (east) of the depots. It is likely that this road was developed to access the depots.

As mentioned above, a 1961 aerial shows vehicular circulation in the study area at that time. Most of the open spaces between the industrial buildings appear to be paved with gravel. Access into the Gulf Oil complex appears to be from the east off of W 1stStreet, crossing over the railroad tracks. There are two gravel drives that appear to cross the spur track on the north side of the study area—one in the Gulf Oil complex and another just west of the Percy-Lobdell Building. This latter drive crossed the spur line near the northwest corner of the study area and circled back to the east toward the warehouse building on the bayou (Figure 4.10).

In the mid-1980s, the Friends of the Library group constructed a parking lot on the west side of the Percy-Lobdell Building and added an entrance into its west facade. This parking lot was covered in gravel (Figure 4.12). A large auditorium addition to the Percy-Lobdell Building replaced the parking lot in the 1990s. During the NPS's development of the site in 1990, the constructed the parking lot and pedestrian circulation features seen today. These features facilitate visitor use, accommodating vehicle parking and pedestrian access to park facilities. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation is clearly defined with a boardwalk, plaza, sidewalks, and paved parking areas. A pedestrian path follows a portion of the approximate location of the main railway line into Thibodaux along the northern boundary of the site.

Summary

Circulation on the site is significantly altered from the historic period. Circulation on the site now has a weaker spatial relationship to the bayou. Changes to the spatial relationship of buildings and structures also redefined movement through the site. During the historic period the site was split into several parcels and crossed by active rail lines, which strongly defined movement throughout the site. As the study area is now a single parcel, circulation features provide free movement across the site. Due to the altered spatial relationship of building and structures, the removal of the railroad, and removal of circulation features connecting historic structures to the bayou, the site does not possess integrity of circulation.

Figure 4.11: View of Thibodaux, LA. From 1942; image looks southwest past bridge over the bayou; the study area is in top right corner of image (Source: Digital Library of Louisiana).

Figure 4.12: Photograph of Percy-Lobdell Building from mid-1980s (Source: Lafourche Parish Public Library).

Vegetation

Historic Condition

It is difficult to ascertain from available information what vegetation was present on the site during the historic period. Native bottomland forest and agricultural crops were cleared from the site prior to the historic period as the study area transitioned toward industrial land use. Given the commercial and industrial nature of the site through much of the historic period, it is likely the vegetation on the site was limited to colonizing vegetation at the edges of circulation areas. The few historic photographs of the study area show practically no vegetation. In a photograph from the late 1800s a single tree is visible near the Ragan Foundry and Machine Shop (Figure 4.4). There are trees visible in the distance, evidence that this area was cleared of native vegetation during the development of the site in the 1800s. In a second photograph, taken around 1905, grass is visible growing on the levee but otherwise no vegetation is visible in the study area (Figure 4.5). In areas with frequent boat traffic along the bayou edge it is likely that vegetation was limited or absent. It is possible cultural vegetation was present in the residential areas of the site, however this is impossible to verify with the information available.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

Vegetation growing along the bayou edge is visible in 1956 and 1961 aerials of Thibodaux, indicating less disturbance along the bayou edge than during the historic period (Figure 4.10). In the aerial from 1961 vegetation is discernible between structures to the north of the site and beyond the railroad tracks following the bayou edge. Mature trees can be seen along the bayou edge in photographs taken in 1982 during the grand opening of the Library-Cultural Center. The archaeological report prepared by Hahn in 1992 indicates that the area between the Percy-Lobdell Building and the bayou was overgrown with dense vegetation at the time of fieldwork investigations in 1989. A survey of the property completed around the same time records a few large trees. Two large pecan trees, including one measuring 18 inches in diameter, grew along the bank of the bayou in the northwest corner of the study area. A 20-inch diameter sycamore grew almost directly north of the Percy-Lobdell Building. The map shows a cluster of mulberry trees east of the Percy-Lobdell Building and several elm trees growing near a building in the northeast corner of the study area. The map also indicates a shrub mass growing west of where the main train line passed through the site.

At present, vegetation on the site is cultural vegetation planted during the 1990s renovation of the site by NPS. An aerial photograph dated 1989 shows the site during construction. The trees along the bayou remain as does the shrub mass noted above that grew along the now-abandoned rail line. Otherwise there is no vegetation visible in the study area (Figure 4.13). During the 1990s site development, the NPS planted a wide variety of trees, shrubs, and ground covers. The as-built planting plan for the project indicates that trees planted included thirty-seven bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), twenty live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*), fifteen river birch (*Betula nigra*), twenty-nine wax myrtle (*Morella cerifera*), and eleven weeping willows (*Salix babylonica*). Other trees planted in lesser quantities included bamboo (*Bambusa phyllostachus nigra*), crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*), elms, Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), Drummond red maple (*Acer rubrum var. drummondii*), and tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). Shrubs planted include large quantities of azaleas (*Rhododendron spp.*), including the cultivars "Fashion," "G.G. Gerbing," and "President Claey." Other shrubs included nandina (*Nandina compacta*), dwarf palmetto (*Sabal minor*), dwarf Indian hawthorn (*Rhaphiolepsis indica*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), sago palm (*Cycas revoluta*), spirea (*Spirea cantoniensis*), and pittosporum (*Pittosporum tobira*). The planting plan created shrub and tree masses at entrance points to the building, a dense planting of evergreen trees in the parking lot, a dense screen of live oaks along the east side of the parking lot, and a spread of large trees between the plaza and the boardwalk (Figure 4.14).

Summary

Despite a lack of clear information about the vegetation present on the site during the historic period, it can be inferred from the land use and building density that the site did not exhibit park-like conditions like that of the present landscape. The current park-like condition of the vegetation results in the site not having integrity of vegetation.

Buildings and Structures

Historic Condition

Buildings and structures on the site changed throughout the historic period of significance (1850-1920s). George Guion laid out six parcels on the western edge of the city limits of Thibodaux in 1846. These were numbered 200 to 205. The Percy-Lobdell Building would eventually occupy Lot 204 in the first decade of the 1900s.

Lot 205 was west of the Percy-Lobdell Building, where the auditorium addition is today. George Anderson, the first owner of Lot 205 constructed a house on the lot in 1847 and apparently operated a foundry on the site, but the location of the foundry building is unknown. He also constructed a residence; which archeologists did locate in 1989. The 1898 Sanborn Map shows six structures on the lot—three primary buildings and three outbuildings (Figure 4.1). Two of the primary buildings faced St. Mary Street, on the south half of the lot. These were at that time part of a bakery operation. The building on the north half of the lot was a one-story, frame dwelling with a porch that wrapped around the west side of the structure. This is presumed to be the Anderson house. In 1907, the Anderson house on the north side of the lot was unchanged; but the bakery had been replaced with a one-story, frame constructed dwelling with a front porch overlooking St. Mary Street.

Lot 204 was the next lot east. Like Lot 205, this lot stretched from St. Mary Street almost to the bayou. The two men who bought the lot in 1848 constructed a sawmill on the property. The location of the sawmill is unknown. There were residential buildings on the site by the late 1860s; one of the buildings was also used as a store. The 1898 Sanborn Map shows two residential dwellings on the lot—one facing the bayou and one facing St. Mary Street (Figure 4.1). These dwellings were gone by 1907, when the Sanborn Map of that year shows the Lobdell Company building occupying most of the lot (Figure 4.2). The two-story, brick building almost spanned the full depth of the lot from St. Mary Street to the levee. A one-story covered porch wrapped around the north and west side of the building. The company's office occupied the southeast corner of the building. By 1907, the Levee Track passed just north of the building. North of the tracks, the Percy-Lobdell Company also had a one-story, frame constructed building

Figure 4.13: 1989 aerial of Thibodeaux, LA. Percy-Lobdell Building is visible in middle left of image (Source: www.historicaerials.com).

with a tin or slate roof. This building stood on the edge of the levee and extended toward the bayou. A smaller frame building labeled "Fuel Oil Tank" stood just west of this building.

The land east of Lot 204 and up to Church Street was divided into four lots—Lots 200 to 203. Two of the lots, Lots 201 and 202, faced St. Mary Street. These smaller lots were only approximately a third of the size of Lots 204 and 205. When first sold in 1848, there already was a structure on one of the lots, but little is known about it. A series of families lived in a residence on the property through the end of the 1800s. The 1898 Sanborn Map shows a one-story, fireproof construction, "tin shop" at the corner of Church Street and St. Mary Street. Its front porch overlooked the Southern Pacific Railroad line that entered town from the south. The 1898 Sanborn Map does not show Lot 202. By 1907, Lots 201 and 202 had been subdivided into three lots, each with their own building. A market building occupied the corner of Church Street and St. Mary Street; this may be the previously described tin shop. The one-story, shingle covered building was divided into two spaces and had a front porch. It also had a one-story, open-sided outbuilding on the north property line. West of this building, two, one-story, frame construction

Figure 4.14: Photograph showing boardwalk and landscape under construction at the Percy-Lobdell Building ca.1991 (Source: Lafourche Parish Public Library).

dwellings faced St. Mary Street. They have identical footprints and their outbuildings, presumably outhouses, shared a back wall on the property line between the two parcels.

Lot 200 was north of lots 201 and 202. It faced the bayou. Patrick Hogan opened a boiler works on the property around 1873. Water Ragan purchased the property in 1882. The 1898 Sanborn Map shows that in addition to the Ragan Foundry and Machine Shop the lot also had a residential dwelling originally built by Hogan. By 1907, the Thibodaux Boiler Works Company had occupied the main building closest to the bayou and the residential dwelling remained unchanged. The boiler works was a complex of attached buildings. The main structure included several connected shops, including a machine shop, a foundry with an iron core oven, and a pattern shop. It had a small one-story storage building next door and two fuel oil tanks. The dwelling was one story with additions on the rear and north facade. A one-story outbuilding north stood between the residence and the boiler works building.

A sliver of land on the east side of Church Street is within the study area but was not part of the land subdivided by George Guion in 1846. By 1898, this land was the location of the Southern Pacific Railroad's passenger and freight depot (c.1878), an engine house, and a stock pen. The engine house was removed before 1907 and Southern Pacific moved the original depot and added a smaller passenger depot. Both were on the east side of the tracks, between the tracks and town. The passenger depot was northeast of the freight depot. It was one story, irregular in plan and had a porch that wrapped around the entire building. The original 1878 freight depot was later renamed the Express Depot.

The buildings and structures in the study area stayed relatively unchanged from 1907 to 1912. One significant change was the demolition of the two dwellings on Lot 205, west of the Percy-Lobdell Building. A livestock auction house occupied a large, one-story, frame constructed building that filled the majority of the lot by 1912. The Percy-Lobdell Company would acquire this building prior to 1927.

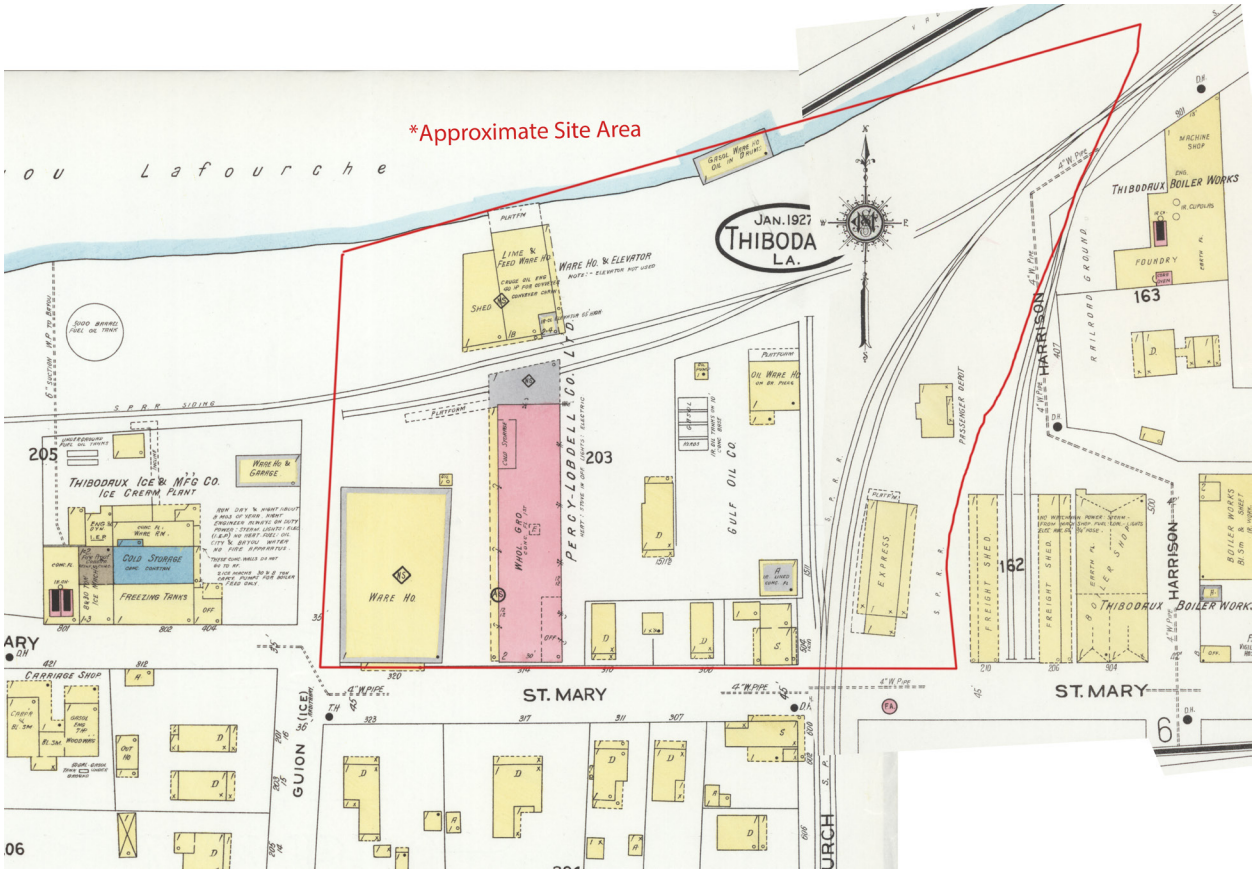

Figure 4.15: Modified portion of the 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance map combines two sheets to show the entire site area, indicated in red. Gulf Oil Co occupies the northeast corner of the site in the former location of the Thibodaux Boiler Works (Source: Library of Congress).

The 1927 Sanborn Map provides the best record of the buildings and structures in the study area at the end of the historic period of significance (Figure 4.15). Sometime between 1920-1924, the Thibodaux Boiler Works building next to the bayou on lot 200 was removed and later replaced by the Gulf Oil Bulk Plant facility around 1925. The complex remained active until 1989. The "Hogan" residence next to the boiler works was also moved westward within its lot and rotated 90 degrees in the early 1920s. It was demolished before 1949. An iron clad automobile shop with a concrete floor occupied the former location of the Hogan house by 1927 and remained in this location into the mid-1900s. Other changes in the first half of the 1900s include the construction of a large store on the corner of Church Street and St. Mary Street. This occurred prior to 1927.

By the end of the historic period, in addition to the Percy-Lobdell Building, the study area included a sale stable, a meat market, a foundry and machine shop, a feed warehouse, an oil warehouse, a coal shed, three residential dwellings, five unidentified small structures, and two Southern Pacific Railroad depots. In total, there were eighteen building. All were frame construction except for the Percy-Lobdell Building which was constructed from brick.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

Two other buildings labeled as automobile shops appear on the 1949 Sanborn Map. These are just east of the Percy-Lobdell Building (**Figure 4.6**). By 1949 the store on the corner of St. Mary Street and Church Street had been enlarged with an addition on the rear (west) that almost reached the adjacent dwelling. This dwelling is the same one that first appears on the 1907 Sanborn Map. One lot to the west and next to the Percy-Lobdell Building, the residential dwelling in this location had been converted to a store by 1949. The Percy-Lobdell Building appears unchanged except for the addition of a wooden platform connecting it to the warehouse on the adjacent (west) lot. The Percy-Lobdell warehouse on the banks of the bayou was substantially smaller in 1949. The 1949 building is in the same location and the two-story

Figure 4.16: 1973 aerial of Thibodeaux, LA. Percy-Lobdell Building is visible in middle of image (Source: www.earthexplorer.usgs.gov).

grain elevator is in the same location, suggesting that portions of the older structure remained. The building appears on an aerial from 1961 but it was gone by 1989. The warehouse on the corner of Ice (Art) Street and St. Mary Street was demolished in 1972. The Express Depot (c.1878) was decommissioned in 1971 and burned, according to an archeological report, in 1972.[340] The fate of the Express Depot and site is discussed in greater detail below. An aerial photograph dated 1973 shows the condition of the site during this period (Figure 4.16).

When the NPS began developing the site between 1989 and 1990, they only owned the property extending from Art Street to the Church Street right-of-way. In addition to the Percy-Lobdell Building, there were four buildings present. In 1989, the NPS demolished the two residential structures east of the Percy-Lobdell Building on St. Mary Street, the remaining Gulf Oil building, a fuel tank storage building, and a shed. There were also noted on a 1989 archeological field map several concrete slabs distributed across the site that correspond to buildings seen on earlier Sanborn Maps. The railroad tracks that crossed the study area were abandoned by this time. Evidence of the railbed remained visible until the NPS cleared the site in 1989. Within the next few years, the NPS acquired the property extending from Church Street to W 1stStreet and by 1994, had removed the Thibodaux Feed and Seed Store warehouse, Wayne's Feed Store Warehouse, and other industrial debris from the area.

It does not appear that Thibodaux Feed and Seed Store was the same building as the historic freight depot/express office located at St. Mary Street

340. Hahn, "Archaeological and Historical Investigations, 1996," 74.

and Church Street. The 1992 and 1996 Hahn & Associates Archeological reports have conflicting information on this building. What is known is that Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railroad built a freight depot in 1878 on the east side of the tracks across from the engine house. This building was owned by Southern Pacific Railroad by 1898. The building appears to have moved south 175 feet sometime between 1898 and 1907 based on a comparison of Sanborn Maps.[341]

The 1992 report states that "Sometime during the 1910s, the original railroad depot, which was located on the west side of Church Street across from the engine house, was replaced by a new depot at the corner of Church Street and St. Mary Streets.…The 1910s railroad depot, which partially stands within the Church Street right-of-way, still stands and is currently used as a feed and seed store."[342] This statement contains multiple errors. The "Southern and Pacific Passenger and Freight Depot" shown on an 1898 Sanborn Map is on the *east* side of Church Street, not the west side. Additionally, the structure Hahn refers to moved sometime between the 1898 and 1907 Sanborn Maps, so prior to 1910.

The 1996 archeological report contradicts the statement made in the 1992 archeological report about the depot still standing, stating that "in 1971, the Southern Pacific Railroad determined that the Thibodaux Branch was no longer profitable and decommissioned the line and the depot. One year later, the depot was destroyed by fire…the Thibodaux Feed and Seed Store occupied the *former location* of the Express Office" [emphasis added].[343] Confusingly, a figure in that report shows the original 1878 depot building as remaining until 1994 (**Figure 4.8**). The Feed and Seed building was presumably built on the same foundation sometime after 1972, but the report does not mention a construction date. No documentation of the 1972 freight depot fire or the Thibodaux Feed and Seed building has been located. The 1996 report stated that the Feed and Seed building and its foundation were removed by 1994.

A comparison of historic aerials suggests that the Express Office building may have survived as late as 1973, when a long, rectangular building exists that is very similar in size and shape to the one seen in historic Sanborn Maps and aerial photographs from the 1960s. A larger, more square building appears in the next available aerial photograph—1982. This appears to corroborate the 1996 archeological report statement that the original depot was replaced in the 1970s at which time it became a feed and seed store.

In the early 1990s, NPS constructed a large auditorium addition to the west facade and an entry alcove on the east facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building. NPS also constructed a plaza with seat wall planters and a boardwalk/pier on the northwest corner of the site. Brick screening walls were added by NPS to contain modern utilities. A small storage shed located behind the auditorium was more recently added. From the 1990s to the present, buildings and structures on the site remained relatively unchanged.

Summary

From the beginning of the historic period of significance in 1850 until the first decade of the 1900s, the study area was the site of several small residences, a bakery, two boiler works, a sawmill, a small tin shop, and two railroad depots located on the east end of the study area.

Most of the buildings and structures from the historic period were lost over the 20th century. The Percy-Lobdell Building is the only remaining structure on the site from the historic period except for a concrete ruin on the banks of the bayou. The identity of this building is unknown, but it is in the approximate location of a gasoline warehouse that was part of the Gulf Oil Company complex that appears on a 1927 Sanborn Map. The site is missing numerous structures present during the historic period. Additionally, the massing and arrangement of existing buildings does not reflect the historic period. Due to these changes, the site does not possess integrity of buildings and structures.

341. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1898-1907.
342. Hahn, "Historical and Archeological Investigations, 1992," 83.
343. Hahn, "Archaeological and Historical Investigations, 1996," 74.

Views and Vistas

Historic Condition

Views into and out from the site during the historic period are difficult to identify from available information. It is likely that views from the site across the bayou were limited prior to the 1910s because of the elevation of the artificial levee. It is probable that following the removal of the levee in the later years of the historic period, there were more open views across and down the bayou. A photograph taken from the Jackson Street bridge in the late 1800s or early 1900s shows the view into the site (Figure 4.4). The elevated levee blocks the view of the lower portion of buildings. There is no single focal point in the view because the site is filled with multiple structures. The most prominent view is looking down the bayou. The view is relatively clear and unobstructed because of the lack of vegetation. It is reasonable to presume that at times boats filled the bayou blocking long views from various vantage points. Historic photographs of Bayou Lafourche in other communities also show minimal vegetation growing along the bayou edge during this period.[344] This further supports the probability that views extended across and down the bayou from the study area at this time. The view from the railroad tracks at the north and east edges of the site would have provided views into and out from the site, otherwise the clusters of buildings likely restricted any long views from within the site during the historic period. Views from adjacent city streets into the site would have been similarly limited, with structures lining the street blocking most views into the study area. For example, the large stable/warehouse in the southwest corner of the site as well as the parcel-spanning Percy-Lobdell Building would have obscured views into the site from the west. It is possible that views into the site existed between buildings facing the road.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

It is unknown how views across the site evolved in the post historic period except that most of the lots continued to have buildings on them into the 1970s and 1980s. Many of the structures were razed in the 1980s, which would have temporarily opened up sight lines across the study area. During the 1990s renovation of the site, the NPS planted the parking lot with evergreen canopy trees, which currently reduces the field of vision into and out from the site. Weedy vegetation along the bayou edge obscures views of the bayou from all areas except the boardwalk. Today, non-historic buildings occupy the opposite bank of the bayou. From within the site, the longest views out from the site are from the concrete plaza on the northwest edge of the site and along the multi-use trail looking back toward the site from the northeast. The view out of the site from the plaza is of adjacent businesses or non-historic buildings on the opposite bank of the bayou. The view along the multi-use trail looks back toward the buffer created by vegetation planted along the parking lot.

Summary

During the historic period, views into the site were likely restricted by buildings. Currently, mature live oak trees in the parking area limit views into and out of the site. It is unlikely that the sense of enclosure created by the canopy trees is reminiscent of any historic condition on the site. Views from the site toward the bayou are likely more restricted now than in the historic period because vegetation was limited in the past because of the importance of the bayou as a transportation corridor. Because views from within and outside of the site reveal no significant landmarks or continuity with historic period views, the site does not possess integrity of views and vistas.

Small-Scale Features

Historic Condition

Documentation of small-scale features during the historic period is limited to items noted on Sanborn Maps and two historic photographs. A photograph from the late 1890s or early 1900s shows a few small-scale features scattered along the banks of the bayou. Most of the visible features appear related to the construction of the levee. These include scattered lumber and sacks filled with sand (or possibly grain or another commodity). A photograph of the Jackson Street bridge taken in 1902 shows the northeast corner of the study area.[345] Wooden gangplanks extend from the bank to wooden barges tied up along the edge of the bayou. A walkway, that appears to be a boardwalk laid on the ground, leads from the boats toward the bridge. A wooden bulkhead is visible along one section of the bayou (See

344. See for example photographs of Lockport, LA in Theirot, *Lafourche Parish*, 92 and 97.

345. Theriot, *Lafourche Parish*, 44.

Figure 4.4). A photograph taken a few years later, circa 1905, shows a few wooden poles mounted vertically along the edge of the Levee Track (See Figure 4.5). Their purpose is unknown. The 1898 Sanborn Map shows only a few small-scale features in the study area, including a platform next to the Southern Pacific passenger and freight depot and a stock pen next to the Southern Pacific engine house that presumably had a fence of some kind. The 1907 Sanborn Map suggests that boundary fences separated the two residences on St. Mary Street and between the market building at the intersection of St. Mary Street and Church Street and the residence north of it on Church Street. The placement of outbuildings on the parcel lines indicates some physical barrier like a fence. Archeologists did find evidence of historic fences during the 1989 excavations on the site. On both the 1907 and 1912 Sanborn Maps a large, 15-feet-tall, soft coal pile was located between the Percy-Lobdell Building and the Thibodaux Boiler Works complex. Both the 1907 and 1912 maps also indicate fuel oil tanks located near both the Thibodaux Boiler Works and the Percy-Lobdell Building. The 1927 Sanborn Maps indicate four gasoline and kerosene tanks on a concrete base located on the Gulf Oil complex in the former location of the Thibodaux Boiler Works.

Post Historic and Existing Condition

The presence and location of small-scale features prior to the 1990s renovation cannot be determined with the information available. Aerial imagery does not reveal enough detail to discern small-scale features on the site. The Thibodaux Branch of the Lafourche Public Library has a scrapbook with photographs of the Percy-Lobdell Building taken in the 1980s that show only a few signs on the site at that time. An existing conditions survey from 1990 indicates several small concrete slabs and sections of metal fencing across the site which were removed during site redevelopment. At present, small-scale features on the site primarily date to the NPS ownership period. These items include signage, flagpoles, benches, multiple types of lighting, waste receptacles, a bike rack, and water spigots. A historic marker was installed on the site by the Lafourche Heritage Society.

Summary

Small-scale features existing on the site date to the park's ownership by NPS. As the site was mostly cleared during renovations in the 1990s, no small-scale features remain on the site from the historic period. Due to a lack of remaining artifacts and information from the historic period, the site does not possess integrity of small-scale features.

Archaeological Sites

It is not the intent of this report to analyze the integrity of archaeological sites. Hahn's report, *Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center*, not only provides an overview of previously archeological investigations, but also provides additional evidence found during archeological efforts in 1989 and 1994. The report revealed that the park houses a variety of archeological remains related to multiple time periods, including the foundations of multiple buildings. Hahn field-verified most features discovered in their historical research as part of a Level II Archaeological survey. Hahn did not survey the entire site area as part of that report.

Evaluation of Landscape Integrity

Landscape integrity refers to a cultural landscape's ability to convey its historic significance. *National Register of Historic Places Bulletin 16A* defines historic integrity as "the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's prehistoric or historic period."

In *National Register Bulletin 15*, the National Register defines seven aspects of integrity to use when evaluating a historic property:

> **Location** is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred;
>
> **Setting** is the physical environment within and surrounding a property;
>
> **Design** is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property;
>
> **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property;
>
> **Workmanship** is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory;
>
> **Feeling** is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time; and
>
> **Association** is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

In order to retain historic integrity, a property must possess several, and usually most, of these seven aspects. Evaluating historic integrity involves first determining the historic significance of a property and then identifying the existing features that contribute to our ability to recognize and understand this significance. Character-defining features are those distinctive features or qualities that make a property unique. They are the individual parts that make the whole place special and worthy of our recognition as a historic property.

As stated above, the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area has a period of significance between 1850-1920s. A specific period of significance for the Percy-Lobdell Building was not established in the National Register nomination. The building was listed as significant in the areas of History and Architecture.

According to the National Register of Historic Places, the historic significance of the Percy-Lobdell Building is that it is the sole remaining representative structure from the "city's historic role as a commercial service, and distribution center for Lafourche Parish." The historic significance of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit as identified by the National Register of Historic Places is specifically related to the Percy-Lobdell Building.

Location

The Percy-Lobdell Building remains in its historic location and therefore the building retains integrity of location.

As for the overall study area, the cultural landscape is missing many historic features that if present would contribute to the historic significance of the site. These historic landscape features include various boardwalks, a raised artificial levee, a public road along the levee, the warehouse and grain elevator associated with the Percy-Lobdell operation, the Thibodaux Boiler Works, the stable/warehouse on the corner of Art Street and St. Mary Street, several residential structures, railroad depots, railroad tracks, fences, and an asphalt drive. The archaeological investigations conducted by Hahn in 1989 located evidence of many of these features.

While the Percy-Lobdell Building retains integrity of location, the entire site does not retain integrity of location because most of the documented landscape features from the historic period are missing.

Setting

The setting of the Percy-Lobdell Building during the period of significance would have been a mixed industrial and residential landscape. The bayou edge was a heavily trafficked commercial corridor lined with wooden loading docks, several warehouses, anchored flatboats, and little to no vegetation. The Percy-Lobdell Company would have regularly transferred goods at the bayou edge via boardwalks and loading ramps. The former asphalt road east of the Percy-Lobdell Building would have also been heavily trafficked as part of the company's function as a distribution warehouse.

Following the removal of the levee and Public Road in the early 1900s, railroad tracks lined the bayou edge on the northern boundary of the site. A second set of railroad tracks crossed the eastern edge of the site along Church Street right-of-way and arcing to the east toward the town of Thibodaux. The tracks were in regular use throughout the historic period. The tracks would have created a visual barrier between the site and bayou when railcars were present. The area surrounding the Thibodaux Boiler Works and railroad depots would have been heavily industrial, likely with smog from coal burning equipment, loud machinery, and railroad activity.

Given the nature of the industrial activity on site, it is unlikely that many trees or landscaped areas were present except maybe in the residential portions of the site. Little is known about the modest structures that lined St. Mary Street and the Church Street right-of-way other than that the properties were fenced in and each had small privies and/or outbuildings. The large stable/warehouse in the location of the current amphitheater would have had regular activity at its entrance on St. Mary Street and around its loading dock on the north facade. Thibodaux Ice Factory to the west and other factories and warehouses to the east would have added to the commercial/industrial character of the setting along Bayou Thibodaux.

The redevelopment of the study area began in the 1980s by the Friends of the Library organization in Thibodaux. It was completed in the early 1990s by the NPS. The conversion of the site into a cultural center, library, and NPS site almost entirely obliterated the historic landscape features that would have conveyed the historic condition of the setting around the Percy-Lobdell Building. The current park-like setting of canopy trees, turfgrass, landscape beds, and the vegetated bayou edge no longer reflect the historic condition of vegetation during the historic period. The visitor parking areas, plaza, boardwalk, and sidewalks reflect the present recreational use of the site and do not convey the character of circulation in the site during the historic period. The site is surrounded by modern commercial buildings not reflective of the historic period. Some houses remain along St. Mary Street south of the site, which is reflective of the historic period.

With the exception of the Percy-Lobdell Building, the spatial organization, cluster arrangement, circulation features, buildings and structures, vegetation, and other visual indicators of setting no longer remain from the historic period. Due to the extent of missing cultural landscape features, the property does not retain integrity of setting.

Design

The site was laid out into six parcels by George S. Guion in 1846. These parcels, Lots 200-205, were on the western limits of the town of Thibodaux. Guion's intention was to subdivide the parcels for commercial and industrial use, thus extending the commercial core of downtown. The layout provided most of the lots with access to the Public Road and bayou. This lot layout facilitated the commercial development of Thibodaux by allowing industries to cluster along the bayou edge, which was the primary transportation corridor during the early decades of the historic period. This functional arrangement was lost when the lots were subdivided in the 1920s, and further obscured when NPS united the lots in the 1990s.

The National Register nomination recognizes the Percy-Lobdell Building for its local architectural significance as a rare example of an Italianate-style commercial building in Lafourche Parish. The builders made use of prefabricated metal decorative elements for the primary facade facing St. Mary Street. The building retains much of its architectural character despite additions made during the 1990s renovation. The modern additions to the Percy-Lobdell Building as well as the current landscaping, fire escapes, and

brick screening walls reduce the visibility of the building's features, although the architecturally significant facade remains clearly legible from the street.

The Percy-Lobdell Building is the only designed feature present during the historic period remaining on the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site. Landscape features on the site during the period of significance were primarily vernacular and reflected patterns of land use—industrial /commercial and residential. The materials and form of these features was presumably utilitarian and most of the historic structures probably did not reflect any known academic style.

The original lot lines are no longer visible on the site, which diminishes the ability of the landscape to communicate the intended spatial organization of the block. The modern additions and landscaping diminish legibility of the Percy-Lobdell Building's original design as a distribution warehouse where goods were delivered and received primarily from the bayou side of the building. Because the Percy-Lobdell Building is listed on the National Register as significant under Criterion C for Architecture, and this aspect remains largely intact, the Percy-Lobdell Building retains integrity of design.

However, for the entire site, the design of the cultural landscape has been diminished by the extensive amount of changes since the historic period. The loss of its historic spatial arrangement, cluster arrangement, circulation features, and most buildings and structures result in the site not retaining integrity of design.

Materials

Most of the materials used to construct the Percy-Lobdell Building remain intact. Most other original materials are absent from the site, except for archaeological remains of a few building foundations and a ruin of a concrete foundation on the edge of the bayou. Materials now missing would have been part of landscape features including frame and metal clad buildings with concrete or brick foundations, a grain elevator, railroad and scale tracks, wooden boardwalks, a soft coal pile, shipping vessels, an asphalt driveway, wooden fences, fuel tanks, and other industrial equipment.

While the Percy-Lobdell Building retains integrity of materials, the loss of the vast majority of historic landscape features from the site results in the site not retaining integrity of materials.

Workmanship

The workmanship from the period of significance remains evident in the brickwork and facade of the Percy-Lobdell Building; as a result, the building retains integrity of workmanship. There is little other evidence of workmanship in the historical or archaeological record for other structures formerly present on the site. Furthermore, other than the Percy-Lobdell Building, there are no other identifiable aspects of historic workmanship currently visible on the site. For this reason, the cultural landscape of the study area lacks integrity of workmanship.

Feeling

During the period of significance, the site would have been a noisy, smoke-filled, congested industrial site. Given the concentration of bayou traffic, railroad spurs, and roads, the area would have been full of activity related to manufacturing and commerce. The sounds of lumbering rail cars, barge horns, and heavy machinery would have reverberated through the area. The smell of coal burning equipment and large petroleum storage facilities would have punctuated the heavy humid air. After the bayou was dammed, it filled with debris and stagnant water. The landscape around individual industrial buildings was filled with informal, unstructured, and often muddy circulation corridors and laydown yards.

Most of the sights and sounds that characterized the historic landscape are currently missing. The general feeling of the site today is that of a park, with large shade trees creating an overhead canopy, ornamental plants distributed in landscape beds, walking paths, bench seating, open concrete plazas and lawn areas, and a boardwalk overlooking the vegetated and lightly trafficked bayou. The site's feeling no longer reflects the rough industrial character of the historic period. Due to the abandonment of the railroad, the damming of Bayou Lafourche, the resultant loss of active industry in the area, and subsequent adaptive

reuse, the cultural landscape of the site no longer retains integrity of feeling.

Association

The Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit conveys its historic significance through the existence of the prominent Percy-Lobdell Building. However, the use of the building as a wholesale grocery warehouse by the Percy-Lobdell Company is not directly conveyed in the existing landscape. The building type conveys the former commercial nature of the site, but with no visible association to the company or the nature of its operations. The bayou could potentially convey the association of the site with former commercial activity; however, this is not directly legible in the present landscape without further interpretation. Because of the overwhelming loss of historic landscape features that connect the site to its historic use and setting, the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center unit does not retain integrity of association to the period of significance.

Conclusions

The site as a whole does not retain integrity to the historic period. Only the Percy-Lobdell Building itself retains integrity. The historic condition of the site was an unsuitable environment by modern standards of human health and safety, not to mention an ecological wasteland devoid of vegetation, shade, or wildlife habitat. With the development of the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, the NPS created a facility dedicated to the interpretation and celebration of regional cultural heritage. An underutilized, locally significant historic building was selected as a suitable location, and the NPS rehabilitated a contaminated heavy industrial site into a pleasant, shaded community amenity that provides recreational and gathering space, public access to the bayou, and urban wildlife habitat. The NPS removed abandoned railroad material along with thousands of pounds of industrial debris and hazardous materials. Park staff regraded and stabilized the bayou edge, planted native trees and shrubs, and developed the facility into a modern amenity for the Thibodaux community. Since the environmental movement of the 1970s, communities have been working to clean up the environmental destruction caused by early twentieth century industrial activities and improve the health of urban areas. In the modern context, the historic cultural landscape of the Percy-Lobdell Building would be best experienced through interpretation.

Treatment

Introduction

The treatment recommendations for this Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) propose a preservation strategy for long-term management of the Percy-Lobdell Building cultural landscape based on research, inventory, and analysis. The appropriate preservation approach considers the evolution of the landscape alongside significance, existing conditions, and current use. The CLR combines the site history and analysis with input from the current site managers to formulate an appropriate treatment and management philosophy.

Recommendations follow National Park Service policy directives, including the Director's Orders No. 28: *Cultural Resource Management Guidelines* and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*. These documents identify four types of treatment: preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. Each treatment ranges by level of physical intervention and includes specific guidelines and standards.

As defined by the National Park Service, the purpose of a landscape treatment plan is to set forth guidelines for preserving and enhancing historic landscape characteristics and features within the context of contemporary park uses.[346] Treatment describes the future appearance of the landscape at the planning level with preliminary design recommendations. It does not provide construction level details necessary for implementation, nor does it address routine maintenance.

346. Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, "A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques" (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, 1998), 81.

Management Summary

The April 1995 *Amendment to the General Management Plan* (GMPA) for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (JELA) states that the park's purpose was preserving "for the education, inspiration, and benefit of present and future generations significant examples of natural and historical resources of the Mississippi Delta region and to provide for their interpretation in such manner as to portray the development of cultural diversity in the region."[347] The GMPA states that the interpretive theme/unit role for the Acadian Unit is the "Contribution of the Acadian people to the unique culture of the region; prairie and wetlands as examples."[348] The GMPA specifies that the Acadian Units' role is to "support efforts of Acadian and regional groups to maintain cultural traditions."[349] Suggested visitor activities for the Acadian Units include "cultural activities, theaters, festivals, demonstrations, and interpretive displays.

The 2015 Foundation Document briefly discusses the purpose of JELA's three Acadian Culture Centers, stating "The park's Acadian cultural centers trace the transformation of Canada's Acadians to Louisiana's Cajuns, descendants of Acadian exiles, as they adapted to their new home's physical and cultural environments."[350] The foundation document also describes the park's fundamental resources and values, which includes the "Cultural Lifeways of the Lower Mississippi River Delta," stating that the park "interprets and perpetuates cultural lifeways of Louisiana's Lower Mississippi River Delta Region. Such lifeways include language, food, music, art, and customs."[351]

Park managers have expressed interest in telling the broader story of how the area developed through

347. National Park Service, Amendment to the General Management Plan, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (Denver: Denver Service Center, 1995), 3.
348. Ibid., iv.
349. Ibid., iv.
350. "Foundation Document: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve" (Louisiana: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, April 2015), 6.
351. "Foundation Document: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve," 7.

the twentieth century to both make visible the history of the Wetlands Acadian Center's cultural landscape and relate the historic activities on the site to the broader cultural development of the area. These interests are further discussed in the Park Management Goals, Issues, and Concerns section below.

Laws, Regulations, and Functional Requirements

Applicable laws, regulations, and requirements that apply to the treatment recommendations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA, 1966).** This act mandates that federal agencies, including the NPS, take into account the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment.
- **Executive Order 11593: Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment (1971).** This executive order mandates that "the Federal Government shall provide leadership in preserving, restoring, and maintaining the historic and cultural environment of the Nation."[352] Responsibilities include nominating potentially eligible federal properties to the National Register and protecting those properties during their evaluation period, thoroughly documenting listed properties prior to major alteration or demolition, and ensuring the preservation / rehabilitation / or restoration of listed buildings in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's standards.[353]
- **Public Law 95-625: National Parks and Recreation Act of 1979, Title IX, Section 901 (1979)** authorized the establishment of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park.
- **Public Law 100-250 (1988)** amended P.L. 95-625 to authorize the establishment of "folklife centers in the Acadian region" of Louisiana and allowed for the acquisition of lands in "Acadian villages and towns" to be "maintained and operated as part of the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park."
- Under the terms of the 1988 donation of the property to the National Park Service, the Lafourche Parish Library retains rights to use the second floor through 2038.
- **Executive Order 13006: Locating Federal Facilities on Historic Properties (1996)** mandates that "the Federal Government shall utilize and maintain, wherever operationally appropriate and economically prudent, historic properties and districts." Furthermore, "any rehabilitation or construction that is undertaken pursuant to this order must be architecturally compatible with the character of the surrounding historic district or properties."[354]
- **Director's Order 28: National Park Service Cultural Resources Management Guideline (1998)** This order requires planning for the protection of cultural resources on park property.
- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties**, described below.

352. A copy of this E.O. can be found in the National Archives at https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/ executive- order/11593.html.

353. "Federal Register, Executive Orders," National Archives, May 13, 1971, https://www.archives.gov/federal register/codification/executive-order/11593.html.1971, appear at 36 FR 8921, 3 CFR, 1971-1975 Comp., p. 559, unless otherwise noted. By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and in furtherance of the purposes and policies of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 852, 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)

354. A copy of this agreement is located on the ACHP's website at http://www.achp.gov/EO13006.html.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes

Recommended treatments for the Percy-Lobdell Building and the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center cultural landscape are to be guided by *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects*.[355] Descriptions of the four standards are as follows:

> **Preservation** is "the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project."
>
> **Rehabilitation** is "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values."
>
> **Restoration** is "the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project."
>
> **Reconstruction** is "the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location."

Primary Landscape Treatment: Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is the appropriate overall treatment for the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Unit. Rehabilitation allows for flexibility in adapting the cultural landscape to meet modern management issues related to visitor use, interpretation, natural resource conservation, and maintenance. It also provides the NPS the flexibility needed for the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center to interpret different periods of development that better convey the complex history of the cultural landscape.

Treatment Period

The Percy-Lobdell Building is included in two National Register of Historic Places documents. The Percy-Lobdell Building was included as a contributing resource in a Multiple Resource Area entitled Historic Resources of Thibodaux, which was entered into the National Register of Historic Places on March 5, 1986 (NR 64000268).[356] A continuation sheet for the Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area) identified the Percy-Lobdell Building as a contributing resource in the areas of commerce and architecture (NR 86000431).[357] The Historic Resources of Thibodaux (Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area) established a period of significance extending from c.1850 to the 1920s. The continuation sheet on the Percy-Lobdell building only provides an approximate construction date—"c. 1900." For reasons provided below, this CLR recommends a period of significance of 1846-1921 for the Wetlands Acadian Center's landscape.

355. Weeks, Kay D. and Anne E. Grimmer. "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings." United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Heritage Preservation Services, Washington, DC, 1995.

356. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination Form for 'Historic Resources of Thibodaux' NRIS # 64000628, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73972656."

357. National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission for 'Percy-Lobdell Building' NRIS # 86000431, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/73972654.

The National Register of Historic Places considers the Percy-Lobdell Building historically significant because of its association with the commercial and industrial history of Thibodaux. The National Register nomination states, "the Percy-Lobdell building survives to represent the all-important warehousing aspect of the city's historic role as a commercial, service, and distribution center for Lafourche Parish."

The continuation sheet for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area that provides additional information on the Percy-Lobdell Building does discuss the cultural landscape as it relates to the building's historic significance. The continuation sheet reads in part: " Of the seven major warehouses shown on the 1916 [Sanborn] map, Percy-Lobdell is the only one remaining. Its pivotal role is very evident not only in its warehouse appearance but also in its location adjacent to Bayou Lafourche and a railroad line." A hand-drawn site map attached to the continuation sheet states "the boundaries were drawn to encompass the significant resource. Very importantly, they recognize its historical relationship with the bayou and railroad."[358]

As discussed in the previous chapters of this report, the site of the current Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center was a constantly evolving cultural landscape characterized by a mixture of industrial/commercial, transportation-related, and residential land uses. In the first decades following 1847, when the parcels that comprise the majority of the site were created, the study area featured a combination of residential and industrial uses, including several residences, a sawmill, and cooper's shop. Over time, industrial and commercial buildings spread across the site, typically sited to interact with St. Mary Street or the bayou and Public Road atop the bayou levee. At the time when the Percy-Lobdell Building was constructed around 1905-1906, the site area featured the Thibodaux Boiler Works, a foundry and machine shop, a market, five domestic buildings, multiple railroad tracks, and two train depots. By 1927, the site had three domestic buildings, a store, railroad depots, a scale track to the Percy-Lobdell Building, a large warehouse west of the Percy-Lobdell Building, smaller warehouses along the bayou, and the Gulf Oil Company bulk oil facility. The site continued to evolve in subsequent decades as outbuildings, additions, and smaller structures came and went, but the overall configuration of the site remained largely the same from the mid-1920s until the 1970s to early 1980s. After 1970, several buildings were either demolished or lost to fire, and the railroad line was formally abandoned. Between 1989-1996, the NPS removed most remaining historic features, leaving only the Percy-Lobdell Building.

The National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area established a period of significance of 1850-1920s in the multiple resource designation for Thibodaux probably because it aligned with the 50-year mark when the nomination was prepared in the 1980s. (Note that the continuation form for the Percy-Lobdell building only provided an approximate construction date—"c. 1900.") The Statement of Work (SOW) for this CLR suggests focusing on the period between the 1870s-1930s. This CLR recommends a period of significance of 1846-1921 for the Wetlands Acadian Center's landscape. This period of significance begins with creation of the parcels that form most of the study area and extends to 1921, when the Interstate Wholesale Grocers, Inc. purchased the Percy-Lobdell Company and before the Thibodaux Boiler Works facility was demolished.

This period of significance is appropriate for the site and building because it includes the platting of the site, the construction of the Percy-Lobdell Building (the only existing historically significant resource), the peak of the industrial/mix-use of the property (its National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) area of significance), and it conforms, mostly, to the existing NRHP period of significance for the Thibodaux Multiple Resource Area, which includes the Percy-Lobdell Building.

Park Management Goals, Issues, and Concerns

The SOW for this CLR includes the request to seek ways to "better evoke the rich history of the Percy-Lobdell site." It also states that "The park seeks in coming years to recapture the missing history of economic and cultural activities that characterized the site during the 1870s and 1930s, when Cajun culture was preeminent and a wide range of economic activities were hosted on the site." The SOW speaks to the modern site amenities that have

358. Ibid.

"obscured the history of the site" and requests that the desired treatment recommendations "would investigate and recommend a range of treatment alternatives to position the Percy-Lobdell Building to recapture its historic feeling and association."

The SOW also requests that the CLR establish a period of significance to guide interpretation of the site, acknowledging that the enabling legislation for the Acadian Cultural Centers did not do so.

As previously discussed in the Analysis and Evaluation chapter of this report, the site does not possess integrity to any historic period. Any attempt to "recreate" the historic landscape would therefore be a reconstruction. According to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Reconstruction, "Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of features from other historic properties." A reconstruction of the historic landscape would require a level of exact documentation that does not exist for this site—there is scant information documenting the now-missing buildings and it is doubtful if much archeological information survived the redevelopment of the property in the 1990s. Therefore, it requires interpretation to "recapture the missing history of economic and cultural activities that characterized the site."

The site's lack of historic integrity arguably frees the site's managers to interpret whatever period the NPS deems most useful for advancing the park unit's mission. The treatment period proposed in this CLR (1846-1921) would thus primarily relate to the preservation treatment of the Percy-Lobdell Building itself, but this period may also guide interpretation of the surrounding cultural landscape.

Treatment Philosophy

In the statement of work for this CLR, NPS staff presented several management concerns, discussed above, and requested strategies to make the historic landscape more legible. NPS staff requested that treatment recommendations allow the landscape to be more sympathetic to the historic context. Through the Analysis process of this CLR, it was determined that the cultural landscape does not possess integrity to the existing NRHP period of significance, the proposed period of significance (1846-1921), or to any other historic period. In light of these circumstances, the CLR team considered multiple treatment alternatives, discussed below.

Alternative 1: "Reconstruct site elements to recapture the Feeling and Association of the cultural landscape to the historic period"

This alternative reflects some of the treatment suggestions and requests made in the statement of work for this CLR.

This treatment alternative attempts to recreate the missing feeling and association of the historic cultural landscape in the built environment. This alternative reduces the recreational and cultural center amenities of the site in order to communicate the historic commercial/industrial context. To reflect the historic feeling and association of the industrial site, existing modern intrusions including the parking area, mature tree canopy, plaza, and boardwalk would be removed. The historic spatial organization of the site would be replicated through reconstruction. Updated museum exhibits in the building interior would begin with early Acadian history in the area, then lead visitors to outdoor exhibits that interpret the Acadian/Cajun story through the lens of the industrial/commercial history of the site.

During review of initial treatment recommendations submitted to NPS, this treatment alternative was not approved because the existing cultural landscape does not possess integrity and because there is not sufficient documentation or historic fabric remaining to accurately recreate the feeling and association of the historic landscape. Additionally, this alternative would reduce the functionality of the site as a

cultural center by removing site amenities. Thus, this alternative is not recommended.

Alternative 2 (Preferred): "Update the site's amenities to better serve the Acadian Culture Center purpose while making visible the missing history of commerce on the site"

This treatment alternative honors the intention for the Acadian Cultural Centers as established in the 1995 GMPA by optimizing the use of the site for cultural activities while utilizing modern technologies to communicate the significance of the site's commercial and industrial history. In this alternative, existing outdated and failing site facilities would be replaced with flexible outdoor gathering and recreational spaces that activate and renew the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center as a place of living cultural heritage conservation and celebration. Locals and visitors alike will have the opportunity to participate in cultural programming activities that illuminate both historic and contemporary expressions of local cultural groups.

As the cultural landscape has been heavily altered from the historic period and does not possess historic integrity, this alternative suggests that the park continue with the practice of modernizing the site to meet current management needs that began when NPS first redeveloped the site in the 1990s. The historic condition of the site could be interpreted within this contemporary landscape using a combination of updated museum exhibits, waysides, and augmented or virtual reality technologies to communicate the site's historic significance without sacrificing recreational, community, or environmental value.

Treatment Recommendations

The recommended treatment for the Percy-Lobdell Building / Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center is rehabilitation to accommodate its continued use by the NPS and the Thibodaux community. The following recommendations reflect the Treatment Philosophy outlined in Alternative 2, discussed above.

Museum & Site Interpretation Spatial Organization / Cluster Arrangement / Buildings & Structures

Percy-Lobdell Building

Restore and rehabilitate the Percy-Lobdell Building according to recent HSR recommendations. As recommended in the Percy-Lobdell Building HSR, remove the 1990's-era east building entrance and portico and relocate the primary building entrance to the north façade. In addition, remove the exterior fire escape stairs, relocating those facilities to the building interior if possible.

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Site

In concurrence with the rehabilitation of the Percy-Lobdell Building, commission a Landscape Architecture firm to create an updated site plan to improve visitor amenities (See Illustration 5.1). The proposed design should provide simplified and attractive outdoor gathering spaces that facilitate programming and interpretation. Several potential themes for an expanded interpretation program that addresses the cultural landscape and its evolution are listed below in the Suggested Implementation Projects section. Potential areas for redevelopment include the existing plaza, boardwalk and dock, and the former railroad area along W 1st Street.

The site is intended to be used as a cultural center, thus it is appropriate that the built environment facilitate this function to the greatest extent possible. As the historic landscape lacks integrity, there are no remaining historic cultural resources to consider in the planning and design of the space outside of the Percy-Lobdell Building. Incorporate a public input process to establish needs within the community.

Consider how the area north of the Percy-Lobdell Building could be redesigned to function as a primary building entrance, interpretive area, and programming space. Refer to Appendix A & B for a list of missing historic site features and historic images of the site for use in developing interpretive materials.

In addition, consider how existing programming functions could be better served with minimal facilities. For example, canoes are currently stored informally on a trailer on the west side of the Percy-Lobdell Building (Figure 5.1). The addition

Figure 5.1: Canoes are currently stored on a trailer in an informal area between the Percy-Lobdell Building and the performance center (Source: WLA Studio).

Figure 5.2: This pavement treatment clearly communicates the former rail alignment at this site in Atlanta, GA (Source: WLA Studio).

of a small shed close to the bayou edge could serve as covered storage for canoes and other vessels used for interpretive programs.

Circulation

Pedestrian Circulation

Activate Historic Building Entrances

Redirect visitors to the north side of Percy-Lobdell Building to activate a historic entrance into the building in accordance with the Percy-Lobdell Building HSR recommendations. Also consider utilizing the entrance on St. Mary Street to activate another historic entrance to the building.

Add Interpretive Walkway along Historic Rail Alignment

Using available documentation, extend the existing walkway at the northeast end of the site to follow the alignment of the former railroad spur that crossed through the site area. Remove the section of existing walkway that leads to the parking lot so the path more closely replicates the rail alignment. Use a pavement treatment such as stamped and dyed concrete to indicate the former railroad use (Figure 5.2). Utilize this circulation feature as an interpretive trail with signage describing former site features along the corridor. This would add approximately 410 feet of new walkway.

Figure 5.3: The north entry to the Percy-Lobdell Building is currently not the primary entry. The current circulation design obscures visibility of the building's former relationship to the bayou, view to southwest (Source: Google).

Figure 5.4: Converting the north building entrance to the primary entry and simplifying the plaza, boardwalk, and dock, improves the Percy-Lobdell Building's visual connection with the bayou, view to southwest (Source: WLA Studio).

Redesign North Entrance and Revegetate Plaza Area
Remove the plaza on the north side of the building as the pavement reaches the end of its lifespan and revegetate this area. This will reduce infrastructure maintenance costs and extend the naturalized informal outdoor area. Widen the entry walk on the north façade of the Percy-Lobdell Building to serve as the building's new primary entrance (Figure 5.3, Figure 5.4). Add park identity signage at the new primary entrance (Figure 5.4). Integrate this entry area with a new interpretive walkway aligned with the railroad corridor, see Illustration 5.1. Provide accessible ramps from the parking lot drop off area to the new entry walk. The area should be paved with a permeable paver or other porous surface to reduce stormwater runoff.

Redesign Boardwalk and Bayou Access
Redesign the boardwalk and dock to better illustrate the Percy-Lobdell Building's historic connection to Bayou Lafourche. Align the boardwalk with the north entrance of the building,

Figure 5.5: The existing boardwalk design clutters the view and access to the bayou along the north edge of the site, view to east (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 5.6: A conceptual sketch of a simplified boardwalk design with a cable railing for clearer views of the bayou, view to east (Source: WLA Studio, 2023).

simplifying the design to provide clear sightlines to the water. Create a clearer visual connection to the bayou by using a less visually obtrusive railing, such as a cable railing, that allows for visibility of the water's edge from within the site (Figure 5.5, Figure 5.6). Incorporate an ADA accessible ramp to bring visitors down to the water's edge. Build the dock around existing mature trees if possible to limit soil disturbance and retain shade trees.

Retain & Add to Existing Walkways
Maintain existing sidewalks within the site interior, repairing cracked and uneven surfaces to ensure accessibility. Add crosswalks where walkways intersect with vehicular traffic in the parking lot.

Add Pedestrian Facilities on W 1st Street
Consider working with the city of Thibodaux to extend curb and gutter, sidewalk, and streetscaping amenities along W 1st Street's right-of-way with appropriate crosswalks and accessible curb ramps at vehicular crossing points. This would add

Figure 5.7: Existing conditions at the corner of St. Mary Street and W 1st Street in the former location of the railroad tracks and depot, view to northwest (Source: Google Maps, 2023).

Figure 5.8: Conceptual rendering of signage, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements at the corner of St. Mary Street and W 1st Street, on the east side of the site, view to northwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2023).

approximately 450 feet of new pedestrian facilities (Refer to Illustration 5.1, Figure 5.7, Figure 5.8).

Improve & Add Pedestrian Facilities on St. Mary Street

Extend the existing sidewalk (which currently terminates in front of the Percy-Lobdell Building) to the corner of St. Mary Street and W 1st Street. Provide crosswalks and accessible curb ramps at vehicular crossing points. This would add approximately 250 feet of new pedestrian facilities (Refer to Illustration 5.1).

Vehicular Circulation

Existing Parking Lot

Maintain the existing parking lot configuration and vehicular circulation, with the exception of the westernmost parking aisle and north drive curb. Swap the locations of the visitor drop-off area (currently at the portico on the east facade) and the four accessible parking spaces, relocating the drop-off area to the new primary entrance at the north end of the building (Refer to Illustration 5.1). Add curb ramps and crosswalks to the existing curb on the northern end of the parking lot to accommodate a new interpretive path along the former railroad corridor alignment.

Figure 5.9: The existing boardwalk is overly complex and obscures views of the bayou, view to northwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

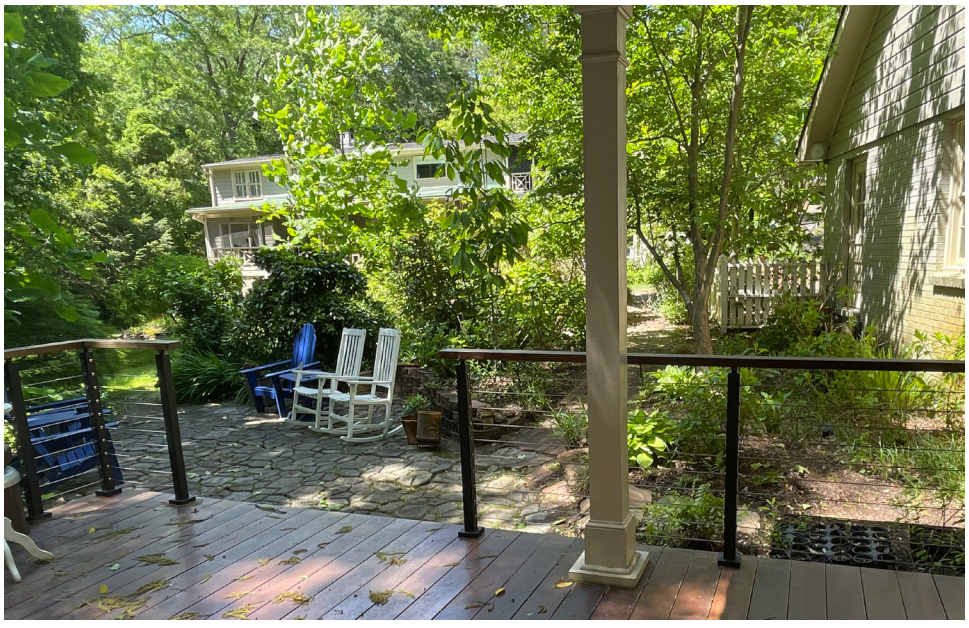

Figure 5.10: Cable railings provide clear sightlines while retaining safety benefits (Source: WLA Studio, 2023).

Views and Vistas

As suggested above, redesign the plaza and boardwalk areas to provide clearer views of the bayou from the Percy-Lobdell Building (Figure 5.9, Figure 5.10). Simplify the dock design and rebuild with less visually obtrusive railings to improve views of the bayou and St Patrick Bridge. Consider removing shrubs that limit views of the bayou from the north end of the parking lot. Remove exotic invasive plants from along the bayou edge to open views of the St Patrick Street Bridge. Consider removing the low-growing evergreen shrubs on the east side of parking lot to establish a visual connection with the eastern side of the property and provide views of the Percy-Lobdell Building from W 1st Street (Figure 5.11). Reduce visibility of the adjacent car wash property with screening trees and shrubs (Figure 5.12, Figure 5.13).

Natural systems and features

The natural systems and features of Louisiana have been heavily altered since European colonization of the area. The natural plant communities of the batture, natural levee, and backslopes of the Percy-Lobdell Building / Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center site were obliterated by artificial levee grading and development by the end of the historic period, as the site area became a highly developed urban industrial site. Nevertheless, replicating native plant communities along the bayou edge will both stabilize the existing slope while supporting local wildlife.

Preserve native trees planted during the 1990s development of the site. Protect tree root zones with appropriate tree protection fencing during any site improvement activities within the vicinity of existing trees. Retain the open viewshed and cultural vegetation near the existing boardwalk as a cultural amenity.

Along the overgrown portion of the northeast bayou edge, conduct selective removal of exotic invasive vegetation with skilled technicians, taking care to reduce soil disturbance as much as possible (Figure 5.14). For example, herbicide application techniques such as 'cut and paint' allow for targeted treatment of invasive species with no resultant soil disturbance. Species of particular concern in Louisiana include listed Tier I Invasive

Figure 5.11: Consider removing the screening shrubs from the east edge of the parking lot (indicated) to provide a visual connection to the eastern portion of the site, view to south (Source, WLA Studio, 2023).

Figure 5.12: Currently there is no visual buffer to the adjacent car wash facility, view to northwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 5.13: Simply adding a few evergreen screening trees such as Magnolia grandiflora, as shown here, helps improve the visitor experience of the site, view to northwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2023).

Figure 5.14: Exotic invasive vegetation has overtaken the bayou edge at the northeastern edge of the site. Selective removal of target species and replanting with native species would benefit the riparian corridor, view to southwest (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Species as established by the 2015 Louisiana Wildlife Action Plan (Table 5.1).[359] This publication defines Tier I species as "Currently having severe or widespread negative impacts on wildlife or natural communities in Louisiana. This includes species that have a limited distribution in the state, but that have severe impacts where found."[360] Both the Louisiana State Fish & Wildlife and the Tulane University Center for Bioenvironmental Research recommend herbicide application as the most appropriate treatment for several of these species, however recommended herbicide selection, application methods, and manual control methods will vary by species.[361] Consult with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries for best management practices for the target species and current guidance on herbicide selection and application rates. Develop a revegetation plan for this area using species native to Louisiana's natural levee zone (Table 5.2). Retain any existing mature native trees and noninvasive herbaceous and woody vegetation. Allow to grow in a dense matrix, stabilizing the bayou edge. Develop and implement a recurring monitoring and removal program to reduce the competitiveness of invasive exotic invasive vegetation on the site.

359. Samuel R. Holcomb et al., "Louisiana Wildlife Action Plan" (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, October 2015), 408.
360. Holcomb et al., "Louisiana Wildlife Action Plan," 408.
361. "Invasive Plants," Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, accessed January 25, 2023, chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/assets/Resources/Publications/Landowner_Assistance/Invasive_Plants_low-res.pdf., Tulane University Center for Bioenvironmental Research, "Invasive Species of Louisiana," Invasive Species of Louisiana, January 25, 2023, http://is.cbr.tulane.edu/index.html.

Table 5.1 Louisiana Tier I Invasive Species

Scientific Name	Common Name
Ardisia crenata	coral ardisia
Cinnamomum camphora	camphor tree
Colocasia esculenta	elephant ear
Cynodon dactylon	Bermuda grass
Deparia petersenii	Japanese twin-sorus fern
Dioscorea alata & D. bulbifera	air yam
Egeria densa	Brazilian waterweed
Eichhornia crassipes	water hyacinth
Firmiana simplex	Chinese parasol tree
Hydrilla verticillata	hydrilla or waterthyme
Imperata cylindrica	cogon grass
Iris pseudacorus	yellow flag iris
Ligustrum sinense	Chinese privet
Lygodium japonicum	Japanese climbing fern
Panicum repens	torpedo grass
Paspalum modestum	water paspalum
Paspalum urvillei	Vasey's grass
Poncirus trifoliata	trifoliate orange
Pueraria montana	kudzu
Rosa racteate	McCartney rose
Rosa laevigata	Cherokee rose
Salvinia minima	common salvinia
Salvinia molesta	giant salvinia
Sporobolus indicus	smut grass
Triadica sebifera	Chinese tallow tree
Vernicia fordii	tungoil tree

Table 5.1: Tier 1 listed invasive vegetation species in the state of Louisiana as defined by the 2015 Louisiana Wildlife Action Plan. Source: Holcomb, Samuel R., Amity A. Bass, Christopher S. Reid, Michael A. Seymour, Nicole F. Lorenz, Beau B. Gregory, Sairah M. Javed, and Kyle F. Balkum. 2015. Louisiana Wildlife Action Plan. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Table 5.2 Plants Native to Louisiana's Natural Levee Zone

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Form
Ferns & Forbs		
Boltonia asteroides	white doll's daisy	forb
Conoclinum coelestium	blue mistflower	forb
Equisetum hyemale	scouring rush horsetail	fern
Hypericum hypericoides	St Andrew's cross	forb
Hypericum mutilum	dwarf St John's wort	forb
Rudbeckia laciniata	cutleaf coneflower	forb
Salvia lyrata	lyreleaf sage	forb
Sisyrinchium angustifolium	narrowleaf blue-eyed grass	forb
Sisyrinchium atlanticum	eastern blue-eyed grass	forb
Smallanthus uvedalius	bear's foot	forb
Solidago caesia	wreath goldenrod	forb
Symphyotrichum lateriflorum	calico aster	forb
Tradescantia ohiensis	bluejacket	forb
Tradescantia virginiana	Virginia spiderwort	forb
Vernonia gigantea	giant ironweed	forb
Grasses, Sedges, & Rushes		
Andropogon glomeratus	bushy bluestem	grass
Carex cherokeensis	Cherokee sedge	sedge
Carex flaccosperma	thinfruit sedge	sedge
Carex vulpinoidea	fox sedge	sedge
Chasmanthium latifolium	Indian woodoats	grass
Dichanthelium commutatum	variable panicgrass	grass
Dichanthelium scoparium	velvet panicum	grass
Juncus effusus	common rush	rush
Saccharum giganteum	sugarcane plumegrass	grass
Shrubs & Small Trees		
Aesculus pavia	red buckeye	shrub-small tree
Asimina triloba	pawpaw	shrub-small tree
Cornus drummondii	roughleaf dogwood	shrub-small tree
Cornus foemina	stiff dogwood	shrub-small tree

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Form
Crataegus viridis	green hawthorn	shrub-small tree
Ilex decidua	deciduous holly	shrub-small tree
Lindera benzoin	northern spicebush	shrub
Morella cerifera	wax myrtle	shrub-small tree
Sabal minor	dwarf palmetto	shrub
Styrax americanus	American snowbell	shrub
Vaccinium elliottii	summer huckleberry	shrub
Trees		
Acer negundo	boxelder	tree
Acer rubrum	red maple	tree
Betula nigra	river birch	tree
Carpinus caroliniana	ironwood	tree
Carya illinoinensis	pecan	tree
Carya laciniosa	shellbark hickory	tree
Catalpa bignoniodes	southern catalpa	tree
Celtis laevigata	hackberry	tree
Diospyros virginiana	persimmon	tree
Gleditsia triacanthos	honeylocust	tree
Ilex opaca	American holly	tree
Liquidambar styraciflua	sweetgum	tree
Morus rubra	red mulberry	tree
Populus deltoides	eastern cottonwood	tree
Ptelea trifoliata	hopwafer	tree
Quercus michauxii	cow oak	tree
Quercus phellos	willow oak	tree
Quercus texana	Nuttall oak	tree
Quercus virginiana	live oak	tree
Ulmus americana	American elm	tree
Ulmus rubra	slippery elm	tree
Vines		
Cocculus carolinus	Carolina coralbead	vine-herbaceous
Clematis crispa	swamp leather flower	vine-herbaceous
Clematis virginiana	devil's darning needles	vine-herbaceous

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Form
Mikania scandens	climbing hempvine	vine-woody
Passiflora incarnata	purple passionflower	vine-herbaceous
Passiflora lutea	yellow passionflower	vine-herbaceous
Rubus argutus	sawtooth blackberry	vine-woody
Vitus riparia	riverbank grape	vine-woody
Vitus rotundifolia	muscadine	vine-woody

Table 5.2: Native species of Louisiana's natural levee zone grouped by plant form. Adapted from Early, Brian Sean. "List of Vascular Flora of Louisiana-Identified in the Wholesale Nursery Trade." Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. Last updated May 26, 2020. https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/resources/category/plantsand-natural-communities. See document titled "A Table of Louisiana Native Garden Landscapes by Region" for complete table.

Vegetation

Coordinate the treatment of existing vegetation and new plantings with site changes proposed in other treatment sections. Anticipated vegetation treatment needs are outlined below.

Existing Vegetation

- Retain mature trees and healthy shrubs planted during the 1990s site renovation.
- Replace failing turf under mature trees with mulch.
- Remove any priority exotic invasive plants as well as failing, leggy, or overgrown shrubs from within parking area, around building entrances and plaza area planting beds (Table 5.1).
- Reconfigure planting beds alongside other suggested site improvements. These changes will likely necessitate the removal of the Chinese elms (*Ulmus chinensis*) and other vegetation from within the raised planter beds in the plaza area. Transplant dwarf palmettos (*Sabal minor*) from raised beds to bayou edge or other planting beds.
- Attempt to incorporate existing trees into any redesign of circulation features. Protect mature canopy trees on site from root disturbance during any reconfiguration of site features.

New Vegetation

- Refresh plantings in existing bed spaces with native flowering shrubs and herbaceous plants for seasonal interest (Figure 5.15).
- Emphasize the north building entrance (proposed as new primary building entrance) with attractive plantings including a palette of native flowering shrubs and herbaceous plants for seasonal interest.
- Add screening shrubs on the west side of the property to reduce visibility of the adjacent car wash and provide a more intimate experience for visitors.
- Add streetscaping vegetation along Art Steet to soften the windowless performance center façade (Figure 5. 16, Figure 5. 17).
- Add streetscaping including street trees and understory vegetation alongside the sidewalk and curb additions proposed on St. Mary Street and W 1st Street to improve the pedestrian experience along the right-of-way.
- Suggested species for all new plantings include species associated with the Bottomland Hardwood Forest type, a forest type associated with "broad floodplain areas flanking large river systems", or species associated with Louisiana's natural levee zone (Table 5.2, Table 5.3).[362] These plant communities have several common species.
- Ensure designs for new plantings are selected following a site analysis of specific environmental conditions such as sun/shade, soil type, microclimate, and other considerations.

362. "Bottomland Hardwood Forest Fact Sheet," Natural Communities of Louisiana (Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, n.d.), https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/resources/category/plants-and-natural-communities/natural-communities-fact-sheets.

Figure 5.15: Planting beds near building entrances would benefit from a simple refresh. Replacing edging with one type, selective weeding, and infill planting with attractive native flowering species would all improve the visitor experience, view to northeast (Source: WLA Studio, 2020).

Figure 5.16: The west façade of the performance center on Art Street is a large blank wall lacking landscape plantings and shade trees along the sidewalk, view to northeast (Source: Google Maps, 2023).

Figure 5.17: Continuing the row of trees along the street edge helps lessen the visual impact of the large performance center building while providing shade for the sidewalk along St. Mary Street, view to northeast (Source: WLA Studio, 2023).

Table 5.3 Plants Native to Louisiana's Bottomland Forests

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Form
Ferns & Forbs		
Amorpha fruticosa	false indigo bush	forb
Asclepias incarnata	swamp milkweed	forb
Asclepias perennis	aquatic milkweed	forb
Bacopa monnieri	herb of grace	forb
Boltonia asteroides	white doll's daisy	forb
Conoclinum coelestium	blue mistflower	forb
Echinodorus cordifolius	creeping burhead	forb
Equisetum hyemale	Scouring rush horsetail	fern
Hibiscus laevis	halberdleaf rosemallow	forb
Hibiscus moscheutos	crimsoneyed rosemallow	forb
Hymenocallis liriosme	spring spiderlily	forb
Hypericum hypericoides	St Andrew's cross	forb
Hypericum mutilum	dwarf St John's wort	forb
Iris brevicaulis	zigzag iris	forb
Iris fulva	copper iris	forb
Iris giganticaerulea	giant blue iris	forb
Iris hexagona	Dixie iris	forb
Iris virginica	Virginia iris	forb
Lobelia cardinalis	cardinal flower	forb
Lobelia siphilitica	great blue lobelia	forb
Lythrum alatum	winged lythrum	forb
Mimulus ringens	Allegheny monkeyflower	forb
Onoclea sensibilis	sensitive fern	fern
Peltandra virginica	green arrow arum	forb
Phyla nodiflora	turkey tangle frogfruit	forb
Polygonatum punctatum	dotted smartweed	forb
Polygonatum virginianum	jumpseed	forb
Polygonum hydropiperoides	swamp smartweed	forb
Pontedaria cordata	pickerelweed	forb
Rudbeckia laciniata	cutleaf coneflower	forb
Sagittaria graminea	grassleaf arrowhead	forb
Sagittaria lancifolia	bulltongue arrowhead	forb
Sagittaria latifolia	broadleaf arrowhead	forb
Salvia coccinea	blood sage	forb
Saururus cernuus	lizard's tail	forb
Smallanthus uvedalius	bear's foot	forb
Solidago caesia	wreath goldenrod	forb

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Form
Symphyotrichum lateriflorum	calico aster	forb
Teucrium canadense	Canada germander	forb
Tradescantia virginiana	Virginia spiderwort	forb
Triadenum virginicum	Virginia marsh St John's wort	forb
Vernonia gigantea	giant ironweed	forb
Woodwardia areolata	netted chainfern	fern
Woodwardia virginica	Virginia chainfern	fern
Grasses, Sedges, & Rushes		
Andropogon glomeratus	bushy bluestem	grass
Carex cherokeensis	Cherokee sedge	sedge
Carex flaccosperma	thinfruit sedge	sedge
Carex glaucescens	southern waxy sedge	sedge
Carex joorii	cypress swamp sedge	sedge
Carex vulpinoidea	fox sedge	sedge
Chasmanthium latifolium	Indian woodoats	grass
Dichanthelium commutatum	variable panicgrass	grass
Dichanthelium scoparium	velvet panicum	grass
Juncus effusus	common rush	rush
Saccharum giganteum	sugarcane plumegrass	grass
Shrubs & Small Trees		
Cephalanthus occidentalis	common buttonbush	shrub-small tree
Cornus drummondii	roughleaf dogwood	shrub-small tree
Cornus foemina	stiff dogwood	shrub-small tree
Crataegus viridis	green hawthorn	shrub-small tree
Forestiera acuminata	eastern swamp privet	shrub-small tree
Ilex decidua	deciduous holly	shrub-small tree
Itea virginica	Virginia sweetspire	shrub
Lindera benzoin	northern spicebush	shrub
Morella cerifera	wax myrtle	shrub-small tree
Sabal minor	dwarf palmetto	shrub
Sambucus nigra	elderberry	shrub-small tree
Styrax americanus	American snowbell	shrub
Vaccinium elliottii	summer huckleberry	shrub
Trees		
Acer negundo	boxelder	tree
Acer rubrum	red maple	tree
Carpinus caroliniana	ironwood	tree

Scientific Name	Common Name	Plant Form
Carya aquatica	water hickory	tree
Carya laciniosa	shellbark hickory	tree
Celtis laevigata	hackberry	tree
Diospyros virginiana	persimmon	tree
Fraxinus caroliniana	Carolina ash	tree
Fraxinus pennsylvanica	green ash	tree
Gleditsia aquatica	water locust	tree
Gleditsia triacanthos	honey locust	tree
Ilex opaca	American holly	tree
Liquidambar styraciflua	sweetgum	tree
Nyssa aquatica	water tupelo	tree
Nyssa biflora	swamp blackgum	tree
Pinus glabra	spruce pine	tree
Pinus taeda	loblolly pine	tree
Planera aquatica	planer tree	tree
Platanus occidentalis	American sycamore	tree
Quercus laurifolia	laurel oak	tree
Quercus lyrata	overcup oak	tree
Quercus phellos	willow oak	tree
Quercus michauxii	cow oak	tree
Quercus similis	bottomland post oak	tree
Quercus texana	Nuttall oak	tree
Salix nigra	black willow	tree
Taxodium distichum	bald cypress	tree
Ulmus americana	American elm	tree
Vines		
Mitchella repens	patridgeberry	vine-herbaceous
Mikania scandens	climbing hempvine	vine-woody
Rubus argutus	sawtooth blackberry	vine-woody
Vitus rotundifolia	muscadine	vine-woody

Table 5.3: Native species of Louisiana's Bottomland Hardwood Forests grouped by plant form. Adapted from Early, Brian Sean. "List of Vascular Flora of Louisiana-Identified in the Wholesale Nursery Trade." Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. Last updated May 26, 2020. https://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/resources/category/plantsand-natural-communities. See document titled "A Table of Louisiana Native Garden Landscapes by Region" for complete table.

Small Scale Features

Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the exterior lighting plan and fixtures- spotlights, parking lights, and exterior building lights. Several 1990s-era fixtures are missing or broken (Figure 5. 18). Consider replacing aging fixtures with LED alternatives. Consider updating other site furnishings including seating and waste receptacles. See design guidelines suggested on Illustration 5.2. Update Identity signage to reflect current NPS signage standards and more clearly identify the park unit (Figure 5.7, Figure 5.8). See Illustration 5.1 for suggested signage locations.

Figure 5.18: Several in-ground light fixtures have been damaged and/or removed since their installation in the early 1990s, view to south in the main parking lot (Source: WLA Studio).

Recommendations for Further Research

- Update to the General Management Plan to further define the role of Cultural Center Units
- Long-Range Interpretive Plan
- Thematic Studies
- Site redevelopment plan
- Riparian Vegetation Management Plan

Suggested Implementation Projects

The following is a summary of the suggested CLR treatment recommendations outlined above. The project statement of work states that the report will include implementation projects "similar to the Government's Project Management Information System (PMIS), including Project Title, narrative fields for Project Description, Justification and Measurable Results."

Make Visible Historic Spatial Organization

- Update, simplify, and reduce area of boardwalk, pier, and plaza space to strengthen the connection between the Percy-Lobdell Building and the bayou and former railroad alignment

Update Interpretive Program to Relate Site History to Broader Regional Themes

- Develop a Long-Range Interpretive Plan for the park unit
- Conduct thematic studies to inform the interpretive approach
- Redesign site interpretation program to tell the broader story of the industrial development of Thibodaux and the site area
- Provide interpretation of the role of the railroad in the region's development and its role in the industrial use of this site
- Provide interpretation of use of bayou during the historic period. Interpretation can include topics such as boat traffic along the bayou and its role in the economic and cultural development of the region and site area
- Provide interpretation of agriculture in the region and the story of the region's evolution from small farmers to plantations
- Create an interpretive trail along the historic rail alignment to interpret missing site features, see Appendix A & B for a list of missing historic structures and historic images of the site to guide interpretation

Improve Visitor Experience and Arrival Sequence

- Remove east entry portico in accordance with HSR recommendations
- Create new primary entry area at rear entrance of building
- Refresh landscape plants in bed spaces
- Remove and manage invasive species along bayou corridor
- Update park identity signage and remove outdated signage
- Update site furnishings, lighting fixtures, and other site elements
- Add screening trees along the western property boundary to Art Street & St. Mary Street

Improve Pedestrian Amenities

- Add sidewalk and streetscaping along W 1st Street
- Add curb cuts and crosswalks at pedestrian crossings on roadways
- Extend existing walkway into site and use as an interpretive trail

Rehabilitate Riparian Edge

- Remove exotic invasive species along bayou frontage
- Stabilize bayou edge
- Revegetate with appropriate native species
- Monitor and control invasive species

BAYOU LAFOURCHE

Remove invasive exotic vegetation along bayou edge

Update & simplify boardwalk and pier on axis with Percy Lobdell building to provide better views and access to bayou

Add small shed for canoe storage

LOWER LEVEL
RAMP
UPPER LEVEL

Create new primary entry area to activate historic entrance to Percy Lobdell building

Add updated park identity signage visible to pedestrian & vehicular traffic

Add curb cuts and crosswalks along drive to accommodate interpretive path

Extend interpretive trail to existing walkway

Add interpretive trail/walkway w/ R.R. pavement treatment along historic rail alignment

Add screening trees

Remove section of existing walkway

Add updated park identity signage

PERCY-LOBDELL BUILDING

Add streetscaping to improve pedestrian experience

W 1ST STREET

Remove plaza & revegetate area

Reconfigure drop-off area & accessible parking

AUDITORIUM

Remove portico per HSR rec.

Remove outdated library signage

Remove understory screening vegetation to open views across site

Add sidewalk along ROW with crosswalks at vehicular crossings

Add updated park identity signage

Activate historic entrance on St Mary Street

Update park identity signage

Add crosswalks at vehicular crossings

ST. MARY STREET

North

0' 50' 100'

Key

- PROPOSED BUILDING/ STRUCTURE
- PROPOSED PLAZA
- PROPOSED BOARDWALK & DOCK
- PROPOSED PLANTING SPACE
- PROPOSED TREES
- PROPOSED CROSSWALKS
- EXISTING WALKWAYS & SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED WALKWAYS & SIDEWALK

Credits:

1. WLA Studio
2. Google Earth, 2022

Illustration 5.1

Treatment Plan
Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Jean Lafitte National Historic Park & Preserve
Cultural Landscape Report
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Metal Bench Seating

Trees on grade in plaza

Outdoor Lighting

Waste Receptacle

Slate-look Permeable Paver

Bike Rack

Illustration 5.2

Design Guidelines- Materials

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

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Appendix A

Cultural Landscape Features

Natural Systems and Features

- Bayou Lafourche
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Terrain and Soils
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Ecoregion and Native Ecology
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Regional Fauna
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Regional Climate
    - Contribution status: Contributing

Topography

- Natural Bayou
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Natural Levee
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Constructed Levee
    - Date of Origin: c.1817-c.1912-16
    - Contribution status: Missing

Spatial Organization

- Percy-Lobdell Building
    - Date of Origin: ca.1905
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- St Mary Street at south of site
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1846
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Art Street at west of site (former Ice/Guion Street)
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1846
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Curve of W 1st Street following historic railroad alignment
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1960
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Bayou Lafourche at northern site boundary
    - Date of Origin: ca. 600 CE
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Parking Lot
    - Date of Origin: 1992
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Plaza, Lawn, & Boardwalk
    - Date of Origin: 1992
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Eastern road frontage and multi-use path
    - Date of Origin: 1992, 2012
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing

Missing Spatial Organization

- Long Lot Parcel Boundaries
    - Date of Origin: 1785-1846
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Guion Lot boundaries
    - Date of Origin: 1846-1927
    - Contribution status: Missing
- 12 Individual Parcels
    - Date of Origin:1927-1990s
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Earthen Levee and Public Road
    - Date of Origin: 1817-1905
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Bayou edge railroad alignment
    - Date of Origin: 1898/1907-1990s
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Church Street railroad alignment
    - Date of Origin: 1878-1910s
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Industries along railroad, levee, and Bayou Lafourche
    - Date of Origin: 1846-1980s
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Residential homes and yards on St Mary Street
    - Date of Origin: 1898-1994
    - Contribution status: Missing

Land Use

- Outdoor Recreation/tourism
    - Date of Origin: 1992
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Institutional
    - Date of Origin: 1982
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing

Missing Land Use

- Farming
  - Date of Origin: 1785-1846
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Industry/Commerce
  - Date of Origin: 1846-1989
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Residential
  - Date of Origin: 1785-1989
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Boat/Rail Transportation
  - Date of Origin: 1878-1980s
  - Contribution status: Missing

Cultural Traditions

- Outdoor Recreation
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Historic Preservation
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Historic Interpretation
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Preforming Arts
  - Date of Origin: 1987
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing

Missing Cultural Traditions

- Subsistence Farming
  - Date of Origin: 1785-1808
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Sugar Plantation Farming
  - Date of Origin: 1842-1846
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Sugar Refining Industry Production
  - Date of Origin: 1873-1920
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Railroad Commerce and Transportation
  - Date of Origin: 1878-1970s
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Bayou Commerce
  - Date of Origin: 1785-1970s
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Warehousing
  - Date of Origin: 1905-1975
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Residences
  - Date of Origin: 1785-1989
  - Contribution status: Missing

Cluster Arrangement

Missing Cluster Arrangements

- Hogan Boiler Shops and Foundry / W.H. Ragan Foundry & Machine Shop / Thibodaux Boiler Works Complex
  - Date of Origin: 1873-1920
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Grocery Complex
  - Date of Origin: 1905-1970s?
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Gulf Oil Complex
  - Date of Origin: 1920-1989
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Southern Pacific Railroad Complex
  - Date of Origin: 1878-1970s
  - Contribution status: Missing

Circulation

- St Mary Street
  - Date of Origin: 1846
  - Contribution status: Contributing
- Art Street (former Ice/Guion Street
  - Date of Origin: 1846
  - Contribution status: Contributing
- W 1st Street along historic railroad alignment
  - Date of Origin: 1960
  - Contribution status: Contributing
- Parking Lot & Drive Lanes
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Concrete Sidewalks
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Multi-use Path
  - Date of Origin: 2012
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Concrete Plaza
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Composite Boardwalk and Pier
  - Date of Origin: 2000s
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing

- Eastern Portico Entrance
    - Date of Origin: 1992
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Informal Parking along W 1st Street
    - Date of Origin: 1990s
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing

Missing Circulation

- Public Road on Constructed Levee
    - Date of Origin: pre-1846-1905
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Railroad Alignment following W 1st St
    - Date of Origin: 1878-1990s
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Spur on Church St R.O.W. to Engine House
    - Date of Origin: 1878-1912/1916
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Levee Track Alignment on Bayou
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1898-1907-1990s
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Scale Track to Percy-Lobdell Building
    - Date of Origin: 1919-1990s
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company Boardwalk and Loading Dock on Bayou
    - Date of Origin: 1916-1926
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company boardwalk on West Building Façade
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1905-1920
    - Contribution status: Missing

Vegetation

- Site Plantings
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Naturalized Vegetation at Bayou Edge
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Grassy Area along W 1st Street frontage
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing

Buildings and Structures

- Percy-Lobdell Building (historic portion)
    - Date of Origin: 1905-Present
    - Contribution status: Contributing
- Percy-Lobdell Auditorium Addition
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Percy-Lobdell Portico Addition
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Composite Boardwalk
    - Date of Origin: 2000s
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Concrete Plaza and Raised Brick Planters
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Asphalt Parking Lot, Curb & Gutter
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Concrete Pads and Walkways
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Site Utilities
    - Date of Origin: 1992-Present
    - Contribution status: Non-contributing

Missing Buildings and Structures

- Guilaume & Marguerite Hamon House
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1785-1808?
    - Contribution status: Missing

Lot 205

- Anderson House on Lot 205
    - Date of Origin: 1847-1904/1905
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Anderson Foundry/Cooperage on Lot 205
    - Date of Origin: 1847-1898
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Bakery/Residence on Lot 205
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1898-1910
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Residence on Lot 205
    - Date of Origin: ca.1898-1906
    - Contribution status: Missing

- Stable/Warehouse on Lot 205
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1910-mid 1970s
    - Contribution status: Missing

Lot 204

- Sawmill
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1848-1855
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Residence/Store
    - Date of Origin: ca.1855-1868
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Residence facing Levee Public Road
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1898-1904
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Residence facing St Mary Street
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1898-1904
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company Stable/Shed on Bayou
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1907-1950s+
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company Ramp to Bayou
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1907-1915
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company Feed/Lime and Feed Warehouse on Bayou
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1916-1931
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company North Awning
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1916-1931
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company boardwalk on West Building Façade
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1905-1920
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company Platform West of Building
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1927-1932
    - Contribution status: Missing

Lots 203 & 200

- Residence on Lot 203-200 (Octave Blanchard/Hogan House, unknown if same structure or different structures)
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1860-1927/1930
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Hogan Boiler Shops and Foundry / W.H. Ragan Foundry & Machine Shop / Thibodaux Boiler Works Complex
    - Date of Origin: 1873-1905
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Rebuilt Thibodaux Boiler Works Complex
    - Date of Origin: 1905-1920
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell company Platform on Bayou
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1916-1926
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Percy-Lobdell Company Oil/Gasoline Warehouse on Bayou
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1916-1970s?
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Stock Pen
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1898-1905
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Gulf Oil Complex (Warehouse, Garage, Fuel Oil Tanks)
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1927-1989
    - Contribution status: Missing

Lot 202

- Residence on Lot 202
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1848-?
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Frame Residence on Lot 202 (109-06)
    - Date of Origin: 1907-1969
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Brick Residence on Lot 202 (109-06)
    - Date of Origin: 1970-1989
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Fruit Warehouse on Lot 202 (109-06)
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1903-1969, replaced 1970s-1989
    - Contribution status: Missing

Lot 201

- Residence on Lot 201
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1848-1898
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Tin Shop/Meat Market/Store at corner of Church & St Mary Streets (parcel 109-08)
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1898-1970
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Residence on Lot 201 (parcel 109-07), possibly moved to parcel 109-08 in 1970s
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1907-1970
    - Contribution status: Missing
- Transformer (parcel 109-07)
    - Date of Origin: ca. 1970s-1989
    - Contribution status: Missing

Church St R.O.W./Lots 164, 163, 157

- Morgan's LA & Texas Railroad and Steamship Boiler
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1878-1905
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Morgan's LA & Texas Railroad and Steamship Engine House/Southern Pacific R.R. Engine House
  - Date of Origin: 1878-1905
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Morgan's LA & Texas Railroad and Steamship Engine Depot/Southern Pacific R.R. Passenger/Freight/Express Depot
  - Date of Origin: 1878-mid 1970s
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Southern Pacific Passenger Depot
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1905-1940
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Dwelling/Restaurant near Jackson Street Bridge
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1905-1921
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Two Residential/Commercial Buildings at Northeast end of Site
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1905-1914
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Freight Shed
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1921-1950+
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Gasoline Generator
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1930-1950+
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Thibodaux Boiler Works Repair Shop
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1940-1994
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Drexel Motor Company Pump House
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1940-1996
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Concrete Plant /Loading Facility
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1940-1996
  - Contribution status: Missing

Views and Vistas

- Limited Views into Site from Perimeter
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Limited Views across the Site Interior
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Views of Bayou Lafourche from Batture
  - Date of Origin: ca. 1900
  - Contribution status: Contributing

Missing Views and Vistas

- Open Viewshed along R.R. Alignment
  - Date of Origin: 1878-1990s
  - Contribution status: Missing

Small-Scale Features

- Signage
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Monuments and Markers
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Flagpoles
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Benches
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing
- Lighting
  - Date of Origin: 1992
  - Contribution status: Non-contributing

Missing Small-Scale Features

- Stock Pen
  - Date of Origin: 1898-1905
  - Contribution status: Missing
- Fencing around Individual Parcels
  - Date of Origin: 1898-1980s
  - Contribution status: Missing

Archeological Sites

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Appendix B

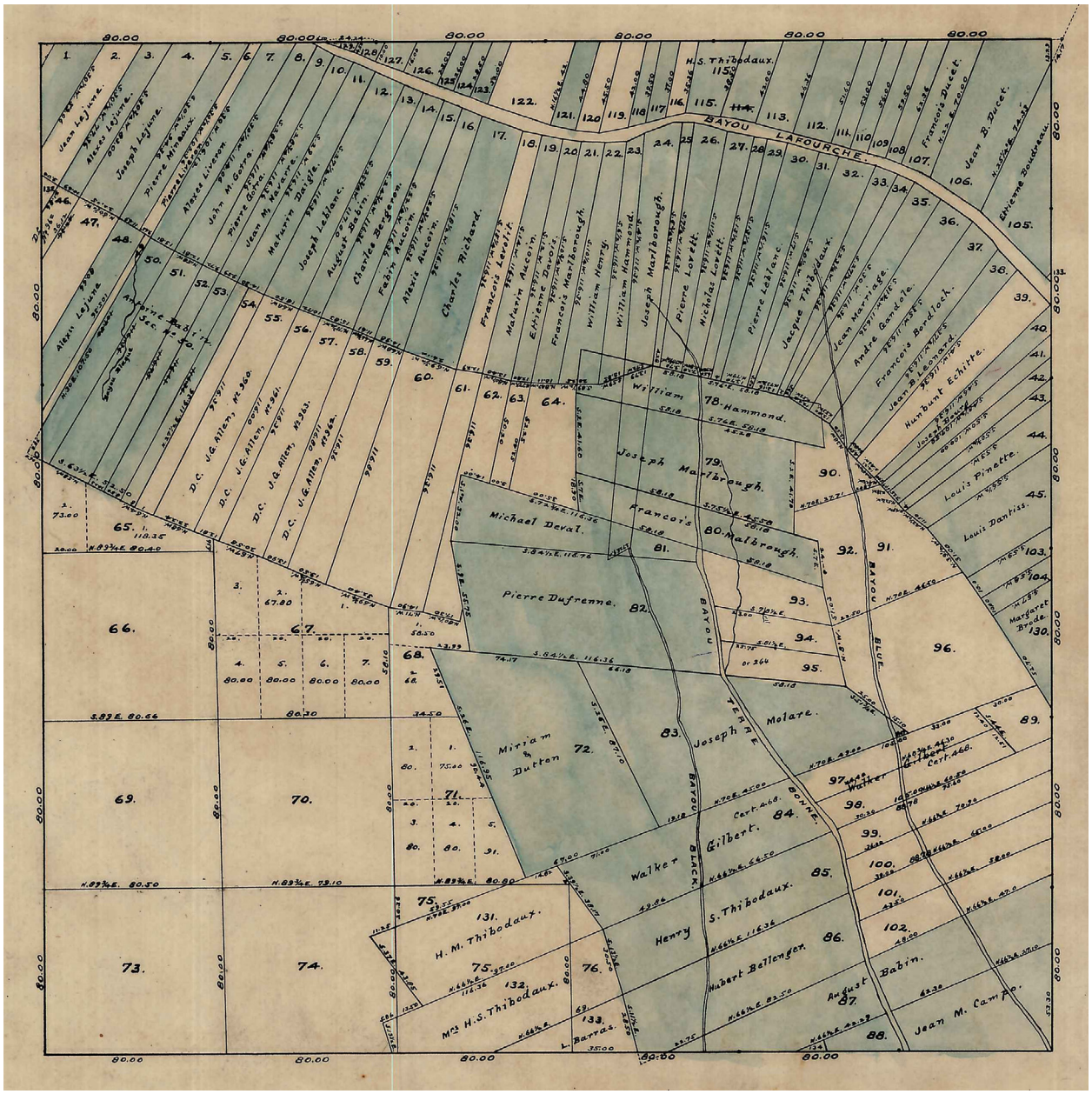

Figure B.1: Portion of an 1830 plat map illustrating the long lot system of land ownership along Bayou Lafourche. Joseph Marlborough and William Hammond (Guillaume Hamon) are the landowners in the area that would become western downtown Thibodaux (Source: 1830 Plat, Township 15S Range 16E, Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of State Lands).

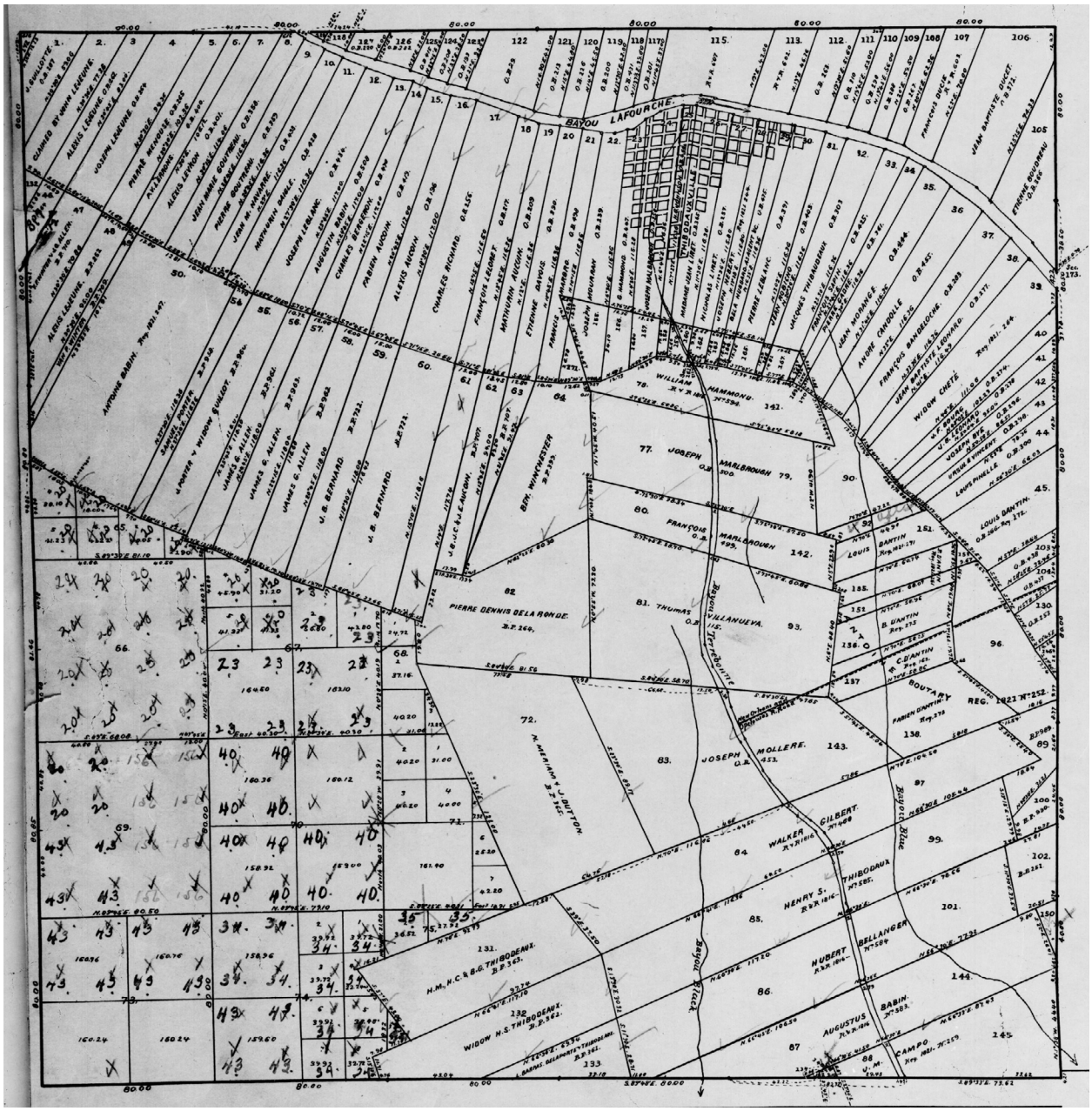

Figure B.2: Portion of an 1856 plat map of the recently laid out town of Thibodaux, LA (Source: 1856 Plat, Township 15S Range 16E, Louisiana Division of Administration, Office of State Lands).

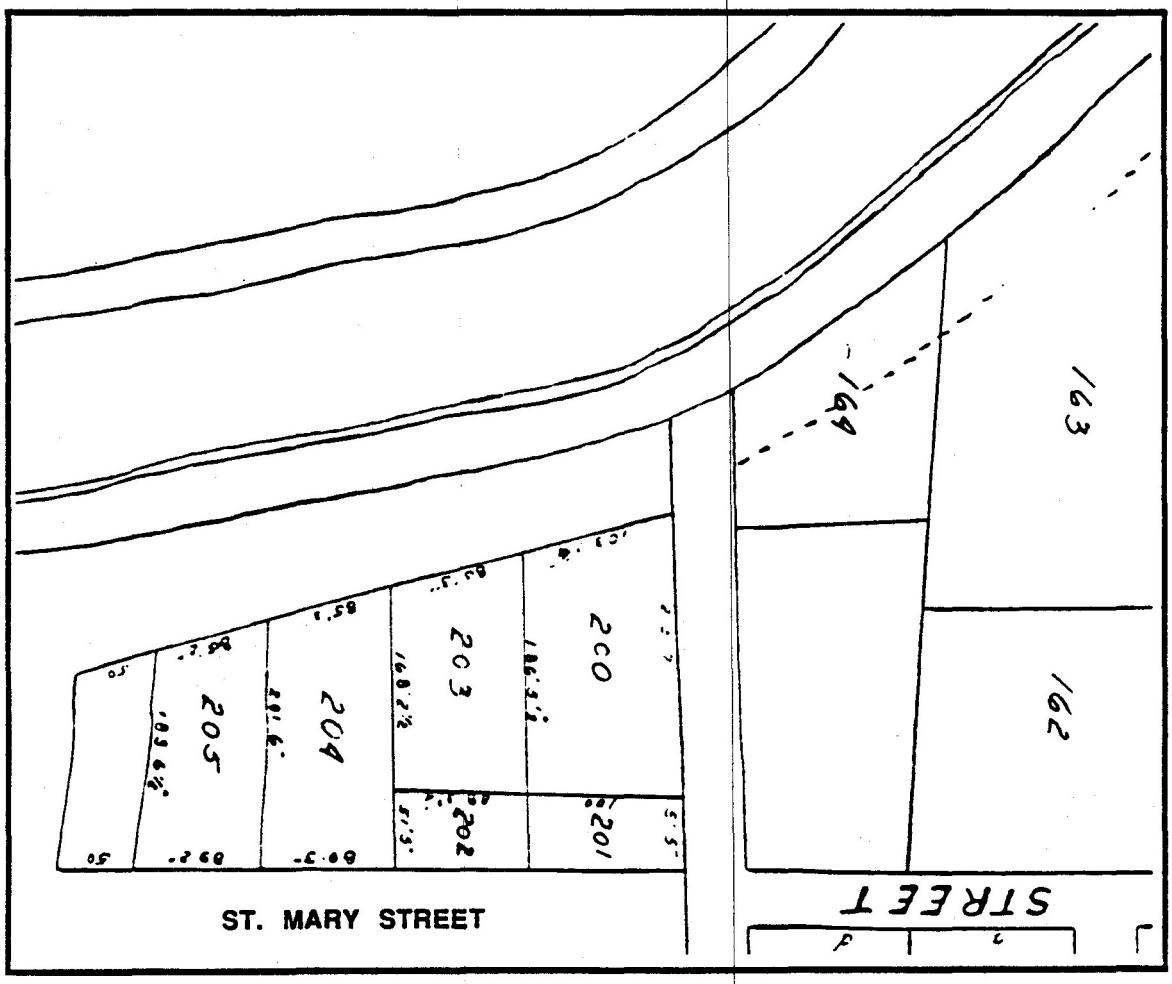

Figure 13. Portion of James B. Grinnage's 1846 map of Thibodaux, as copied by J.A. Lovell, showing the original lot layout in the project area (Lafo. Par. Court House).

Figure B.3: 1846 map depicting the original lot layout of the site. Included in the site area are lots 205-200 and lot 164 (Source: Hahn, *Historical and Archeological Investigations*).

Figure B.4: This ca. 1915 image of the Thibodaux Boiler Works complex may have been the building located on site, however this cannot be verified by available documentation (Source: William Littlejohn Martin Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA).

Figure B.5: Undated image of the small Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, passenger rail, and stock pen ca. 1899-1907 at the northeastern end of the site area (Source: State Library of Louisiana).

Figure B.6: Undated image (ca. 1893-1906) of the Southern Pacific Railroad Passenger & Freight Depot, and the engine house. The steam locomotive is identified as "Morgan LA & Texas R.R." Southern Pacific had been leasing the Morgan Louisiana & Texas line since 1885 (Source: William Littlejohn Martin Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA).

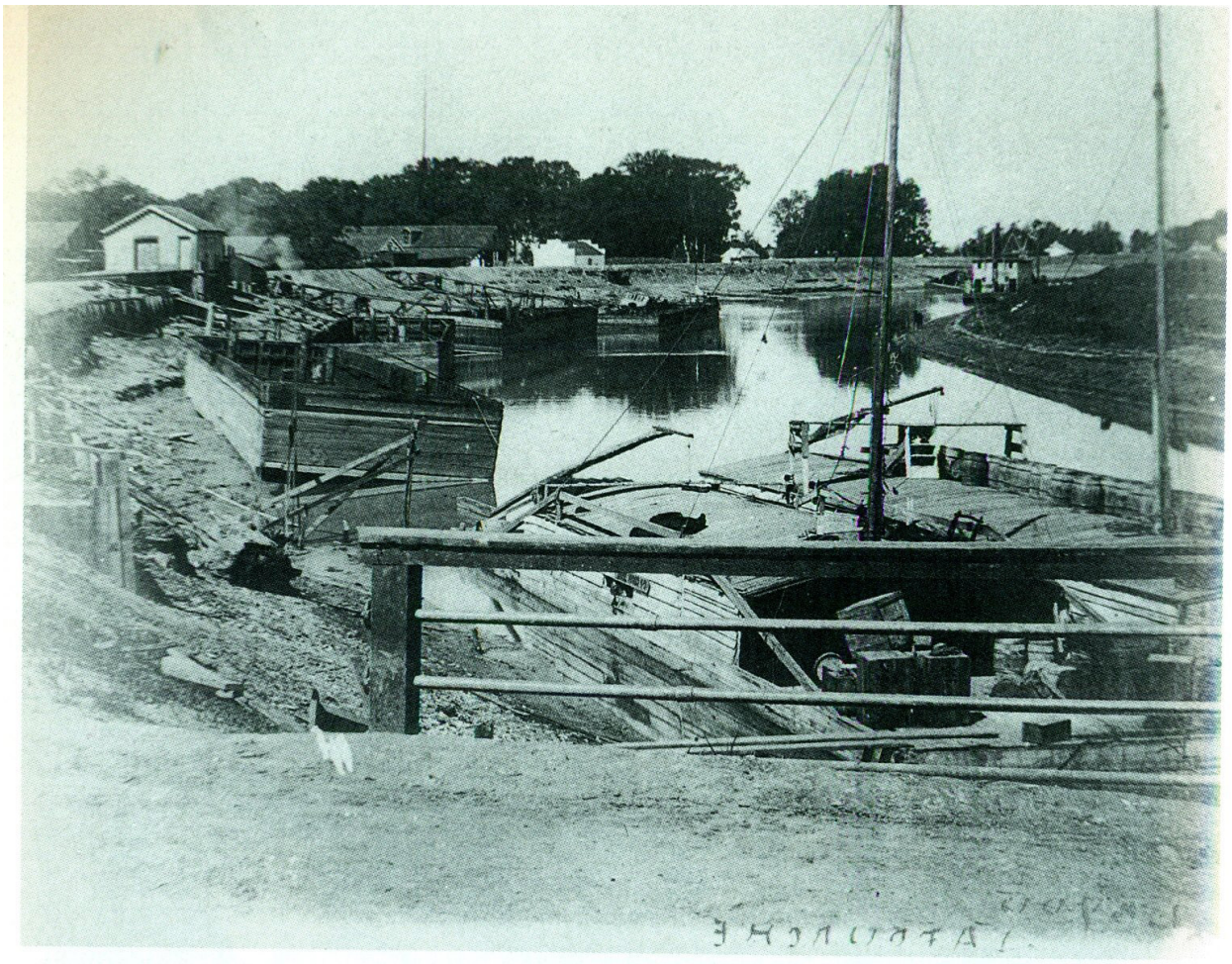

Figure B.7: Undated image circa 1890-1900 of Bayou Lafourche shows the heavy use of the bayou by flatboats and other vessels (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.8: Undated image shows the Percy Grocery Co. facility on the north shore of Bayou Lafourche, opposite and downriver from the Percy-Lobdell Building. The loading ramp construction is likely similar to the ramp used at the Percy-Lobdell Building NOT IN SITE AREA (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.9: Undated image circa 1905 looking west toward the Thibodaux Ice and Manufacturing Company. The Public Road along the top of the levee is visible (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.10: The Percy-Lobdell Building in 1982, prior to the development of the Wetland Acadian Cultural Center. Note the residential buildings in the location of the present-day parking lot. View from south side of St. Mary Street to east (Source: Thibodaux Library Archives).

Figure B.11: The Percy-Lobdell Building and adjacent residence and produce stand in 1982, prior to prior to the development of the Wetland Acadian Cultural Center. The residence is located on parcel 109-06 in the location of the existing parking lot. View from the south side of St. Mary Street to west (Source: Thibodaux Library Archives).

Figure B.12: A residential building formerly in the location of the existing parking lot on parcel 109-08. Seen before the building was demolished by NPS in 1989. Seen from St. Mary Street in 1988, view to northeast. (Source: Thibodaux Library Archives).

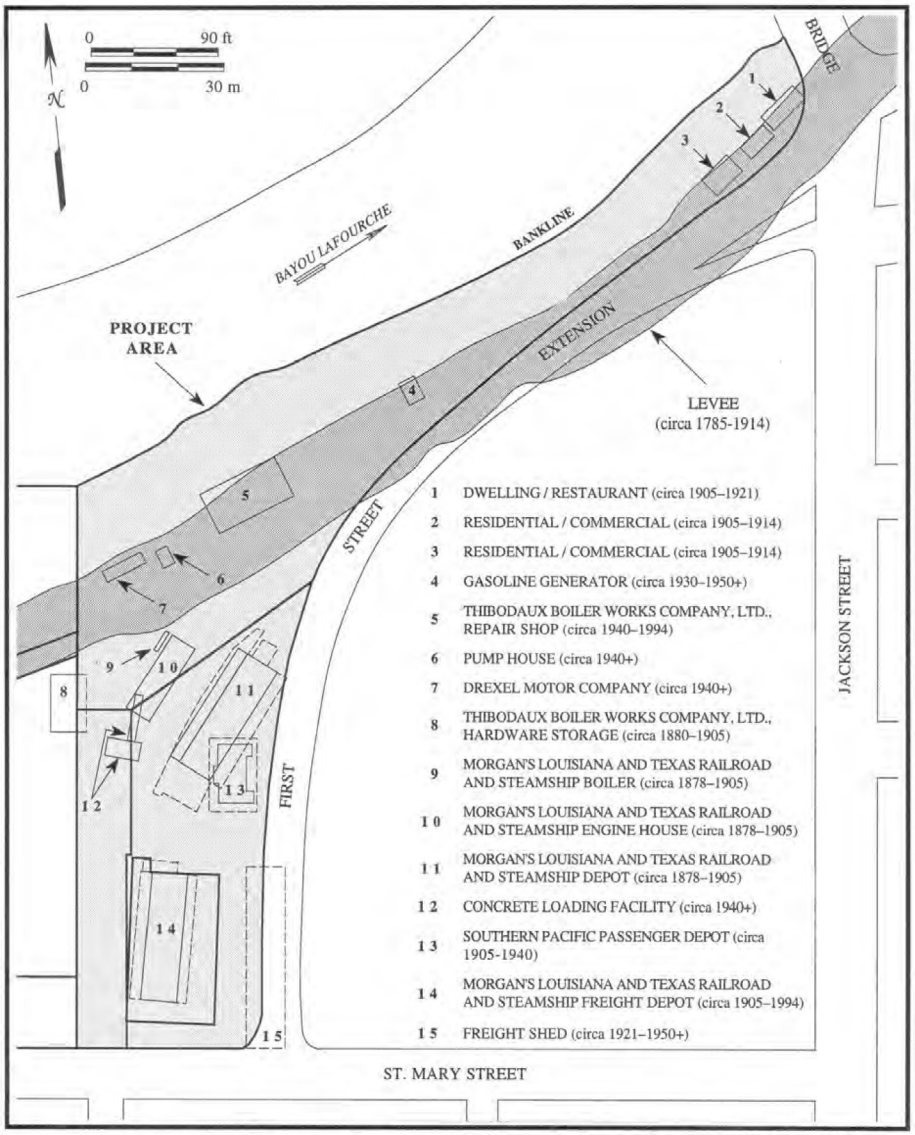

Figure 26. Location of known structures in the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center Addition project area between 1878 and 1950.

Figure B.13: Graphic from 1996 CEI Archeological Report depicting known structures on the eastern portion of the study area. Note the listed dates of item 14 conflict with the report text (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

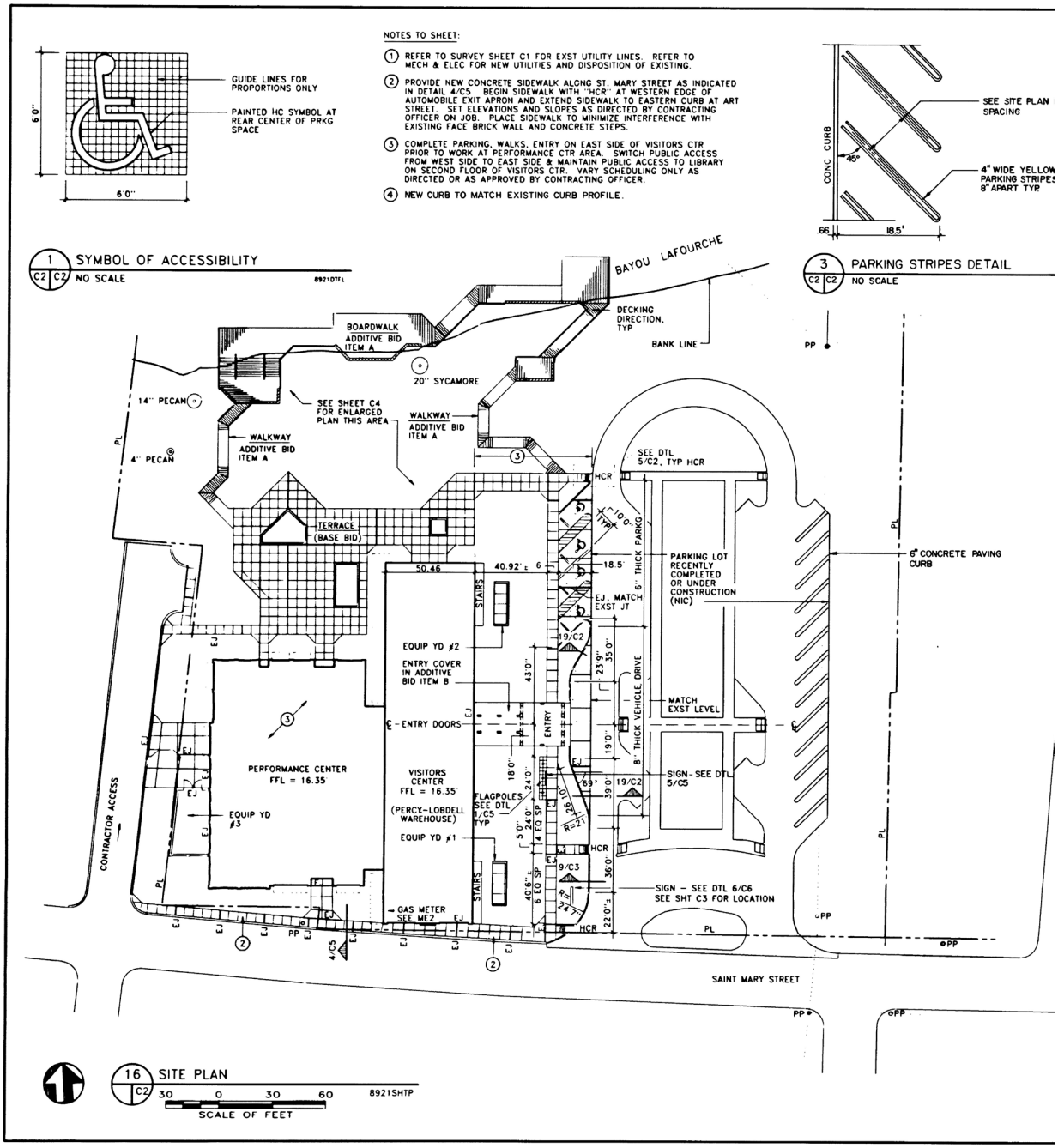

Figure B.14: Portion of As-Built Site Plan by Hamilton & Associates architectural firm, 1990. The site renovations were completed after NPS acquisition of the site and included the addition of a performance center, entry alcove, plaza, parking areas, and landscaping around the original Percy-Lobdell Building (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.15: 1961 aerial of Thibodaux, LA. Percy-Lobdell Building is visible in middle left of image (Source: www.historicaerials.com).

Figure B.16: View of Thibodaux, LA. from 1942; image looks southwest past bridge over the bayou; the study area is in top right corner of image (Source: Digital Library of Louisiana).

Figure B.17: Photograph of Percy-Lobdell Building from mid-1980s (Source: Lafourche Parish Public Library).

Figure B.18: 1989 aerial of Thibodaux, LA. Percy-Lobdell Building is visible in middle left of image (Source: www.historicaerials.com).

Figure B.19: Photograph showing boardwalk and landscape under construction at the Percy-Lobdell Building ca.1991 (Source: Lafourche Parish Public Library).

Figure B.20: Photograph showing the bank of the Bayou, tract 109-09 from Jackson St Bridge looking southeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.21: View looking north along the west line of tract 109-01 showing fence and lumber storage building. A property marker is in foreground March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.22: Photograph of the view of the bank of the Bayou behind the feed store on tract 109-09 March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.23: View of the bank of the Bayou behind the feed store on tract 109-09 looking southeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.24: Looking northwest, the view of the brick house located on tract 109-06. Lower left of image shows tract 109-04. Percy-Lobdell Building is in background March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.25: Image showing the view of east boundary looking southwest with house on tract 109-08 in background. Tract 109-09 is in foreground March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.26: Looking southeast, image showing the view of electric transformer located on tract 109-07. Gulf Building and fuel storage tank are in background March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.27: View of feed store and area between 1st St and Bayou looking northeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.28: View of feed store located on tract 109-09 looking northeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.29: View of feed store located on tract 109-09 looking northwest March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.30: View of front of garage attached to brick house on tract 109-06 looking north March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.31: View of front of Percy-Lobdell Building looking northwest March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.32: View of fuel storage tanks near west line of tract 109-05 looking west March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.33: View of Gulf Building located on east line of tract 109-05 looking northwest March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.34: View of house located on tract 109-08 looking northeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.35: View looking southwest of rear of garage and brick house located on tract 109-06 on east side. Percy-Lobdell Building is in the background March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.36: View of rear of house located on tract 109-08 looking southwest March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.37: View of tract 109-09 and feed store looking northeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.38: View of tract 109-09 between 1st St and the Bayou looking northeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.39: View looking southwest of tract 109-09 between 1st St and the Bayou March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.40: View looking northeast of transformer located on tract 109-07. Gulf Building on tract 109-05 is in background March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.41: View of west side of Percy-Lobdell Building looking east March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.42: View of west side of Percy-Lobdell Building looking northeast March 1988 (Source: JELA Archives, NPS).

Figure B.43: View of Gulf Oil Bulk Plant Building, facing north (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-28976).

Figure B.44: View of Gulf Oil Bulk Plant facing north-northwest (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-28979).

Figure B.45: View of circa 1940 frame home on lot 109-08, facing north (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-28992).

Figure B.46: View of rear of circa 1940 home on lot 109-08, facing southwest (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-28980).

Figure B.47: View of brick house and farmer produce stand on lot 109-06, facing north (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-28993).

Figure B.48: Auger testing area 2, facing east, with Percy-Lobdell building in background (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-28995).

Figure B.49: View, looking southwest from near W 1st St into eastern section of Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center. Land is cleared, with Percy-Lobdell building in background. (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-29279).

Figure B.50: View of Jackson Street Bridge, facing east from eastern portion of Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center (Source: Historical and Archaeological Investigations at the Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center, Hahn, 1989; SEAC Photo 01406-05-29293).

As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

TIC Number: 467/187248 ; PMIS: 253330

Percy-Lobdell Building

Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center

Cultural Landscape Report

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

JULY 2023

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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