

STAFF REPORT ON THE LANDMARKS NOMINATION OF
THE ETOILE POLAIRE (POLAR STAR) LODGE NO. 1
1433 NORTH RAMPART STREET

The handsome plastered brick Greek Revival style building at 1433 North Rampart Street was built about 1840 for the Worshipful Polar Star Lodge No. 1, (translated from the French "Etoile Polaire"). The lodge had been chartered by the state legislature on March 18, 1916 as a chapter of the Louisiana Masonic community. Masonry was extremely popular with both Catholics and Protestants in New Orleans during the early nineteenth century. Many of the more wealthy and prominent citizens of the city appear to have belonged to Etoile Polaire No. 1, including Pierre Soule, who was lodge president in 1832, Jean LaMonthe, Charles Claiborne and Mandeville Marigny.

An 1832 contract exists for the construction of a one-story lodge building that predates the existing building. On January 11, 1840, the lodge was granted a loan of \$7,500 from the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. This money was most likely used to erect the existing building a short time later.

The Greek Revival style of the building is articulated on the front facade of the building by two tiers of pilasters, each topped by a simple cornice. Above the second story tier is a high entablature with a dentilled cornice and parapet. Both the centrally located entrance door and high second story casement window are flanked by six-over-six sash windows.

The iron fence and gate, set in a plastered brick base, were added in the 1880's.

Based upon a careful consideration of the four areas of criteria determining landmark qualification, any one of which will qualify a property for designation, the staff of the Historic District Landmarks Commission finds that the Etoile Polaire (Polar Star) Lodge No. 1 at 1433 North Rampart Street meets three of the four categories in that it reflects the broad cultural, political, economic, and social history of the state and community; is identified with historic personages in national, state, and local history; and embodies distinguishing characteristics of architectural types, inherently valuable for a study of periods, styles, methods of construction, and indigenous materials or craftsmanship.