

STAFF REPORT ON THE LANDMARK NOMINATION OF
THE LOMBARD - DAVIS HOUSE
3933 CHARTRES STREET

This early example of a raised creole manor house is believed to have been built in 1826 by Joseph Lombard, Sr. for his son, Guillane Joseph Lombard, and daughter-in-law. The property was sold seven years later when the younger Lombard died and his widow had a home built on Royal Street in Faubourg Marigny. Among the subsequent owners of the property were J. F. Amedee Durand, who purchased the house and grounds in 1844. He sold it in 1864 to Mrs. Charles Caffin and Charles Caffin, Jr. The property is currently owned by Arthur Q. Davis, Jr.

The term "manor house" was used in early nineteenth century building contracts to distinguish the main house from the various dependencies on a small plantation tract. Though dating from the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the plan and details are reminiscent of earlier plantation-style houses. There are no halls in the house, as was typical in such early plans. Other significant creole-style characteristics include the front and back galleries, with side cabinets at the rear, and the hipped roof punctuated by small-scale dormers on the front and side. The wooden gallery posts appear to be original, though the existing turned railings balusters have replaced square ones. The French doors on the front of the house also appear to be original. A plan and rendering of the property is located in the Notarial Archives and is dated September 15, 1843. The appearance of the house today has changed little since that time. The drawings indicate that the two galleries were approached by wooden sweep steps. It also appears that the stucco on the front facade was scored. Although the house was originally built to directly face the levee, an early subdivision of the property had permitted another building to be erected in front of the house by 1843. This is still the case, but the existing structure fronting onto Chartres Street is at least set to one side. Because this creole manor house is one of the few remaining examples of this type in the city and is appreciably unaltered, it is therefore extremely significant.

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 Lombard-Davis House at 3933 Chartres Street meets three of the four categories, in that it reflects the broad cultural, political, economic, and social history of the nation, state and community; is identified with historic personages in 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.