

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received DEC 14 1982
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic N/A
and/or common St. Martinville Historic District

2. Location

street & number Main and Bridge Streets N/A not for publication
city, town St. Martinville N/A vicinity of
state LA code 22 county St. Martin Parish code 099

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	Multiple
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name multiple ownership
street & number
city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Martin Parish Courthouse
street & number Main Street (no specific address) P. O. Box 308
city, town St. Martinville state LA 70582

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title LA Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1982 federal state county local
depository for survey records LA State Historic Preservation Office
city, town Baton Rouge state LA

7. Description

Condition	N/A	Check one	N/A	Check one	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site		
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed				

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

There are forty-two buildings within the boundaries of the St. Martinville Historic District, three-fourths of which date from c.1820 to c.1910. The two major elements in the district are the church square and the surrounding old commercial-residential sector. There are ten intrusions, but they do not significantly threaten the district's overall historic character (as explained below).

Like many French Catholic settlements in Louisiana, the town of St. Martinville grew around a central church complex. The two block church square contains the 1840 Romanesque inspired church (#37), the Greek Revival parish hall (#36), and the 1857 rectory (#38) in a parklike setting with large overhanging live oak trees.

The space in this central square is solidly defined by a tightly packed line of commercial buildings on two sides. Most of these buildings come right up to the property line and have galleries. As a result, the sidewalk is covered most of the way along the portions of Main Street and Bridge Street which fall in the commercial area. Though they range in date from 1835 to 1917, most are two stories with the classic urban formula of shops and storage below and residential apartments above.

A brick example (#s 3-5, c.1840 & c.1865) clearly shows this arrangement. The small scale chamfered gallery columns, French doors, and balcony dividers indicate residential space upstairs. The interior features party walls, aedicule mantels, and transomed doors. As in most of the town's other early examples, the lower story is larger in scale than the upper story and has been modified numerous times, thereby obscuring the original fenestration pattern. Despite this, the basic geometry of the facade survives, as do most of the second story details.

A large frame 1899 example (#23) shows popular features such as tongue and groove siding, plate glass windows, an Eastlake upper gallery, a cornice mounted parapet, a Colonial Revival elliptical arch, and bay windows downstairs. As with most of its brick and frame fellows, the shopfront fenestration is largely intact.

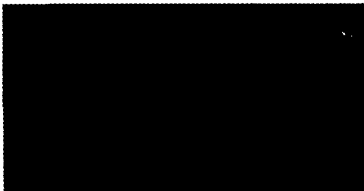
In a few instances, such as #6, an early nineteenth century commercial building received a new parapeted front at a later date. Greek Revival details are still evident on the upstairs interior of #6.

All of these earlier commercial buildings are noteworthy for their heavy roof structures. It seems that up until the Civil War carpenters were still installing simplified Norman trusses, despite the antiquity of the feature.

Most of the town's one story commercial buildings date from the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. An exception is the graceful Gary's Store-Fournet's Building (#s 1 & 2) with its pediment shaped parapet, lunette, and cast-iron front. A more typical example is Hebert's Jewelry (1895-#15) with its brick cornices, semi-hexagonal parapet, and corbelled bartizans. As with most of its kind, the gallery has been replaced within the past forty years due mainly to deterioration. However, judging by old photographs, these newer galleries are of a similar simple character to the old. In addition, they can be viewed as continuing the tradition of Main Street galleries so prevalent in Louisiana towns of the nineteenth century.

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7. Description (continued)

In addition to commercial and ecclesiastical buildings, the district also contains some six historic residences. These are listed as contributing elements because, by helping to preserve the town's historic land use pattern, they enhance one's appreciation of St. Martinville as a nineteenth century commercial center. These residences demonstrate that nineteenth century downtown areas in South Louisiana were frequently characterized by a mix of commercial and residential structures. The purely commercial central business district is largely a twentieth century phenomenon. Indeed, often the most pretentious residences in nineteenth century towns were located on the main commercial street. For example, in St. Martinville the Maison Duchamp (#39, N.R.) is located along Main Street.

INVENTORY BREAKDOWN ACCORDING TO PERIODS:

1820 - 1850	9 buildings	22%
1851 - 1880	7 buildings	17%
1881 - 1910	14 buildings	34%
1911 - 1931	2 buildings	4%
non-contributing	10 buildings	23%
	<u>42 buildings</u>	

Intrusions:

Intrusions account for 23% of the district's buildings. In no case are they larger in scale than the district's historic buildings, either in terms of width or height. In addition, in most cases the intrusions are innocuously styled. There are only two exceptions to this--buildings #s 28 & 29 (General View #8). Even in this case the scene is dominated by historic structures (General Views 8 & 9). On the whole, the district has a rightly paced overall historic character which is sufficiently emphatic that the ten intrusions pass almost unnoticed (General View #6 and photo showing buildings 9, 10, & 11).

Contributing Elements:

Contributing elements include those properties constructed between c.1820 and c.1930 which have not been significantly altered. Non-contributing elements are those properties constructed after c.1930 or earlier ones which have been significantly altered. They are labeled on the inventory as intrusions.

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7. Description (continued)

ST. MARTINVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT INVENTORY

- 1-2. 214 and 216 South Main St. (one building--two shops) Circa 1865. Three-bay brick commercial building. Shop windows and gallery replaced. Side carriageway with elliptical arched entrance. Louvered lunette in the central pedimented parapet. Tie bars with sunburst ornamentation on exterior of building.
- 3-5. 210, 206, 204 South Main Street (one building--three shops) Structure dates from c.1830-1840; however, unit at 210 S. Main (#3) was apparently destroyed in a c.1859 fire and rebuilt in about 1865 with recycled materials.
- Details include chamfered columns on upper gallery, French doors, and aedicule motif mantels. Ground floor reworked in mid-twentieth century. Upper floor largely intact from nineteenth century.
6. 200 South Main. Basic form dates from c.1830. Two-story building with Norman truss roof and opera house on second floor. Originally had galleries on front and side. Greek Revival details remain on interior. Brick front with parapet added c.1915, galleries removed, and present shopfront built.
7. 134 South Main. Intrusion. Circa 1940 two-story brick commercial building.
8. 126 South Main. Intrusion. Circa 1940 two-story nondescript movie theatre.
9. 134 South Main. Intrusion. Two-story commercial building. Original building dates from c.1875, but front extensively reworked c.1940.
10. 132 South Main. Circa 1875. Two-story brick galleried commercial building. Originally residential upstairs and commercial downstairs. Square gallery posts and handsome French doors. Ground floor commercial facade recently reworked.
- 11-12. 130 South Main. Circa 1850. Pair of two-story, four-bay brick buildings. Originally built for business on lower floor and residence on upper. Double chimney and gabled parapet. Turned Sheraton style wood columns on upper gallery. Wood railings replaced with cast-iron. Ground floor facade recently reworked.
13. 122 South Main Street. Circa 1850. Commercial on lower floor/residence above. Wood frame, two-story structure with galleries. Cast-iron columns on lower level with original paneled shopfront. Upper gallery is Greek Revival with central front door with transom and side lights. Windows have simple pediments. Exposed gable end with weather siding and louvered shuttered windows on both floors.

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DISTRICT

7. Description (continued) Inventory

- 14-15. 116 and 117 South Main. Thibodaux Cafe and Hebert's Jewelry Store. Pair of c.1899 brick one-story commercial buildings with elaborate corbeled decoration, terra cotta scalloped shell ornamentation, miniature turrets, broad arches, and multiple dentil cornices. Beautiful and noteworthy pressed tin ceiling and impressive cabinets in jewelry store.
- 16-17. 112 and 110 South Main. Circa 1900. Pair of one-story commercial buildings. Plain brick facade with corbeled cornice. 112 South Main (#16) has old if not original shopfront. 110 South Main (#17) has modern shopfront.
18. 108 South Main. Foti Grocery/Foti Residence above. Original building dates from 1917. Extensively reworked in 1931. Details from 1931 construction include galleried front with bungalow columns, multi-colored brickwork, elaborate parapet, pressed tin ceiling ornamented with laurel leaf pattern, and cast-iron ballooned columns with papyrus capitals on the lower gallery.
19. 106 South Main. Intrusion. One-story, nondescript. Building dates from c.1900, but it was extensively reworked in the 1960's.
20. 104 South Main. Attakapas Printing Company. Circa 1900-1910. Cast-iron fluted square columns at entrance and wood shopfront. One-story building. Pressed tin ceiling.
21. 102 South Main. Circa 1895-1900. Queen Anne Revival residence. One-and-one-half stories with Eastlake columns on raised curving gallery. Octagonal side turret with flared shingled skirting at the top and surmounted by pressed tin onion dome.
22. 101 North Main Street. Circa 1910 two-story brick commercial building. Shallow arches over windows. Dentil cornice treatment.
23. 101 East Bridge Street. 1899. Two-story wood frame building. Upper gallery has Eastlake columns. Gallery extends around west side of building as well as across the front. Lower floor store has fenestration with framing boards and corner blocks. Segmented arch above center door at upper level.
24. 105 East Bridge. 1920's bungalow.
25. 107 East Bridge. Circa 1900. Two-story wood frame building. Eastlake upper gallery. Commercial/residential.
26. 109 East Bridge. Intrusion. Circa 1900 two-story frame structure which was extensively remodeled in 1960's.
27. 115 East Bridge. Intrusion. "A" frame. 1960's.

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7. Description (continued) Inventory
28. 117 East Bridge. Intrusion. 1978 one-story ranch style commercial structure.
29. 201 East Bridge. Intrusion. 1950's brick store. One-story with second story mansard roof added.
30. 205 East Bridge. Intrusion. 1950's small, one-story, brick office.
31. 207 East Bridge. Circa 1890-1900 two-story frame building with Eastlake columns on upper gallery.
32. 215 East Bridge. Circa 1899 two-story frame building. Commercial/residential. Simple styling with chamfered wood columns both upper and lower gallery. Scrollsawn ornamentation on upper gallery.
33. 219 East Bridge. Circa 1900 wood frame cottage.
34. 220 East Bridge. Circa 1820. Frame Creole cottage with three rooms in the front and two rear cabinets. Noteworthy for its rare 12 over 12 windows. The fenestration, the form, and the plan survive; however, in the late 1970's the exterior clapboard surface was bricked over. The brick veneer is easy to remove, and, in any case, the house retains many of its original features. The State Historic Preservation Office decided to list the house as a contributing element on the advice of the Tax Act Coordinator, who suggested that it would be an excellent candidate for a conditional certification.
35. 225 East Bridge Street. Circa 1830 frame residence. Basic form, fenestration pattern, detailing of c.1830 house remain. Heavy bungalow style front porch, columns, and dormer added c.1930.
36. Church Green--The Parish Hall, St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church. 1861. Attributed to Robert Benson. Two-story wood frame. Greek Revival pedimented facade. Wood shingle roof evident from attic.
37. Church Green--St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church. Built in 1840 and dedicated in 1844. National Register.
38. Church Green--St. Martin of Tours Rectory. 1857. Attributed to Robert Benson. Two-story frame building. Heavily fluted wood columns added circa 1925, replacing a facade identical to that remaining on rear of building. Plate glass windows and 1970 aluminum siding, but retains much of the appearance of an 1850's building.
39. South Main Street. La Maison Duchamp. 1876. National Register.
40. 209 South Main Street. Intrusion. Circa 1940 two-story brick. Store on ground floor and meeting hall above.

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7. Description (continued) Inventory

- 41-42. Corner South Main and Old Market Streets. Vee's 5¢ & 10¢ and Robert's Lounge. Corner building housing Robert's Lounge built in 1897. In early 1900's adjacent building, now housing Vee's, was added in a similar style. Two-story brick commercial building with shallow arch fenestration and brick paneled parapet and corbeled cornice. Lower shopfronts modified. Original ceramic mosaic style flooring still visible at front entrance of lounge.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c.1820 - c.1930 **Builder/Architect** N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criteria A and C

The St. Martinville Historic District is significant in the following respects:

- (1) It is architecturally significant on the local and state levels as an important example of a small urban commercial center. In addition, it is architecturally significant on the state level because of the surviving visual relationship between the central church square and the surrounding town.
- (2) It is significant in the area of exploration/settlement on the state level because of the unusual role the Catholic church played in its development.
- (3) It is locally significant in the area of commerce because it is a visual reminder of St. Martinville's importance as an interior port and commercial center.

ARCHITECTURE:

The St. Martinville Historic District is significant in the area of architecture as an example of a nineteenth century interior port associated with the bayou steamboat trade. The downtown area contains the finest and largest collection of old commercial buildings to be found in St. Martin Parish. In addition, of all the steamboat trading towns along the once important Bayou Teche trading route, St. Martinville has the only downtown area with a significant mixture of early and mid-nineteenth century commercial buildings and those of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Other old commercial areas along the Teche are almost completely characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (For purposes of this submission, buildings are considered early and mid-nineteenth century if they date from the 1820's through the 1870's--brown and orange on the district map. Later buildings date from 1880 through 1931 and are shown as green and glue on the map.)

In addition, many Louisiana towns were founded around a dominant central church square. St. Martinville has a large parklike church square which is the center of the downtown area. Due largely to post-1900 redevelopment, this kind of relationship of church to town is visually evident in very few old towns in Louisiana.

Finally, the district derives considerable charm and character from the interplay of early and mid-nineteenth century structures with late nineteenth and early twentieth century structures. This lends a richness which is not often seen inasmuch as most of the older towns in Louisiana have a purer turn of the century character.

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT:

St. Martinville is significant in the area of exploration/settlement because it is the only town in Louisiana whose main district developed on property which had been

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property @ 15 acres

Quadrangle name St. Martinville Quad, LA

Quadrangle scale 1: 62,500

UTM References

A	1 1 5	6 1 1 2 8 1 0 1 0	3 1 3 3 1 3 1 1 0 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	1 1 5	6 1 1 3 1 1 0 1 0	3 1 3 3 1 2 9 1 5 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	1 1 5	6 1 1 3 0 1 5 1 0	3 1 3 3 1 2 7 1 5 1 0
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D	1 1 5	6 1 1 2 6 1 5 1 0	3 1 3 3 1 2 6 1 5 1 0
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E			
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F			
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G			
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H			
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Verbal boundary description and justification

See map and Item 10 continuation sheet. Boundaries shown on the attached color coded map are the true and only boundaries of the St. Martinville Historic District, as amended in November 1982. These boundaries supercede those from any previous submissions.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state		code	county	code
-------	--	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

organization _____ date _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___X state ___ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Robert B. DeBlieux*

Robert B. DeBlieux

title State Historic Preservation Officer date November 29, 1982

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Anna M. Douglas

date 1/27/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Patrick Andrews*

date 1/25/83

Chief of Registration

for

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8. Significance (continued)

donated to the Roman Catholic Church and which was later acquired by the individual owners not by virtue of an outright sale but only through a most unusual lease arrangement. The donation to the church by Bernard Dauterive in 1772 consisted of two 6 X 40 arpent tracts of land on either side of Bayou Teche which were a part of Dauterive's original grant from the Spanish government. The establishment of the church at this particular place on Bayou Teche served to assure the growth of this location into a new community. Fr. Michael Bernard Barriere, an early pastor of the church who probably began the practice of renting these church lands, may have devised this plan as a means of accommodating the early inhabitants who wanted to experience this new frontier without incurring too great a financial risk. The first mention of this practice is in 1795 when Fr. Barriere, in the annual report to the Bishop of New Orleans, lists in the revenue of the church income from the "rental of church lands." The practice proved attractive and soon came under the jurisdiction of the church wardens or "fabrique," who on December 18, 1818, at a meeting of the Administrative Council, established procedures for a more businesslike plan. This was a lease-purchase agreement under which the lands owned by the church were surveyed, divided into lots, and leased for a period of 12 years after which time the leasee became the owner of record, but was required to pay an "annual and perpetual" rent to the congregation. This apparently unique ecclesiastical land rent system continued in force in St. Martinville for almost 100 years.

COMMERCE:

St. Martinville gained importance after its incorporation in 1817 and experienced a period of rapid growth during which the townspeople realized the potential of its location on an important inland waterway. Contemporary with the appearance of the steamboat on the Mississippi River was the granting of a charter to the Attakapas Steam Company by the Louisiana legislature on February 26, 1819. Applicants for the charter were farsighted residents of St. Martinville who were anxious to bring the "bateau a vapeur" to the waters of Bayou Teche. St. Martinville's location at the head of navigation on the Teche soon made it an important commercial center. Consequently the construction of a public wharf at the foot of Port Street and a public market nearby became a necessity. According to a petition to the state legislature concerning the regulations of the public market, the population of the town almost doubled between 1817, the year it was incorporated, and 1820, the year of the petition. St. Martinville remained a major commercial center until the late nineteenth century when the steamboat trade stopped and railroad construction in the area bypassed the town. After that time it became only a local commercial center.

The primary focus of this application is the pre-1880 buildings; however, the later buildings also contribute to the district's significance. Most were subject to the aforementioned ecclesiastical land rent system as were the older structures. Moreover, many of them continued to use the time honored commercial building configuration consisting of shop space downstairs and living space upstairs with front galleries. Thus they contribute to St. Martinville's identity as an old commercial center. Finally, these newer buildings contribute to the scene by providing an

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8. Significance (continued)

important part of the mix of buildings of various periods which make up St. Martinville's distinctive architectural character.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

St. Martinville BIBLIOGRAPHY
CONTINUATION SHEET Historic District ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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St. Martin of Tours Church Records, Church Rectory, St. Martinville
Records of the Diocese of Louisiana and the Floridas (Microfilm, 12 reels)
Plat Books, St. Martin Parish Courthouse

The Weekly Messenger

Attakapas Gazette

St. Mary, St. Martin, and Lafayette Advertiser

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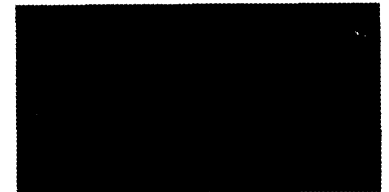
DISTRICT

10. Boundary Justification

As will be noted in Item 8, there are two elements which contribute to the district's significance. These are the associations with the church and the church square and the overall urban character which is derived from the mixture of early and mid-nineteenth century buildings with late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings. The present boundaries take in all the extant cultural resources which embody either of these elements. Of course, the church square is included in the nominated area. In addition, the boundaries encompass all of those areas where there is a significant component of early and/or mid-nineteenth century buildings along with the later structures. Beyond the boundaries the incidence of these older buildings drops to almost nothing. In addition, there are a good number of less than 50 year old structures beyond the boundaries.

NB: As can be seen on the attached 8½ X 11 map, the Bridge Street portion of the district reaches almost to Bayou Teche; however, the bayou could not be included in the nominated area because it is isolated from the core of the district by numerous intrusions.

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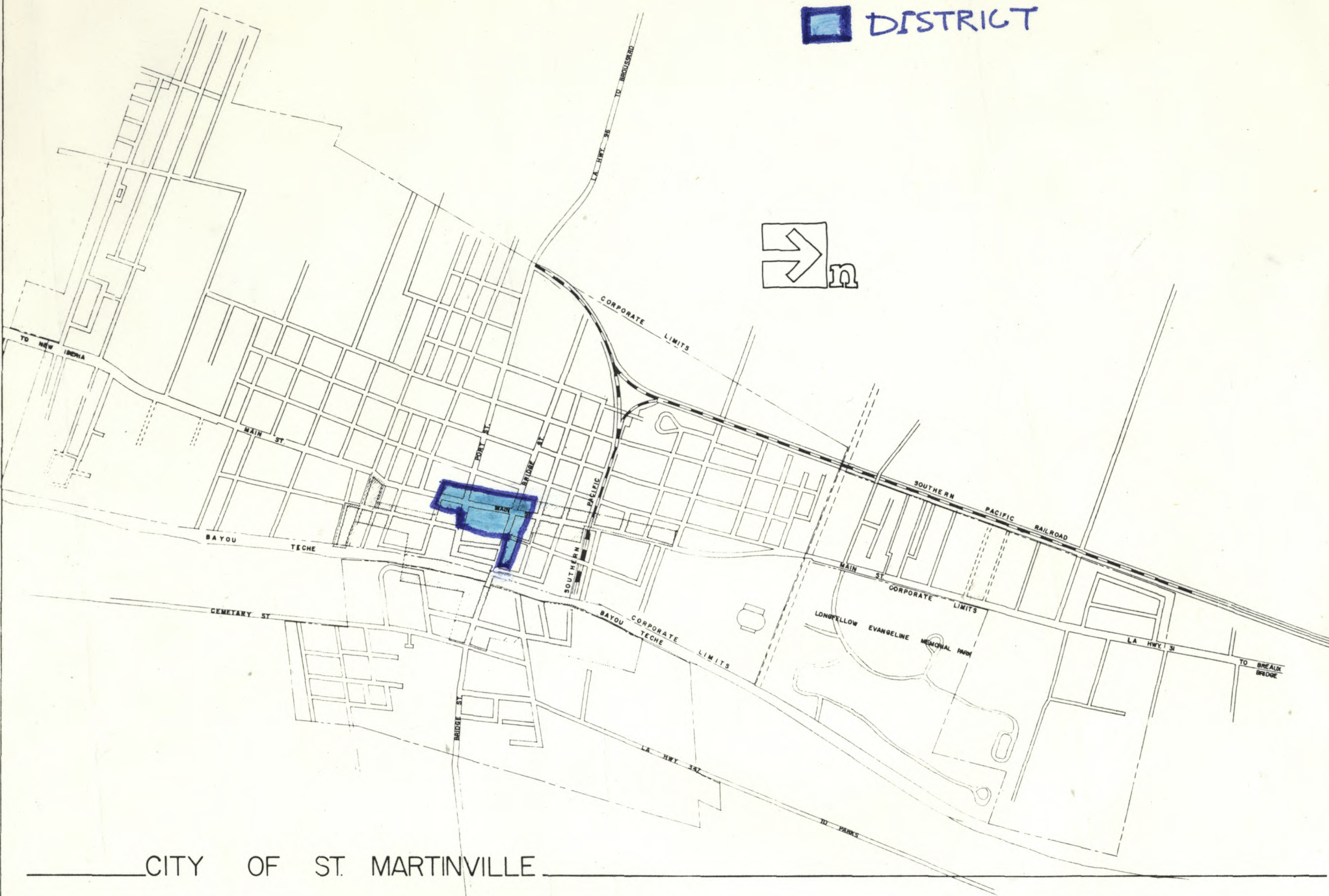
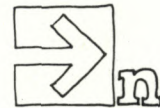
11. Form Prepared By:

This form was prepared by the National Register staff of the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

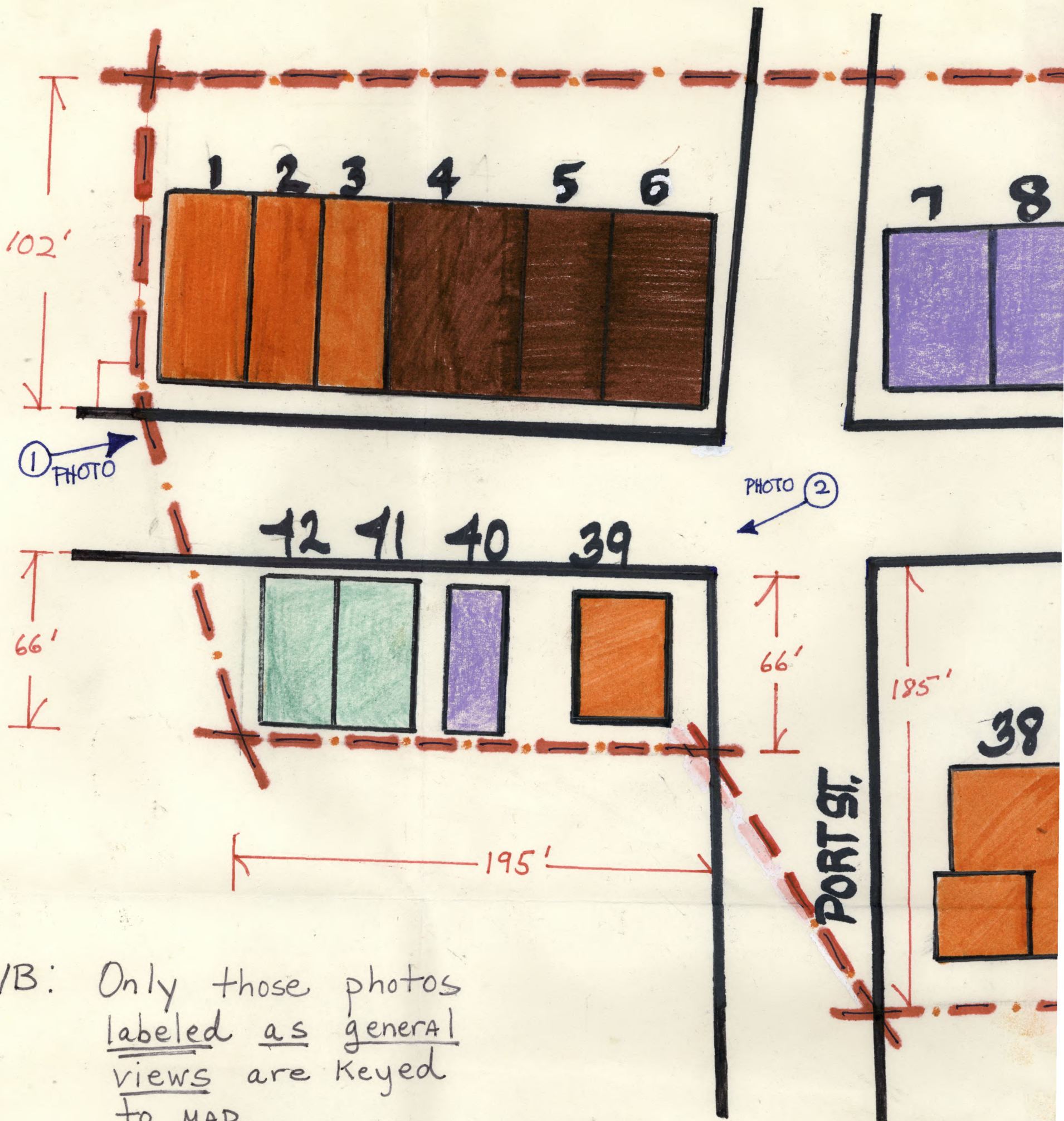
Invaluable assistance was provided by: The Honorable Earl Willis, Mayor of
St. Martinville
John Albert Landry, Architect
Al Landry, Architect
Jane Bulliard
Marian Barras

Date prepared: The form was originally prepared in August and September
of 1980; however, the present form was prepared in November
of 1982.

 DISTRICT





CITY OF ST. MARTINVILLE





NB: Only those photos labeled as general views are keyed to MAP.


LEGEND

 1820 - 1850

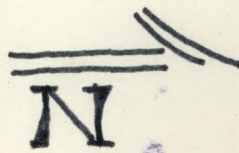
 1851 - 1880

 1881 - 1910

 1911 - 1931

 HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY LINE

 NON-CONTRIBUTING ELEMENTS (INTRUSIONS)



THIS MAP IS NOT PRECISELY HOWEVER

HISTORICAL DISTRICT

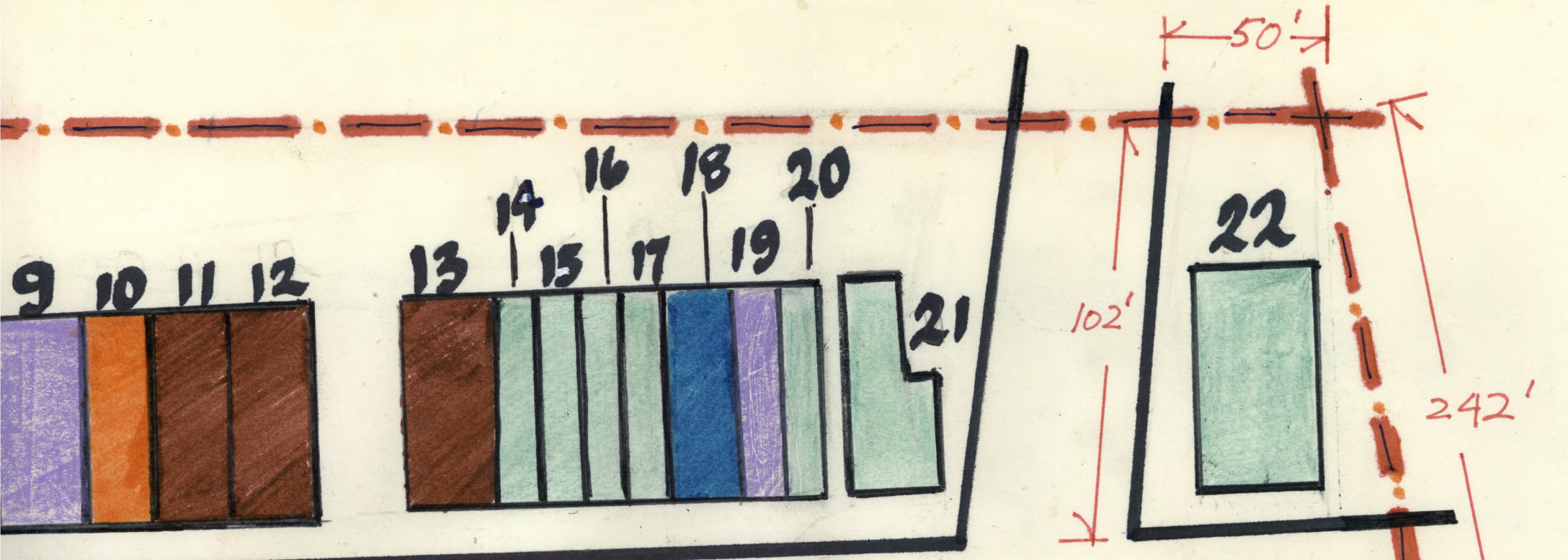
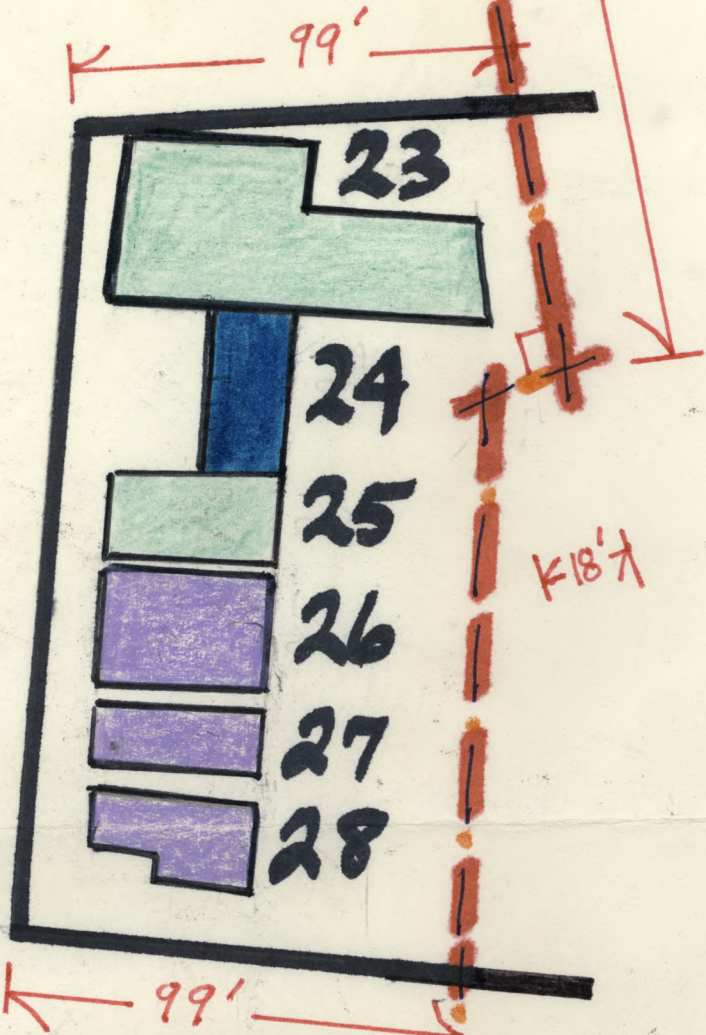
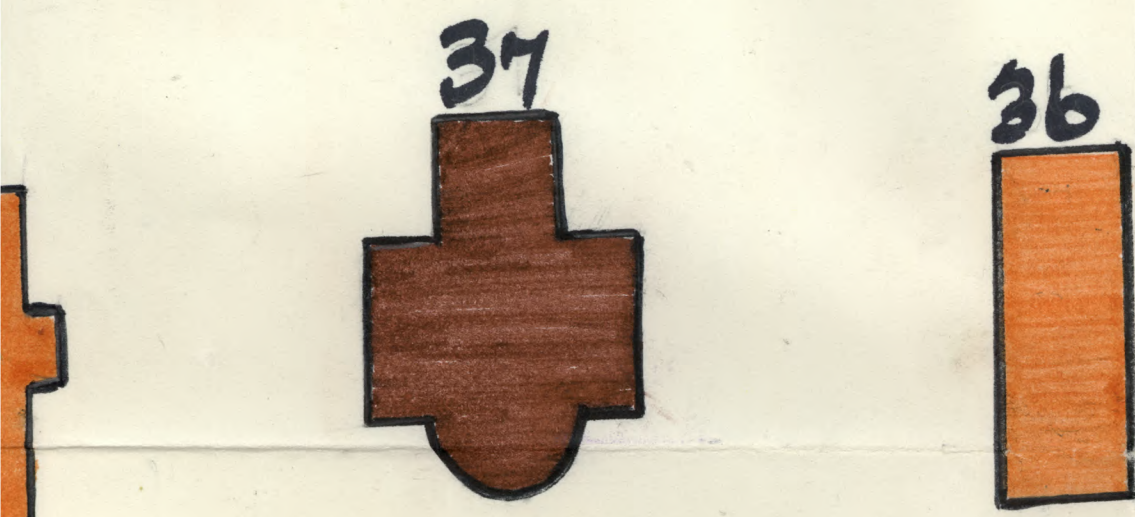


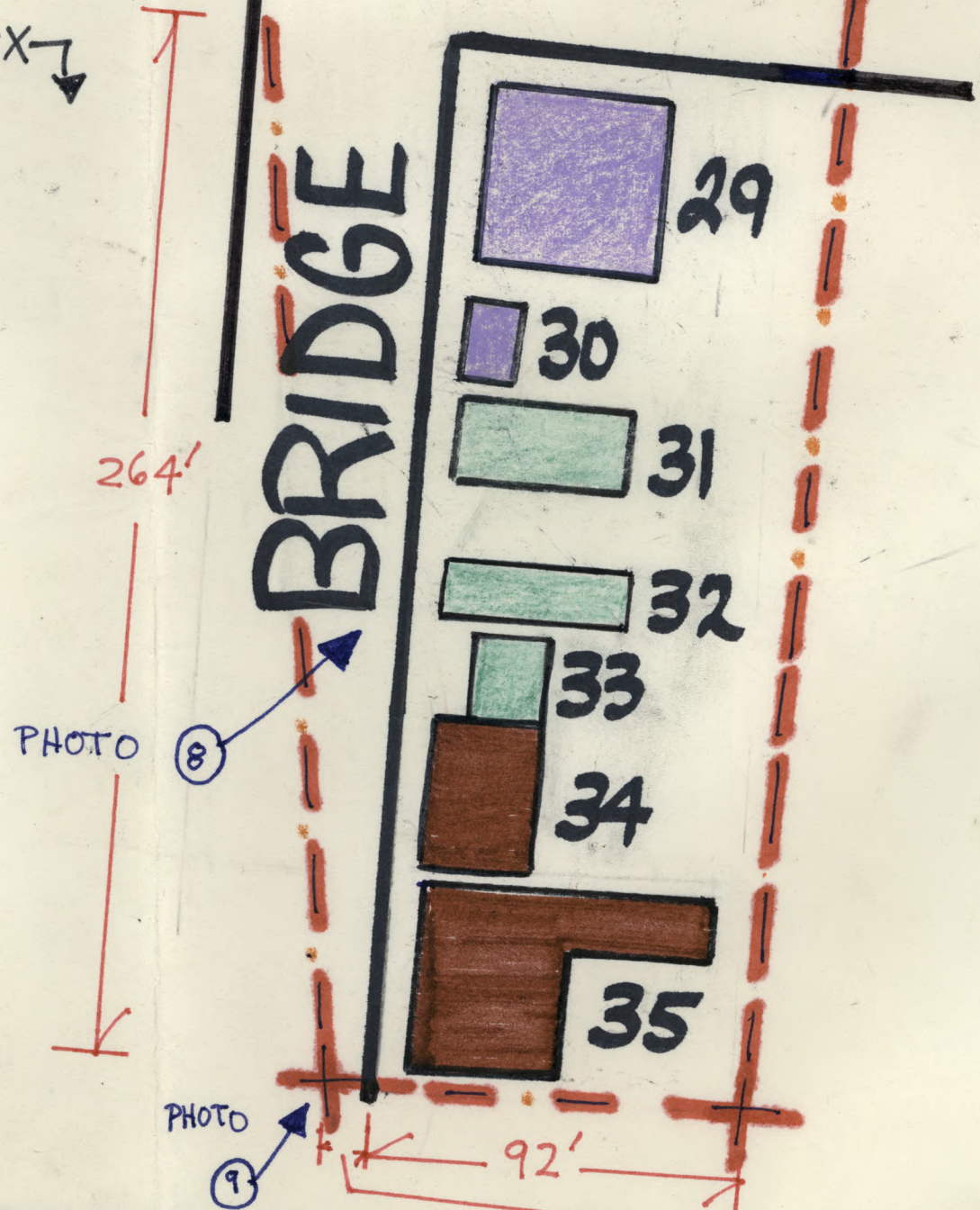
PHOTO ③
MAIN ST.
 PHOTO ④
 PHOTO ⑤
 PHOTO ⑥

CHURCH SQUARE



ST.
BRIDGE ST.

MODERN SCHOOL BUILDING COMPLEX



TO SCALE;
 ER, ONE INCH IS
 APPROXIMATELY EQUAL
 TO FORTY-FIVE FEET

PHOTO ⑧

PHOTO ⑨

City of St. MARTINVILLE