

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JAN 12 1988
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Bellevue Multiple Resource Area

and/or common

2. Location

street & number See individual inventory and district forms _____ not for publication

city, town Bellevue _____ vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Campbell code 037

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	n/a being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name multiple owners

street & number n/a

city, town n/a _____ vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Campbell County Courthouse

street & number Fourth and York Sts.

city, town Newport state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985-1986 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

INTRODUCTION

The town once known as "Beautiful Bellevue" is one of several Northern Kentucky communities with large, intact inventories of historic architecture. Included in the Bellevue Multiple Resource Area are two adjacent yet distinct historic areas; the Taylor's Daughters and the Fairfield Ave. Historic Districts. Despite many similarities in the character of the built environments of these two sections of the city, the difference in land use justified creation of two separate preservation areas. The Fairfield Ave. Historic District is centered between Lafayette and O'Fallon Aves., and includes 106 buildings. The Taylor's Daughters Historic District takes in the vast area south of Fairfield Ave., an inventory of 1165 buildings. Together these two districts encompass approximately two-thirds of the city's total land area.

Also included in the Multiple Resource Nomination is the landmark Foote-Fister Mansion at 801 Lincoln Road. Since this mansion's site is somewhat isolated, surrounded by non-historic new development, it is being nominated as an individual property.

Excluded from the Multiple Resource Area is the area known as "South Bellevue," centered along the city's southern periphery. This part of the city was developed at a later date and does not have much intact historic fabric. Its built environment also has little in common with that of the older areas of the city.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The city of Bellevue (1980 population: 7678) is located in northern Campbell County, on the south bank of the Ohio River opposite Cincinnati. The city of Newport, which has an eastern boundary defined by Taylor Creek, adjoins Bellevue on the west. O'Fallon Ave. forms the boundary between Bellevue and its neighbor to the east, the city of Dayton.

Bellevue is largely residential in character. Commercial activity is confined to Fairfield Ave., Bellevue's major east-west thoroughfare and traditional "Main Street." A small business district is also centered along lower Taylor Ave., the city's most important north-south street.

The topography of Bellevue is characterized by a gentle rise as one moves south from the Ohio River. A significant (albeit man-made) physical feature is the below-grade Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, which cuts across the city at an angle. Most of the city's historic architecture is concentrated between the river and the hills of South Bellevue. The Bellevue riverfront area, north of Fairfield Ave., has the lowest land elevation in the city and its historic fabric has been severely damaged by repeated flooding. With the exception of some isolated tract developments dating from the 1920's, most of South

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 type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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. 1868-1933 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bellevue Multiple Resource Area is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture for the period c. 1868-1933. The Fairfield Ave. and Taylor's Daughters Historic Districts represent the historic core of Bellevue, and are a living record of its evolution from an isolated village to a thriving small city. This period of significance is the era of the city's greatest growth and prosperity. These two historic areas include the city's best-preserved historic fabric. They feature rich, diverse and well-preserved collections of late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential and commercial architecture. Also included in the Bellevue Multiple Resource Area is the Foote-Fister Mansion, a remarkably intact large-scale residence of the post-Civil War era. This rare surviving Victorian estate is also noteworthy for its association with the Taylor family, local pioneers who played a large role in the development of urban Northern Kentucky.

HISTORY

The City of Bellevue, along with the neighboring communities of Newport and Southgate, was originally part of the vast land holdings of the James Taylor family of Caroline Co., Virginia. Bellevue itself was founded in the post-Civil War era by Taylor descendants residing in Newport. The "New Town", whose birth was officially announced in the May 28, 1866 edition of the CINCINNATI DAILY ENQUIRER, was named for Gen. James Taylor's splendid Greek Revival mansion on East Third Street in Newport. Incorporation would follow four years later.

The "Original Plan" of Bellevue was confined to a small area in what is now the extreme northwest corner of the city, adjacent to the Ohio River. (See 1883 Atlas for illustration.) At an unspecified date prior to its incorporation, several small plats to the east and south--including the Berry, Seiter, Williamson and Timberlake Additions--were annexed. The development of the city during its first decade (c. 1866-1875) was thus limited to the area west of Washington Ave. This growth was quite sparse, and few early buildings have survived.

Nor would development accelerate over the next ten years. From 1875 to 1884, not more than 25 houses were built in Bellevue "owing to a stagnant condition caused by limited powers possessed by the new town." (KENTUCKY STATE JOURNAL, November 13, 1891.) Unable to annex additional land, or to provide basic services in the way of fire protection or a reliable water supply, the town's growth was hampered.

This situation was alleviated in 1884 when Bellevue became chartered as a fourth-class city. The immediate result was a dramatic increase in the city's land area, as the vast Harris Heirs' Addition (from Washington Ave. east to O'Fallon) was annexed to the city. Housing construction proceeded at a rapid pace, aided by local building and loan

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property See individual inventory and district forms
Quadrangle name Newport Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Verbal boundary description and justification

See individual inventory and district forms

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

state	<u>n/a</u>	code	county	<u>n/a</u>	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Margaret Warminski, Architectural Historian

organization City of Bellevue date May 1987

street & number 616 Poplar St. telephone (606) 581-2883

city or town Bellevue state Kentucky

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national 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 David C. Morgan

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date 1-6-88

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

Patrick Adams date 2/24/88
for Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

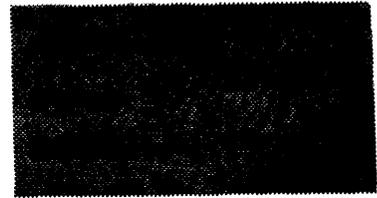
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Bellevue was developed after the Great Depression.

Like other Northern Kentucky communities, the city of Bellevue was platted on a grid. Uniform blocks--most with dividing alleys--and narrow streets and lots are the norm. Because of this tight scale, there are no divided streets and open space is rare.

The scale of most buildings in Bellevue is modest. Most are one to three stories in height, with the majority of residences being two or two and a half stories tall. Unlike Newport and Covington, where brick was the material of choice, frame buildings predominate in Bellevue. However, brick was favored for commercial structures as well as the majority of the city's most stylish residences.

Diversity is the hallmark of historic Bellevue. Since the city's development began along the Ohio River and proceeded in a general southeasterly direction, most of its city's oldest structures are concentrated in the northwest corner of the city. But since this development was a gradual rather than a uniform process, most blocks contain a variety of large and small structures built over a 20 or 30 year period.

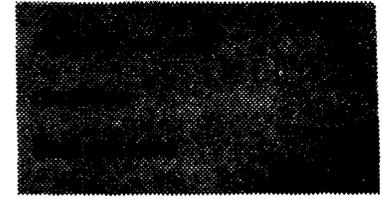
The periods of significance for both Bellevue districts are roughly equivalent, encompassing several decades of the city's development. The period of significance for the Taylor's Daughters district begins c. 1868, the approximate construction date of its oldest extant structures. Because of extensive redevelopment in the Fairfield Ave. district (which destroyed most of its early buildings) its period of significance begins c. 1880. Since the most recent contributing buildings in both districts were built in 1933, that year was chosen as the cut-off date.

As in other Northern Kentucky historic districts, a continuum of historic styles can be found in central Bellevue. Favored styles include the Italianate, Victorian Vernacular L-Plan or T-Plan, Queen Anne, Foursquare, and Bungalow. Also represented in lesser numbers are the Stick/Eastlake, Colonial Revival, and Homestead. In the city's business district many examples of the Turn of the Century Commercial can be found, as well as utilitarian, i.e. functional structures.

HISTORIC SURVEY

A comprehensive survey of the historic resources of Bellevue was conducted by architectural historian Margaret Warminski during 1985-1986 under the auspices of a grant awarded to the City by the Kentucky Heritage Council. The survey recorded unaltered structures over fifty years of age the area bounded by the Ohio River and the South Bellevue hills. Because of the lack of variety in its historic fabric, the flood-prone riverfront area was recorded on a Neighborhood Inventory Form and christened the "Riverside Neighborhood." Unusual or stylish buildings in the Riverside Neighborhood were

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documented on individual Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory Forms. The uppermost blocks of the Taylor's Daughters district--between Center Street and Grandview Ave.--were treated similarly because of the predominance of speculative "tract" developments in that part of the city. In this area, labeled the "Hillside Neighborhood," unique or unaltered structures were also recorded on individual forms. Because of the remarkable variety of resources in Bellevue's historic core (from Fairfield Ave. north to Center Street), only individual forms were used in that part of city. Approximately 250 structures were so documented throughout the city.

Since there are no written histories of Bellevue or of the larger Northern Kentucky area, survey research utilized primary materials. Map resources included Lake's 1883 ATLAS OF BOONE, KENTON, AND CAMPBELL COUNTIES as well as Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Bellevue for 1886, 1894 and 1910. The city's building permit records, fortuitously preserved, provided a wealth of information, as did Bellevue city directories for the years 1880 to 1931. News articles on microfilm at the Kenton County Public Library also offered glimpses into the city' past.

Three Bellevue buildings were previously honored with National Register listing. The first of these, the landmark Herz Jesu Kirche (Sacred Heart Church), was built in 1892 and included in the Register in 1974. The old Bellevue High School building (1905-07) and the Joseph Seiter House (1896) received National Register designation in 1986. All three of these landmarks are located in the Taylor's Daughters district.

INTEGRITY

The historic fabric of both districts has been well preserved, due to the large number of owner-occupied residences and the city's traditional pride. Levels of maintenance are high, drastic alterations few, and intrusive new construction very rare. The following table illustrates this data in graphic form:

INVENTORY OF THE BELLEVUE MULTIPLE RESOURCES AREA

Contributing Elements		
Unaltered Buildings		509
Altered Buildings		598
Sites (Parks)		3
	Total	1,110
Non-Contributing Elements		
Buildings Non-Contributing Due to Age		24
Buildings Non-Contributing Due to Alteration		142
Sites (Vacant Lots)		14
	Total	180

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associations as well as real estate corporations. These syndicates, headed by prominent residents of Bellevue and Newport, included the Bellevue Town Lot and Improvement Co. and Bellevue-Dayton Land Co. They purchased open land in the eastern and southern areas of the city from the Taylor estate, subdivided it into uniform lots, and then re-sold it at large profits.

In 1885, the aggregate value of Bellevue real estate totaled \$534,300, and \$49,200 worth of permits were issued. By 1891, these figures had climbed to \$1,051,850 and \$123,700. An article in Newport's KENTUCKY STATE JOURNAL praised Bellevue's progress, extolling its "rapid but not hot-bed growth...on (the) most reliable basis in large measure, the result of a beautiful and healthful location, and honest management by building owners." The article then went on to say that "the above ought to be a matter of personal satisfaction to every citizen of beautiful Bellevue." (KENTUCKY STATE JOURNAL, November 13, 1891.)

As the city prospered and expanded, selective redevelopment occurred in its oldest neighborhood (located toward the western edge of the city, and within the proposed Taylor's Daughters district.) During the 1890's, several prosperous Bellevue entrepreneurs chose to replace their modest first residences with splendid new homes built on the same site. The best-documented case is that of Joseph Seiter of Berry Ave., who in 1897 built a lavish new house on the lot of his first home: a small frame cottage. Seiter's neighbors Charles Ellerhorst and George Robson Jr., both of Lake St., were among the other affluent Bellevue residents to make the same choice. This loyalty was a phenomenon highly unusual in Northern Kentucky, and may well have been unique.

Bellevue's evolution during the late nineteenth century was markedly different from that of its nearest neighbors. While Newport and Dayton were relatively self-contained cities, each with a well-developed industrial base, Bellevue was a "bedroom" community that was predominantly residential in character. Moreover, Bellevue's ties to Newport were so numerous during this era that the former could safely be called a suburb of the latter. For example, most Bellevue residents were employed either in Newport or "over the river" in Cincinnati. In addition, Bellevue's water supply and rapid transit system were provided by her "mother city."

Entrepreneurs and builders based in Newport, such as the Robson family, also played a major role in the development of Bellevue. George Robson, proprietor of the Old 76 distillery in West Newport, moved to Bellevue during the city's formative years. Robson was instrumental in Bellevue's incorporation, built the first large-scale residence in the city (c. 1868), and speculated in the new town's real estate market.

But Bellevue's relationship to Newport is best illustrated by the Taylor family legacy. Although the Taylors did not reside in Bellevue (with the exception of the Foote Heirs, of 801 Lincoln Rd.) they left their mark in the form of the city's street and subdivision names.

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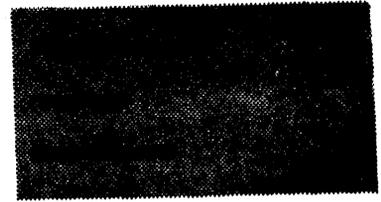
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During its first half-century, Bellevue was a diverse community, including a mixture of income levels. Citizens of German or Irish descent constituted its two largest ethnic groups. But as in most of urban Northern Kentucky, the German Catholic influence predominated. The first church founded in the city was Herz Jesu Kirche (Sacred Heart), organized in 1872 by German Catholics weary of the commute to St. Stephen's Parish in Newport. Seventeen years later, a building permit was issued to what was simply described as the "English Speaking Catholic Church" of St. Anthony, frequented by Irish Catholics. Other German congregations in the city included the St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church (organized in 1887—now St. John's United Church of Christ) and the First German Evangelical Lutheran Church (formed in 1890—now Prince of Peace Lutheran Church).

Bellevue's reputation as a clean, relatively quiet city—a desirable place to live—continued into the mid-twentieth century. A promotional brochure, the PICTORIAL AND INDUSTRIAL REVIEW OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY, published in 1923 extolled the city as a

"...healthy, convenient and attractive city in which to live...About nine-tenths of the citizens of Bellevue are home-owners, paupers being absolutely negligible in the city and poor people few. Bellevue has some citizens of outstanding wealth, and the beautiful homes along the finely paved and macadamized streets are some of the show places of the city."

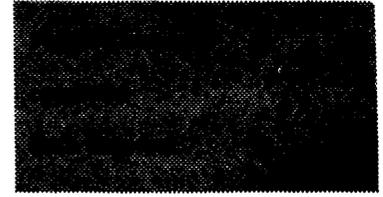
In a similar vein, the WPA Writers' Project guide to Cincinnati describes Bellevue as being "almost entirely a middle-class suburb." Residential construction in the city's core area continued into the 1920's with the development of new subdivisions such as the Nagel and Beyland plat on upper Van Voast. Following the Great Depression, the focus of the city's development shifted to the hilltops of South Bellevue.

In the post World War II era, Bellevue suffered from the same urban ills afflicting its riverside neighbors. Many middle-class residents deserted the city in favor of newer suburbs. Their homes were subdivided by absentee landlords, and a familiar cycle of disinvestment was set in motion.

Nonetheless, a number of old families remained loyal to the city. In recent years, young people (many of whom grew up in the city) have again chosen to settle and raise families in central Bellevue. City-sponsored clean-up and beautification programs have also improved the area's image. The Bellevue Architectural Conservation Association, founded in 1985, actively promotes preservation in the city by sponsoring house tours and special projects, and by offering restoration advice. Thus Bellevue's traditional pride in community has thus been translated into a new commitment to the preservation of the city's fine old building stock.

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SECTION 9. REFERENCES

City of Bellevue Building Permits, Volume I: 1883-1894. Available at the City Clerk's Office, Bellevue City Building.

Federal Writer's Project in Ohio. CINCINNATI: A GUIDE TO THE QUEEN CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORS. Cincinnati: The City of Cincinnati, 1943.

Lake, D. J. ATLAS OF BOONE, KENTON, AND CAMPBELL COUNTIES. Philadelphia: D. J. Lake and Co., 1883.

National Register Nomination Form, Herz Jesu Kirche. Prepared by Rev. Robert Klein, Associate Pastor, 1974.

PICTORIAL AND INDUSTRIAL REVIEW OF NORTHERN KENTUCKY. Newport, Kentucky: The Fennell Co., 1923.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Bellevue, Kentucky. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1886, 1894, 1910.

Williams Bellevue Directories for the following years: 1880, 1894, 1910, 1931.

The following edition of the CINCINNATI DAILY ENQUIRER: May 28, 1866.

The following editions of the KENTUCKY POST: Jan. 28, 1896; Nov. 6, 1902; June 4, 1917.

The following editions of the KENTUCKY STATE JOURNAL (later known as the KENTUCKY JOURNAL): Jan. 1, 1884; Dec. 20, 1883; Nov. 13, 1891.

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CAMPBELL CO. COURTHOUSE AT NEWPORT, KY.

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much of the property traditionally associated with the courthouse and skirts a parking area to the rear of the building. It excludes surrounding structures, including the Newport Jail, which is scheduled for demolition in the near future, and will be replaced by either a parking area or new structure of differing use. Areas adjacent to the Courthouse are described in Section 7.

History of the City of Bellevue



THE CITY OF BELLEVUE is now a municipal corporation of the fourth class. It was granted its first charter by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky under an Act which was approved by the Governor on March 15th, 1870. The legislative body of the city at that time was composed of a board of trustees consisting of five, one of their number being elected presiding officer. The first trustees of Bellevue were George D. Allen, John Peak, William Robson, Spencer C. Reeves and Ruben Tedrow. Bellevue, at that time, was approximately two-fifths of its present area, additional territory having been added from time to time by Act of the General Assembly and by annexation by the Board of Council. The present area of Bellevue covers about two square miles and a population of approximately seventy-eight hundred inhabitants. Lying immediately east of and adjacent to Newport, it is within twelve minutes by street car to the Dixie Terminal at Cincinnati, being connected with Cincinnati by two electric street car lines. Bellevue is really "a city of homes", there being but one manufacturing establishment in the city, which is the Caldwell Overall Company. The total assessed valuation or property for purpose of taxation is in round figures about \$4,000,000.00, while the total indebtedness of the city, bonded and floating, is approximately \$48,000.00 and the tax rate for 1922 was \$1.76 per hundred.

Bellevue has two banks, the Campbell County Bank with a capital of \$25,000.00 and deposits of \$900,000.00 and the Bellevue Commercial & Savings Bank with a capital of \$25,000.00 and deposits of approximately \$700,000.00, which indicates the character of people who comprise the citizenship of Bellevue. The former bank commenced business twenty years ago and the latter on May 10th, 1919.

The churches and lodges play a dominant part in the progress of the city, there being two Roman Catholic Churches and five Protestant Churches. Bellevue can boast of one of the finest system of public schools in the state, its High School, being one of the accredited list of most of the important colleges and universities in this section.

The main line of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway passes through and maintains a passenger depot in Bellevue. Water is furnished through the City of Newport and electric current and natural gas by the Union Light, Heat & Power Company. Natural gas is furnished to consumers at the flat rate of thirty cents per one thousand cubic feet which is considerable lower than the rate in either Cincinnati or Covington, and this franchise still has about ten years to run. Bellevue being a city without factories, the air is not contaminated with smoke, and the winding Ohio River bordering it on the north and its hills on the south, with its close proximity to Cincinnati make it a healthy, convenient and attractive city in which to live. Unlike other cities in northern Kentucky, Bellevue, on account of its topographical condition, is unaffected by floods, and therefore we do not find in this city the poorer grade of houses and homes, which usually bring an undesirable class of citizens. About nine-tenths of the citizens of Bellevue are home-owners, paupers being absolutely negligible in the city and poor people few. Bellevue has some citizens of outstanding wealth and the beautiful homes along the finely paved and macadamized streets are some of the show places of the city.

1/12/88

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Bellevue MRA
State Campbell Co., KY

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
Cover	
1. Fairfield Avenue Historic District	for Keeper Patrick Andrews 2/24/88
2. Foote-Fister Mansion	for Keeper Patrick Andrews 2/24/88
3. Taylor's Daughters Historic District	for Keeper Patrick Andrews 2/24/88
4.	Keeper _____
5.	Keeper _____
6.	Keeper _____
7.	Keeper _____
8.	Keeper _____
9.	Keeper _____
10.	Keeper _____