



Office of the Planning Commission

City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge
Post Office Box 1471, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821
or
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Phone (225) 389-3144 Fax (225) 389-5342

Ryan L. Holcomb, AICP
Planning Director

April 8, 2021

TO: Planning Commission

THROUGH: Ryan L. Holcomb, AICP, Planning Director *RH*

FROM: Collin Lindrew, Planner I *CL*

SUBJECT: **HL-1-21** 1344 Terrace Avenue

Application Summary					
Applicant	Fairleigh Jackson on behalf of Preserve Louisiana		Submittal Date		December 3, 2020
Site Area	± 10,300 sf				
Location	South side of Terrace Avenue, east of Smith Street (Council District 10 Coleman)				
HPC Meeting Date	February 10, 2021	Planning Commission Meeting Date	April 19, 2021	Metro Council Meeting Date	April 21, 2021
Request					
Proposed Landmark	New Ark Baptist Church				
Site Characteristics					
Historic District	None				
Historic Information	Originally constructed in 1909 as a wooden church building. Remodeled in 1943 in a gothic style.				
Existing Zoning	Heavy Commercial (C2)				
Existing Use	Religious Institution				
Findings					
Staff certifies the request meets the criteria for designation as a Local Historic Landmark					

Case History – This Site

- Historic Preservation Commission recommended approval on February 10, 2021

Case History – Surrounding Area

- None

Design Elements

- Church was originally constructed in 1909 as a wood structure.
- Major renovations in 1943 introduced a gothic style to the structure.

- Steeple was added in the 20th century, and the foyer contains the original bell tower.

Regulatory Issues

- Consistent with FUTUREBR Community Design and Neighborhoods Action Item 2.4.3: Expand historic designation program to protect additional areas
- Consistent with Unified Development Code Section 3.7.1 A, exhibiting cultural significance
 - Church was founded in 1909 by a small congregation under the leadership of Reverend J.S. Butler
 - Over the course of its 111-year history, the church has been a foundation in the South Baton Rouge community
 - Due to the 1943 renovation, the church building is a rare example of a gothic-style Baptist church
 - Under the leadership of seven pastors, the church property has been expanded a number of times, strengthening its position of importance in South Baton Rouge
- Application has written consent of property owner

Community Outreach/Notification







- Public notification cards mailed to property owners within a 300 foot radius on February 26, 2021
- Subject property posted on February 26, 2021
- Staff reports available online on March 4, 2021 at <http://la-batonrouge.civicplus.com/AgendaCenter/12>
- Legal advertisement published in the Advocate on March 5, 9, and 11, 2021

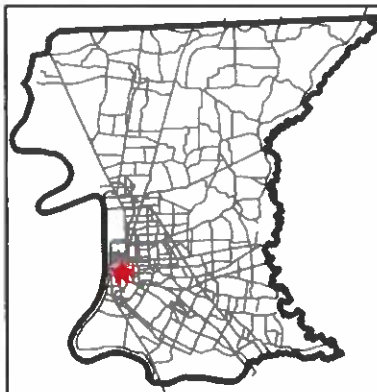
Findings

Staff certifies the request meets the criteria for designation as a Local Historic Landmark



Legend

-  Current Case
-  Previous Relevant Cases
-  Notified of Public Hearing
-  Zoning Graphic
-  Lot Graphic
-  Special Flood Hazard Area
- A1** Zoning Labels



HL-1-21

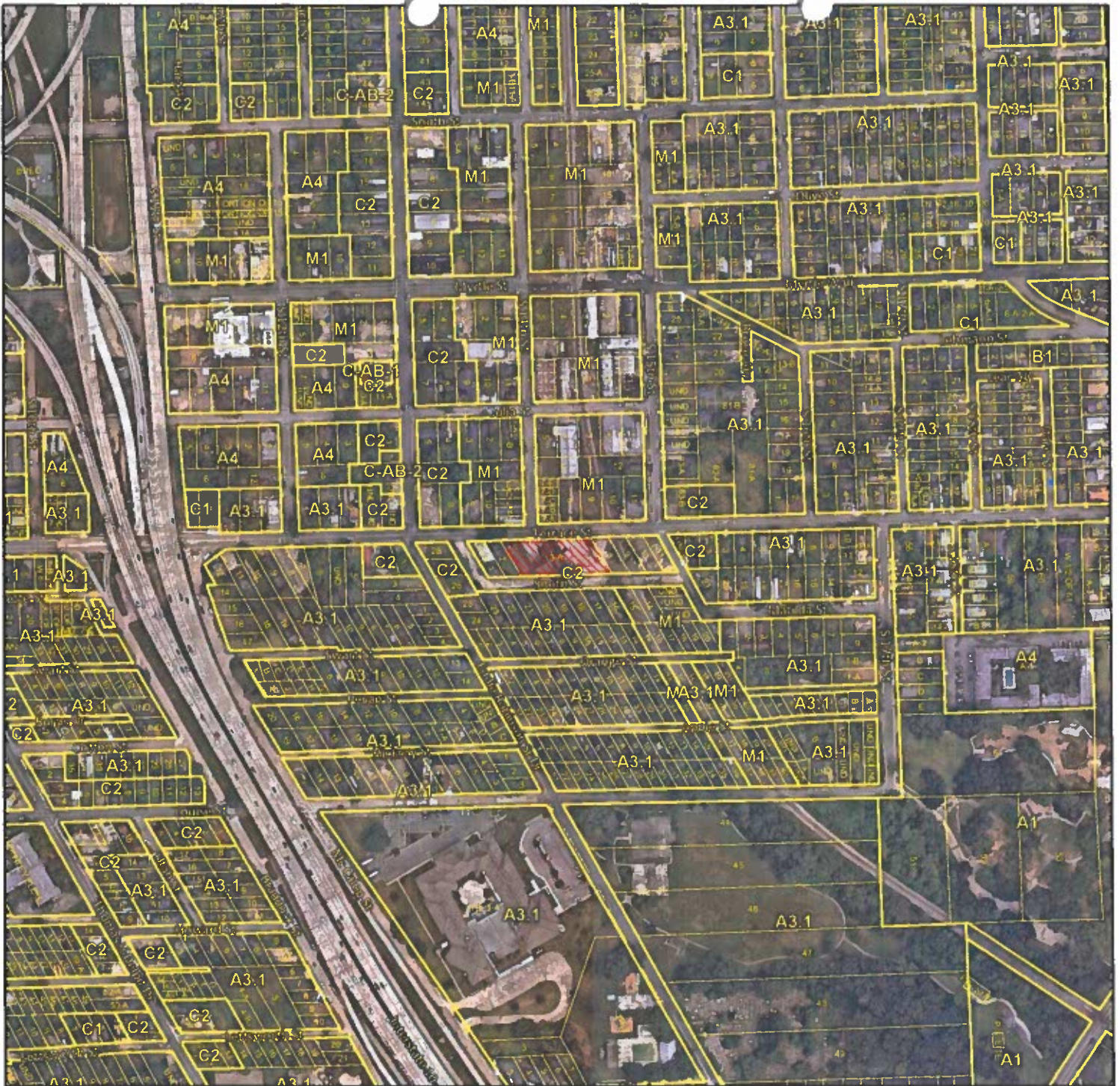


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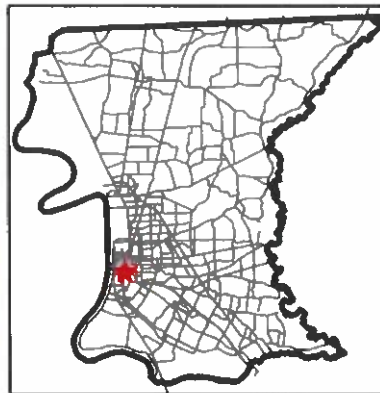


CITY OF BATON ROUGE
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
PLANNING COMMISSION




Legend

-  Current Case
-  Zoning Graphic
-  Lot Graphic
- A1** Zoning Labels



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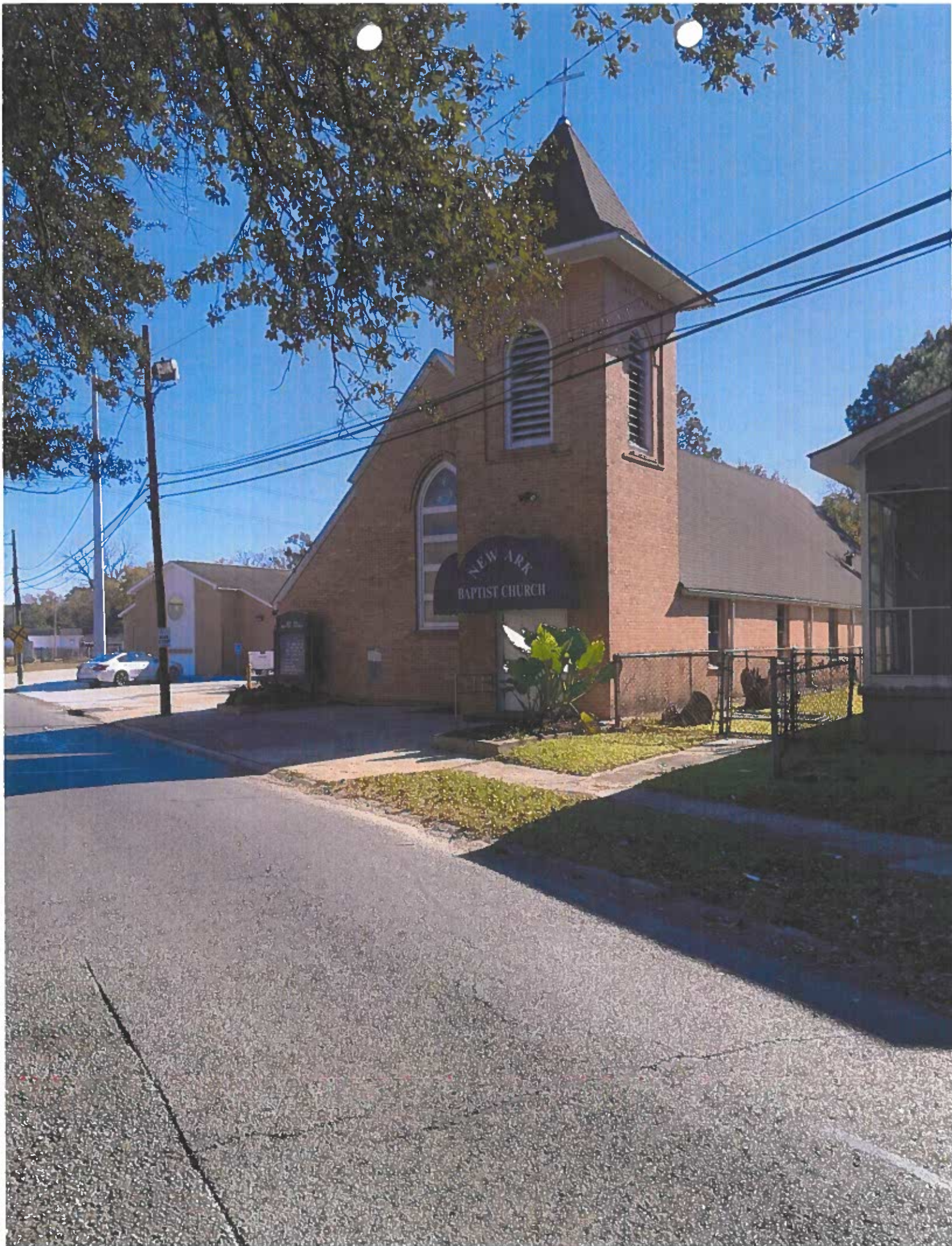
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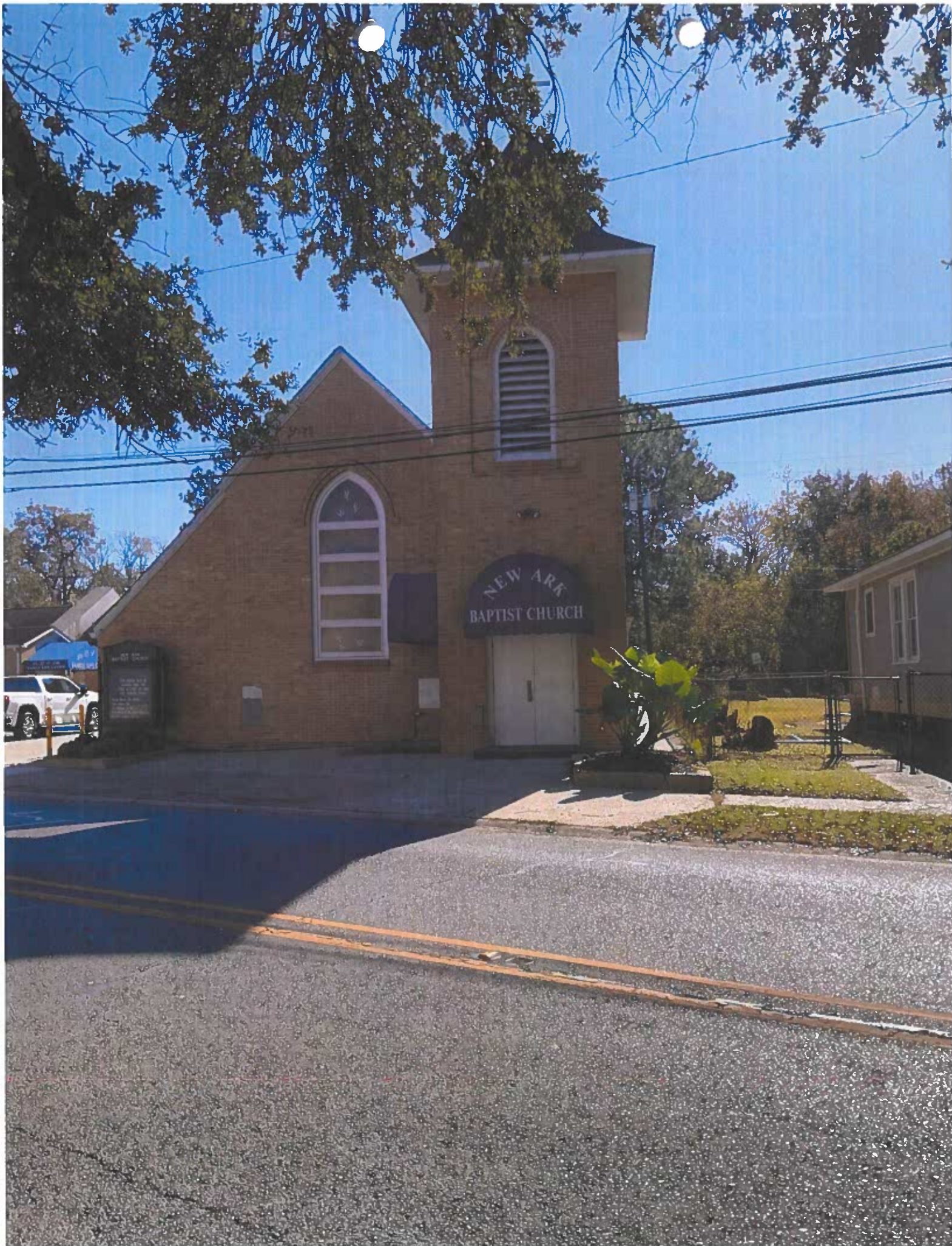
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OUR CHURCH HISTORY

The beginning of this sacred sanctuary and its progress over time are reasons for the members to be proud, grateful, and determined to continue to do God's will. For the past 110 years, New Ark has been and forever will be a blessed place full of blessed people who desire to be a blessing to others.

New Ark Baptist Church was organized in September of 1909 by a small, yet faithful group of believers under the leadership of **Reverend J. S. Butler**. During the early 1900's there wasn't much money, but the members were filled with strong determination to erect a facility and be a church family that would be beneficial to the surrounding community.

After the passing of Rev. Butler, **Reverend R. H. Hall** was elected as pastor. Both physical and spiritual growth of the church persisted under his leadership. God continued to show Himself mighty in the life of New Ark. To add to the work of the church, God sent **Reverend Don Smith** as the third Pastor. Under his leadership, and with the continued faithfulness of the membership, additional land was purchased, the church building was extended, and funds were raised toward erecting a new edifice.

The next chapters of this place of worship were graced by the spiritual preaching, teaching, and leadership of **Reverend Q. T. Ellis**. Relatively early in his more than 60 years as pastor, the current sanctuary was built. Since that time, hundreds of people have been spiritually fed, babies blessed, couples married, converts baptized, and those whose life ended have been eulogized on this holy ground. During Rev. Ellis's tenure the church continued to advance in kingdom building. Many new ministries were added, more property was obtained, the mortgage on the sanctuary was retired, and the vision for a multipurpose center was laid out.

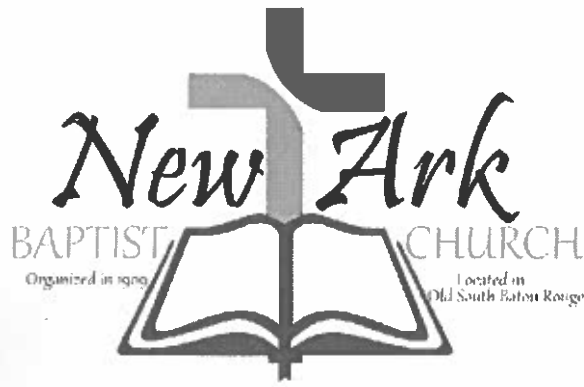
Rev. Ellis was completely dedicated to ministry, evangelism, and community growth, but he knew he wouldn't be here forever. He selected **Reverend Melvin Carter** as his assistant pastor, and God later saw fit for him to become the fifth pastor of New Ark. Rev. Carter served the church and community and oversaw a period of continued expansion.

The sixth pastor, **Reverend David Ferguson**, brought several new ministry initiatives to the church with his leadership. Although his tenure was short and New Ark experienced a season of difficulty, God's word in Romans chapter 8 proved true, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." During this time, many members remained steadfast in their resolve to do God's will God's way.

In November 2016, seeing the need for and potential of the church to reach higher heights, the membership received its 7th pastor, **Reverend Devin J. Wright**. Rev. Wright powerfully proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ, teaches through biblical revelation, engages in pastoral care ministry, provides vision and oversight for the ministry work of the church, and acts as a proficient administration in church business affairs.

Under his leadership so far, the Deacons were ordained during a very powerful ceremony, Sunday school classrooms were modernized, church windows have been updated with a new look, AA meetings have been provided for the need of the community on Tuesdays after our community feeding, and several new members have been added to the body of Christ. As we continue to "focus on God's purpose for His people", a new Boy Scouts troop is presently being organized as a way to help address the need for increased Godly, male influence and exposure to the world beyond this community.

The New Ark Baptist Church family has and will continue to promote spiritual and meaningful ministry initiatives inside and outside of the church. Our hope is that we do our part in creating a welcoming and spirit-filled atmosphere that will encourage everyone to come to Christ.



"A Church Focused On God's Purpose For His People"

Monday, March 15, 2021

Dear Members of the EBRP City-Parish Planning Commission,

It fills my heart with much joy to render this letter of support as our church is considered for designation as a local historic landmark. Since its beginning in 1909, New Ark Baptist Church has been a vital part of the life of, what is now known as, Old South Baton Rouge. More than a place of worship, it has been a catalyst for transformation and development in the community.

Over the course of our nearly 112 year history, we've had 7 pastors. most noticeably was Dr. Q. T. Ellis, who is a historic figure in his own right, having served the church for more than 60 years before his retirement. Pastor Ellis was a known friend and co-laborer of Dr. T. J. Jemison, a prominent leader of Baton Rouge's 1953 bus boycott. like many black churches during the height of our nation's civil rights era, New Ark was a safe-haven and place of restoration for those who fought for a more just society.

Many New Ark's members have also left edible marks in history. One in particular stands out, Sister Earledean Joseph. She was one of Baton Rouge's first black nurses and can be seen regularly in worship on Sunday mornings. Black people from all walks of life have found refuge and inspiration at New Ark for generations.

When I became the pastor in 2017, I was 28 years old, the youngest pastor in the life of our church. The power of New Ark's history has never been lost on me. I have been blessed to hear so many first-hand stories from members who have been around for 60 years or more. I am excited to know that, with your vote of approval, people throughout future generations will be able to learn about and connect with the rich past of this sacred place.

Yours in Progress,

Devin J. Wright

1344 Terrace Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Phone: 225.963.6040 | Email: connected@NewArkBaptistBR.org

Devin J. Wright, Pastor

Historic District/Landmark Nomination

City of Baton Rouge / Parish of East Baton Rouge
Office of the Planning Commission, 1100 Laurel Street, Suite 104
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802

12/3/2020

Staff Use Only

Fee(s): \$250

Application Taken by: MLN

Case Number: _____

Meeting Date: Jan 19

MPN Project Number: 52553-1PC

Please Print or Type (all entities listed below will be copied on all comments)

1. Applicant Name and Title: _____
Email Address: Fairleigh@preserve-louisiana.org Daytime Phone Number: 225-387-2484
Address: 502 North Blvd City: Baton Rouge State: LA ZIP: 70802
2. Developer (if applicable): n/a
Email Address: n/a
3. Name of Property Owner: New Ark Baptist Church Daytime Telephone: 225-963-8040
Email Address: wright.devinj@gmail.com
Address: 1344 Terrace Avenue City: Baton Rouge State: LA ZIP: 70802
4. Subject Property Information:
CPPC Lot ID#(s): 1650750
Lot #(s): 3-A Block/Square: G
Subdivision or Tract Name: Swart Addition
(If property is not subdivided, attach a complete legal description from the East Baton Rouge Parish Tax Assessor and a survey map indicating bearings and dimensions.)
Nearest Intersection: Eddie Robinson Sr. Drive and Terrace Avenue
5. Property Street Address: 1344 Terrace Avenue
6. Historic Name: New Ark Baptist Church
Other Names: _____
6. Ownership of Property:
☒ Private ☐ Public-Local ☐ Public-State ☐ Public-Federal
7. Category of Property:
☐ District ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

8. Number of Resources within the Property:

	National Register Listed/Eligible	Contributing Element	Modest Contributing Element	Non-Contributing Element
Buildings	1	0	0	0
Structures	0	0	0	0
Sites	0	0	0	0
Objects	0	0	0	0
Total	1	0	0	0

9. Original Owner: New Ark Baptist Church

Significant Later Owner(s): _____

10. Date(s) of construction: September 9, 1909

Date(s) of alterations/additions: June 20, 1943

11. Historic Use: Church

Present Use: Church

12. Physical Description:

Describe the historic and current condition of the property/district on one or more continuation sheets. Include style(s) of architecture and relationship to surrounding fabric. Elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments, site details, and major alterations.

Built in September 1909 the structure was wood, in 1943 it was rebricked. It is a 20th century interpretation of a gothic style.

The steeple is independent and at the front makes it more 20th century. The foyer is also where the bell tower is still held.

13. Criteria for Designation:

Landmark (Check all that apply)

- ☐ It is an outstanding example of a building, structure, object, or work of art representative of its era.
- ☐ It is one of the few remaining examples of past architectural styles.
- ☐ Plans, Elevations, & Sections
- ☒ It is a place, building, site, object, work of art or structure associated with an event or a person of historic cultural significance to Baton Rouge, State of Louisiana, or the region.

District (Check all that apply)

- ☐ It has special character or special cultural value, historic/aesthetic values or interest.
- ☐ It represents one or more periods of styles of architecture typical in one or more eras in the history of the city-parish, state, or region.
- ☐ It constitutes a visibly perceptible section of the municipality or city-parish.

14. Statement of Significance:

Describe the significance of the property/district on one or more continuation sheets. Describe the history of the property/district on one or more continuation sheets. Provide details about the circumstances of construction and specific historical associations, including why this property/district has direct association with an important individual, group, event, or historic trend. Be sure to explain precisely how the property/district meets the above criteria for designation.

With this property being constructed in 1909 by the faithful followers of the South Baton Rouge community by one of the leading families of the time. The church was the site of many community and church functions that helped to push the community when needed.

15. Bibliography (Use additional sheet if necessary):

New Ark Baptist Church was organized in September of 1909 by a small, yet faithful group of believers under the leadership of Reverend J. S. Butler. During the early 1900's there wasn't much money, but the members were filled with strong determination to erect a facility and be a church family that would be beneficial to the surrounding community.

Attachments:

☐ District or Site Map
☐ Other

☐ Site Plan

☐ Photographs (historic and current)

☐ Historic Building Inventory (districts only)

16. Owner Consent for Landmark Designation:

I/We, the undersigned, acting as owner(s) of the property described in this application for landmark designation do, hereby, give my consent to the designation of this structure as a Local Historic Landmark.



Rev. Devin Wright

12/3/2020

Signature of Property Owner

Type of Print Property Owner Name

Date

If the owner does not consent to designation, describe the reasons for recommending designation:

17. Acknowledgement:

In filing this application, I understand that it becomes a part of the public record of the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge and hereby certify that all information contained herein as accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the application fee is nonrefundable. (Applications must be received by 10:00a.m. on the scheduled Application Deadline.)



Fairleigh Cook Jackson

12/3/2020

Signature of Applicant

Type or Print Name of Applicant

Date