



AN
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Surroundings
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Hurricane Katrina: Recovery Efforts in Planning and Historic Preservation

In New Orleans, brackets such as this are common features of mid-to-late-nineteenth-century shotguns and double-gallery houses.

After a major disaster, many skill sets are needed to facilitate the recovery of an area, much like any other development or transportation project. After a disaster such as Hurricane Katrina, it takes not only a large amount of professionals but a lot of time and coordination. In fact, recovery efforts are still taking place in Louisiana over two years later.

A.D. Marble & Company has sent three employees to Louisiana over the last two years to work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) post-hurricane effort. Two of the recovery efforts we have been involved in are Long-Term Community Recovery Planning and Historic Preservation.

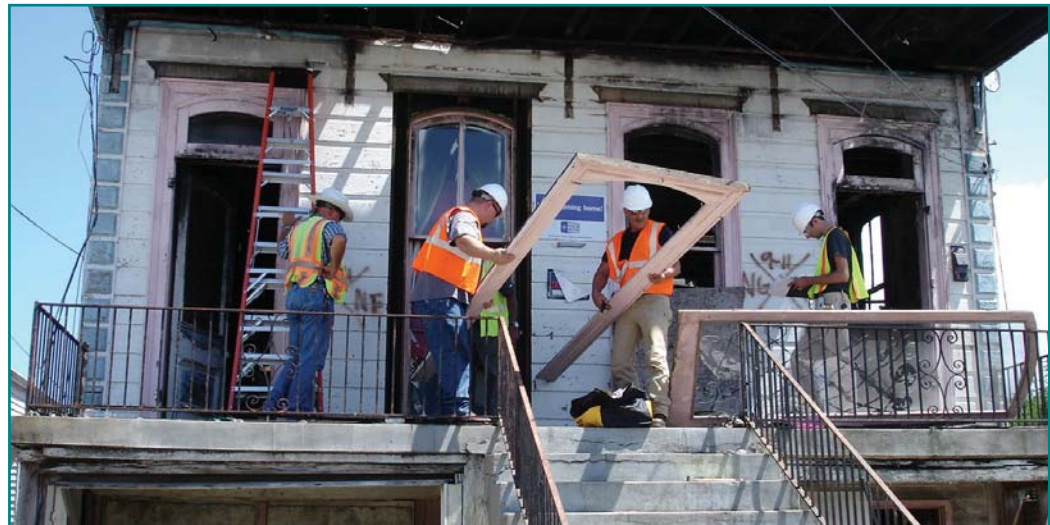
Long-Term Community Recovery Planning (LTCR)

Soon after Hurricane Katrina, efforts were made to think beyond the immediate response to the disaster. FEMA's LTCR section was initiated

early on in the recovery in order to begin coordination and take advantage of the funding and presence of federal agencies. LTCR is a relatively new function for the federal government. Still an evolving arena, it was determined that providing a community with opportunities to improve instead of simply replace what was lost speeds recovery and enhances the community's long-term future.

In addition to a coordination office in Baton Rouge, eighteen field teams were put into

The nature of post-disaster work demands that creative solutions be sought and consultants work efficiently. As adequate numbers of consultants cannot usually be found within the immediate vicinity of a disaster, they are brought in from around the country. These professionals are quickly educated in the local context and politics, as well as progressive methods of addressing the recovery process in accordance with established regulations. Disaster recovery projects such as those that are taking place in Louisiana use some of the most current technologies and force consultants to think outside of the box when it comes to the project and the clients' differing needs.



Selective Recoupment: In New Orleans, the character-defining features of historic structures damaged by Hurricane Katrina are salvaged for reuse within the city.

place across the southern parishes of Louisiana. Each of these teams was given the task of involving the public and the local government in the preparation of a recovery plan. The planners, engineers, architects, and other professionals of the recovery teams evaluated the effects of the disaster on transportation systems, the economy, housing, and other sectors. They then identified, through extensive public involvement, specific projects to boost the long-term recovery of the parish in each of these sectors. The process is fast paced to take advantage of early rebuilding efforts and, in the parishes outside of the New Orleans metropolitan area, plans were completed in spring 2006. Implementation is currently underway in these areas.

Historic Preservation

The demolition of private properties is being reviewed under Section 106 as FEMA has a reimbursement program for the demolition of properties deemed hazardous to public health as a result of hurricane damage. However, with the urgency of the post-disaster situation, the FEMA Environmental and Historic Preservation department (EHP) had to be extremely efficient in their efforts, while ensuring adequate coordination with other agencies. In Louisiana, EHP developed an abbreviated Section 106 process in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the five metropolitan parishes, and consulting parties such as the National Trust for Historic

SECTION 106 PROCESS OVERVIEW

Any project with federal funding or permitting must undergo the Section 106 process, which includes ongoing public involvement:

- ✓ Identify buildings, structures, districts or sites over 50 years old
- ✓ Determine eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
- ✓ Determine the effects of the project on the eligible resources
- ✓ Determine mitigation for any adverse effects

Preservation (NTHP), the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (ACHP), and local preservation groups.

The abbreviated process is coordinated between all of these parties by a Historic Preservation (HP) Specialist. The HP Specialist receives lists of properties proposed for demolition from each parish. They then coordinate with the parish, GIS, survey teams, and consulting parties to insure that each property is properly documented and goes through the public involvement process. The HP Specialist also coordinates directly with the SHPO to determine eligibility.

Although FEMA solicits the public and consulting parties for alternatives to demolition of eligible properties, feasible options are rarely found. However, mitigation methods were

agreed upon through coordination with the consulting parties and the local government. In New Orleans, FEMA is conducting a resurvey of each of the approximately twenty affected historic districts within the city. This resurvey not only documents the losses from the hurricane but also documents any changes made since the nomination of each district and makes recommendations for new or amended districts. This resurvey provides the city and state with up-to-date GIS mapping through the use of geodatabases and GPS data taken in the field. In addition to the resurvey, each eligible property proposed for demolition is documented with large-format photography and any character-defining features that can be reused are salvaged for resale within the city. This program was given the ACHP Chairman's Award for Federal Achievement in Historic Preservation in 2007.



Shotguns in the Faubourg Marigny Historic District:

Many of these classic New Orleans-style homes were impacted by Hurricane Katrina and have benefited from local restoration efforts.



Shauna Haas
Architectural Historian

B.A.
Urban & Regional Planning
University of Illinois, 2000

M.A.
Historic Preservation
Cornell University, 2004

Shauna Haas has been an Architectural Historian with A.D. Marble & Company for three years, currently working out of the Conshohocken, PA, office. She has recently spent eight months in Louisiana as a planner and historic preservation specialist, and has three years of experience in disaster recovery. In addition, Ms. Haas has over eight years of experience in planning and historic preservation.

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