

MAGNOLIA HOUSING PROJECT, BUILDING NO. 51  
(C.J. Peete Housing Project)  
3201-09 South Robertson Street  
New Orleans  
Orleans Parish  
Louisiana

HABS LA-1369-F  
HABS LA-1369-F

HABS  
LA-1369-F

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

DUE TO INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION AT THE TIME OF EDITING, THIS MATERIAL MAY NOT CONFORM TO HABS OR HAER STANDARDS. HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

C.J. PEETE HOUSING PROJECT, BUILDING No. 51  
(Magnolia Housing Project)

HABS No. LA-1369-~~BA~~ F

Location: 3201-09 South Robertson Street, New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana

Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates:  
29.937052738004602°, -90.09218886494636°

USGS New Orleans East Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM)  
coordinates: 15.780689.3315367

Date of Erection: ~~1939~~ 1941

Architects: Moise Goldstein, Thomas Harlee, Frederick Parham, N. Courtlandt Curtis, Richard Koch, and Charles Armstrong

Owners: Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO), the City of New Orleans

Significance: The Great Depression of the 1930s spurred the first peacetime federal government attempts to systematically address the lack of adequate affordable housing for low-income residents. The federal government financed local building efforts through a series of new laws. Among the third wave of these projects planned and built in the late 1930s, the construction of C.J. Peete Project addressed two major issues of the era: the housing reform movement (i.e. – urban “slum clearance”) and the reemployment of large sections of the labor force.

History: Please see <sup>Field Notes for</sup> ~~historic report~~ HABS No. LA-1369 for the general history of the C.J. Peete Housing Project.

Description: The architects of Building No. 51 of the C.J. Peete Housing Project designed the building to echo the brick townhouses of the Vieux Carré. Yet it was a modern multi-unit apartment designed to allow the lowest income residents in New Orleans a safe and sanitary place to live.

<sup>2005</sup> Even after many storms and two major hurricanes (Hurricane Betsy in 1965 and Hurricane Katrina in 2008), the brick, concrete and terra cotta “tile” walls had no structural failure. Only surfaces, plumbing, and electrical systems needed repair or replacement. The original site plan labeled Building No. 52 as type “B”, not be confused with HABS No. 1369-B.

The building stood 124 feet long, 27 feet deep and 48 feet tall at the ridgeline. The building had three stories with four two-bedroom units and one three-bedroom unit on the first floor. The second floor had four one-bedroom units and two two-story two-bedroom units on the second floor. The third floor had four more one-bedroom units.

1. United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, “C.J. Peete Housing Development, Environmental Justice Study.” (New Orleans, LA, 2007), 11.

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The walls sat on concrete footings with an approximately three foot high knee-wall forming a vented crawlspace. Terra cotta "tile" masonry supported the twelve-inch thick walls with a brick exterior veneer. The floors were six-inch thick concrete slabs. The only wood could be found in the roof: trussed rafters spaced 23 ½ inches on center.

The concrete front porches extended six feet out from the façade, with one set of front steps. Cypress beam hip roofs shaded the center front porch. The flanking front porches had been covered with a pediment roof. The roofs were supported by steel beams and surrounded with a railing with decorative ironwork that echoed the ironwork balconies and galleries of the French Quarter. Back stoops were only three feet deep and uncovered. Six chimneys were spaced down the length of the building.

Exterior doors were simple affairs with six-light over panel front doors with no brick detailing. An important point of comfort: all doors had a secondary wood screen door for summer ventilation (while protecting the people from insects).

Windows had several different types specified. Most would be eight over eight pane wood double-hung windows. Some would be a six over six pane wood double-hung window. (A New Orleans standard window.) However, two six over six pane windows would be paired into a set or the bathroom window would be noticeable for its four over four double-hung window,

Originally, the contractor installed terra cotta tiles on the hip roof. Hot air vented out of the attic with triangular roof vents. Wood molding covered the eaves and traditional half-round gutters with downspouts carried rainwater off the roof. The terra cotta tile roofs had been replaced with a 30-year asphalt shingle.

The architects arranged the rooms of each unit on either side of a central stair. The building contained the stair at the rear. A hallway and small lobby divided the front door and the stair. The stairs ran between floors in "U" shape. Stair banisters were constructed of metal: a square newel post and plain pickets.

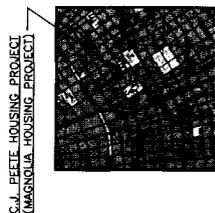
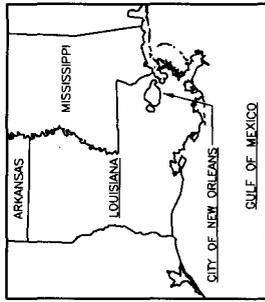
The architects used traditional residential finishes: floors with wood (later tile), plaster surfacing over the terra cotta walls and concrete ceiling. All wall had a simple, but well crafted wood baseboard. All interior doors were two-panel doors with a plain surround that matched the baseboards. The fireplaces were simply but attractively decorated with a brick surround with wood molding, a wood mantle top with a beveled edge, and three metal heat grates. Later, space heaters (probably natural gas) would be vented out of the chimney.

Historian: Virginia S. Lee  
Preservation Architect, M. Arch.  
Earth Search, Inc.  
P.O. Box 770336  
New Orleans, LA 70177-0336

# C.J. PEETE HOUSING PROJECT

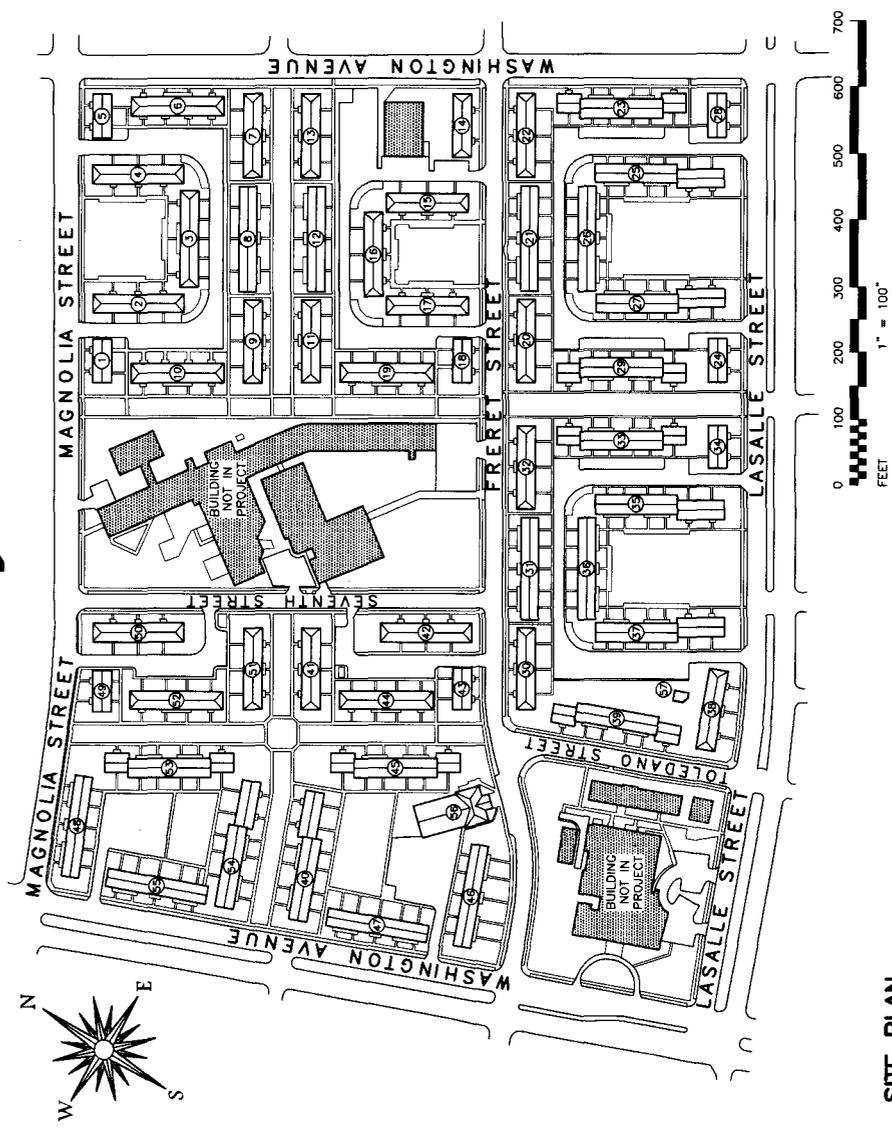
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(Page 3)

BUILDING KEY	HABS NO.	TYPE
1.	2800-56 MAGNOLIA ST.	A
2.	2844-48 MAGNOLIA ST.	C
3.	2814-42 MAGNOLIA ST.	C
4.	2808-12 MAGNOLIA ST.	C
5.	2800-06 MAGNOLIA ST.	A
6.	2800-14 WASHINGTON AVE.	F
7.	2801-09 S. ROBERTSON ST.	B
8.	2841-38 S. ROBERTSON ST.	E
9.	2801-15 SIXTH ST.	D
10.	2840-48 S. ROBERTSON ST.	B
11.	2810-38 S. ROBERTSON ST.	E
12.	2800-08 S. ROBERTSON ST.	H
13.	2801-03 FRED ST.	A
14.	2805-13 FRED ST.	B
15.	2812-23 FRED ST.	B
16.	2832-21 FRED ST.	D
17.	2835-21 FRED ST.	D
18.	2835-21 FRED ST.	D
19.	2501-15 SIXTH ST.	A
20.	2840-48 FRED ST.	B
21.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
22.	2840-48 FRED ST.	B
23.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
24.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
25.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
26.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
27.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
28.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
29.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
30.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
31.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
32.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
33.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
34.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
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36.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
37.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
38.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
39.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
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42.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
43.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
44.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
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49.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
50.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
51.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
52.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
53.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
54.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
55.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
56.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E
57.	2810-38 FRED ST.	E



C.J. PEETE HOUSING PROJECT  
(MAGNOLIA HOUSING PROJECT)

UM REFERENCE: 15-760458.3313241  
**LOCATION MAP**  
 ADAPTED FROM USGS MAP  
 NEW ORLEANS EAST QUADRANGLE,  
 LOUISIANA



**SITE PLAN**

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF THE 1930S SPURRED THE FIRST PEACETIME FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO SYSTEMATICALLY ADDRESS THE LACK OF ADEQUATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR LOW-INCOME RESIDENTS. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FINANCED LOCAL BUILDING EFFORTS THROUGH A SERIES OF NEW LAWS. AMONG THE THIRD WAVE OF THESE PROJECTS PLANNED AND BUILT IN THE LATE 1930S, THE CONSTRUCTION OF C.J. PEETE HOUSING PROJECT ADDRESSED TWO MAJOR ISSUES OF THE ERA: THE HOUSING REFORM MOVEMENT (I.E. - URBAN "SLUM CLEARANCE") AND THE REEMPLOYMENT OF LARGE SECTIONS OF THE LABOR FORCE. AFTER HURRICANE KATRINA IN 2005, THE CLOSING AND DEMOLITION OF THE HOUSING PROJECTS ONCE AGAIN FOCUSED NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION ON HOUSING RIGHTS.