

Rewinding to the Past: New Orleans Architecture

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Before Hurricane Katrina hit, the typical sightseer went to New Orleans to visit the infamous French Quarter and Bourbon Alley. Now, the tourist sites broadened from the historical past to the future architecture: Brad Pitt's 'Make It Right' progressive houses, Tulane University's 'URBANBuild' ultra-modern houses, and Global Green's Holy Cross Visitor Center's play-on-shotgun houses. Instead of touring the plantation mansions of the Garden District, tour buses rolled down the narrow streets filled with oddly enveloped houses that would supposedly float in floods. One can assume these state-of-the-art constructions will survive the next natural disasters, based on their ability to withstand 160 miles/hour wind and to remain above at least eight feet of water, but will they last through the next couple generations of New Orleans criticisms?

The building phenomenon in New Orleans can be compared to one by Le Corbusier in Pessac, a mainly generational, family-owned, wine-producing suburb of Bordeaux, France. Similar in that both involve houses that are deemed 'futuristic' and 'progressive,' it would be interesting to speculate the outcome of the New Orleans houses based on the outcome of the Pessac houses.

Figure 1. Le Corbusier. Pessac – Before and After Quartiers Modernes Frugès I



The living unit designed by Corbusier mimicked his modern image of the Villa Savoye, a house that was a "machine to live in." Modern and not-appreciated for its time, his bare-walled and rectilinear forms in Pessac were decried by the community. Forty years later, the "machine to live in" was remodeled and/or torn down to become a "chez soi (a house)." Not only had the vast majority of bold colors disappeared, the wide windows were narrowed, open terraces became enclosed spaces, and the empty spaces beneath stilts were closed off, echoing a clash between Corbusier's desire to be *avant-garde* and the occupants want of a functional, not aesthetically pleasing house. There had been a real conflict between the intentions of the architect and needs of the occupants.



Figure 2. Le Corbusier. La Villa Savoye
[Online] http://farm1.static.flickr.com/107/311329033_ec044347bd.jpg
September 20, 2009.

Upon reaction, one would consider Le Corbusier's project an architectural failure. But to say that would be to assume architecture should be unchangeable and that all architects are capable of fulfilling their clients' deepest habitual and living needs. Yes, architects must understand his clients' needs to design an appropriate house, but in order to judge what is an architectural failure, the motives of the architect and his understanding of the client's culture must be taken into

consideration as well. Pessac set a precedent for what may happen when the understandings and wants of the architects differ from the occupants' needs. The criticism brought upon the Pessac housing unit offer a different approach to critiquing future architecture. In New Orleans, the houses were constructed as a machine, a defense mechanism to survive future natural disasters. Similar to Pessac, the soaring houses pop out from the surrounding environment like pages in a pop-up book, literally. Built to be above sea-level in a below sea-level environment, a newly designed double story angular house can be seen looming over the next-door single story Creole cottage. These well-intentioned houses designed to protect occupants from future Hurricane Katrina-like storms are, in ways, shadowed by the ulterior motives of architects who are taking advantage of this blank-slated city to design free-range. These selfish motives are slowly changing the deeply-rooted architecture of New Orleans. Not taking into consideration the habitual needs, rich history, or culture of the inhabitants and city, architects can be said to be forcing New Orleans into a splitting image of 21st century Pessac. Well intentioned, yet controversially unsuitable, the newly built houses in New Orleans may be standing for the next ten years, but will they be there in the next thirty or fifty years? The deciding factor of New Orleans future architecture will depend on her immense flexibility in accepting and integrating this new wave of design into her rich culture and history.

New Orleans is a melting pot of French, African, Native American, German, Spanish, and Caribbean immigrants, an amalgamation of such diverse cultures that it has produced one entirely of its own. Raynell, a loyal New Orleanian who returned after two years in Texas, said, “[Texas] just wasn’t right. The people ain’t the same; the food ain’t the same. Hell, the people didn’t want us there anyways.” After being evacuated to a foreign environment of relatively “lesser” culture, many New Orleanians like Raynell returned to their hometown more appreciative of their traditions. Those who had previously never left the state of Louisiana returned realizing the distinctness it possesses. Welcoming everyone with open arms, New Orleans generates an intimate sense of kinship and conviviality rarely found in such a diverse group of 300,000. This camaraderie is indeed rare, but not surprising. Generations of New Orleans residents have been through a series of challenging events, from arriving to America to the most recent Hurricane Katrina. It is these series of challenges that illuminate empathy within such a diverse group of ethnicities. It remains to be seen if this culture, which has welcomed everyone and everything with generosity, will welcome this new found architecture with the same open arms.

Architecturally, New Orleans is conservative. Shotgun styled houses and Creole cottages dating back to the 18th/19th century are still the majority of New Orleans architecture, showing the little changes since the last two-hundred, three-hundred years. Working actively to preserve this conservative style, New Orleans created the Historic District Landmark Commission (HDLC), which prevents any drastic architectural changes to houses within twelve local Historic Districts. All exterior remodeling of the property including “the color of brick, color of roofing material, and painting of previously unpainted masonry” must be approved through various stages of the HDLC. Conservative and traditional in this quickly evolving modern world, New Orleans is staunchly determined to remain in keeping of its cultural identity. One taxi-driver agreed to how little New Orleans has and will change by speculating, “New Orleans is the only place where you can blindfold and drop me off on the corner of this block in another fifty years, and I will still

know where I am.” Perhaps it is this comforting feeling of returning to a shelter of immutability, while the rest of the world is transforming, that New Orleanians are afraid to lose.



Figure 1. Shotgun house. This is a classic example of a vernacular New Orleans shotgun house: long and narrow with a generous porch and long overhang.

protected by heavy wooden shutters to keep the house cool during the summer and the rain and/or debris out during hurricane season, allow for year-round natural light to enter the house. The generous porches lining the streets derive the famous term ‘Southern hospitality.’ Not only do they create a bridge for social interaction between neighbors and neighbors and residents and pedestrian, but the large overhang above the porch also provides a refuge for residents from the hot Southern sun. These simple, yet practical techniques of architecture designed before the luxuries of air-conditioning and gas lights are beautiful examples of how people built to accommodate the environment and climate. Taken for granted and entirely non-technological, these minimal ways of living have suited more than 200 years of New Orleanians.

Now compare a freshly designed, commercially fabricated, metal-lined house to a traditional shotgun house, richly embellished with ornate trims and boldly painted to the various festivities celebrated throughout New Orleans. One can only see the powers of the technological world. The exterior is fully equipped with solar panels on the angled roof, metal roofing to reduce energy consumption and a green roof to filter the rain. Built with cement siding, rigid insulation, paperless sheetrock,

recycled ceramic tiles, double paned windows with Low-E glass, and completely furnished with energy star qualified refrigerators, dishwasher, washing machine,

The reasons behind the New Orleans architecture are well moderated to the history and overall environmental climate. For example, the traditional New Orleans architecture is called a shotgun house. The name ‘shotgun’ is speculated to originate from New Orleans Afro-Haitian slaves who may have re-interpreted the word ‘to_x gun,’ meaning ‘place of assembly.’ Commonly seen as long and narrow, the shotgun developed in the 1800’s when property taxes were based on the surface area of the house facing the street. The long rectilinear shape provides good interior cross-ventilation and works well with the tall ceilings to separate the hot air from cool air. Large bay windows,



Figure 2. Global Green Holy Cross District house. The house is completely LEED platinum with energy star equipment.

water header, and dual-flush toilets, one can only

see a war craft that will serve against natural disasters. Missing from the impressive resume of this new Global Green house is the hours of delicate arts and craft spent in constructing a ‘*chez soi*.’ Joy, who works in the Preservation Resource Center, describes the missing part as: the “nooks and crannies of life” – the generations of history, culture, and energy built within the house that makes a house feel like a home. The Global Green house is supposedly unique, being one of the five that will be developed with that ultra-modern design, but occupants living in that house cannot feel at home. It is an outcast, situated on an isolated plot of land previously used as cargo storage, in the historically preserved Holy Cross Historic District. Different and non-culturally related, the houses will have difficulty being accepted into the community.

As much as architects designing in this new wave of design defend their prototypical model as a play off a traditional house, there is very little comparison. ‘Make It Right,’ for example, argues each house is a modern-version of a shotgun house. But other than the long and narrow shape, there are few connections to be made. The poorly shaded porches, in some houses, are not connected to the ground, stripping it of its social and practical purpose. The windows are no longer covered by shutters, taking away not only a functional technique of cooling the house, but also an aesthetic appeal. The roofline is tiled at a thirty degree angle for maximum energy absorbance, detracting from the symmetrical look of the house commonly seen in the shotgun and Creole cottages. Tulane University’s ‘URBANbuild’ also argues to have followed the interior layout of a traditional New Orleans house.



Figure 3. Tulane University URBANbuild Prototype 03. This house looms over the neighboring house.

But the traditional interior layout does not compensate for the abstract looking house. ‘URBANbuild Prototype 03’ may have the interior design of a Creole cottage, but the exterior looks like pieces of bright red Lego pieces assembled together. Standing two stories high, a whole story above the neighboring construction, the towering stature disrupts the serene landscape of quaint houses. Another example is Tulane’s ‘Green build 1,’ a greenhouse look-alike. Built in a warehouse using modular construction, the pre-manufactured house was not well accepted in the community. The whole process of pre-manufacturing the house off-site did not allow the community to watch the house be constructed, taking

away a crucial thread necessary for the community to build a connection to the house. An African American lady sitting across ‘Greenbuild 1’ took one look at the house and said, “I don’t want to live in that house. All that pre-manufactured crap don’t look too good.” Perhaps she would have been more accepting of the house if she had a say in the construction and saw it being assembled stick-built method, which is the experience Reverend Charles had. In comparison, Reverend Charles, who lives in a colloquial Creole cottage next to a massive ‘Make It Right’ house, said the ‘Make It Right’ house next door does not bother him. He was a member of the committee who chose the final designs and saw each house “grow up.” Sitting in his front porch everyday, he was able to see the houses come together like watching children develop.

“You might be annoyed, be tired of it, but in the end she’s still your baby,” he said. The different encounters experienced by the two spectators demonstrate the difference between the modern modular construction and the traditional stick-built method. The subtle bond that grows between the neighborhood and a house cannot develop through this new method of construction. Missing all the emotional attachments, the pre-manufactured house reflects nothing of the traditional New Orleans lifestyle.

There are more criterions other than the cultural and aesthetic aspects to be mindful of while speculating on the future of New Orleans housing. One important condition is ‘affordability.’ Speaking with sixty-three residents of New Orleans narrowed the term ‘housing affordability’ down to two general definitions: residents being able to afford a subsidized house and residents being able to afford a non-subsidized house. New Orleans suffered an enormous catastrophe with 80% of the city flooded and over 1,500 people dead in Greater New Orleans. With little government support and no belongings left of their own, New Orleans residents restarted their lives from scratch, beginning with a house. Non-profit organizations such as ‘Make It Right’ and ‘Global Green Holy Cross District’ offered to build and sell limited LEED platinum houses to returning residents for \$150,000, subsidizing the rest of the \$100,000 plus needed to build the house. This is an affordable deal for individual homeowners who are able to take out loans for the \$150,000 because not everyone has the opportunity to live in a \$250,000 house for almost half that price. David, who works in the Operation Comeback unit of the Preservation Resource Center, believes the subsidization and capped number of houses is what makes the houses affordable. But it is this very fact that is controversial. Only 173 residents will be treated with this luxury – 150 residents working with ‘Make It Right’ in the Lower Ninth Ward and 23 residents working with the Global Green Holy Cross District. Christine from the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio believes the capped number and subsidized houses are the reasons these houses are not affordable. It is only affordable to those lucky 173 homeowners, which is less than 1% of the New Orleans population. What about the other 99% of New Orleans residents who would not be able to afford buying a non-subsidized house designed by world renowned architects using the newest LEED platinum equipment? Ironically, organizations such as Make It Right and Global Green still pride themselves in being model programs for offering ‘affordable’ housing. Considering the average cost of a new house is being between \$80/ft² and \$200/ft², no part of the \$300/ft² is considered ‘affordable.’ Even with the architects minimizing any waste and utilizing the best resources from simple things such as harvesting rain water for flushing toilets to installing solar panels at a thirty degree angle facing south for the maximum sun exposure, the loans taken out to buy the house in addition to paying for their daily expenses may take years to pay off, despite the almost net-zero utility bills. In a location where everyone’s belongings: personal, financial, physical, and memorable, were wiped away, money is the scarce resource. For many residents, finding money to remodel their old house, nonetheless buying a new house, is difficult.

It is this scarcity of money and government help that pushed the residents to turn toward the non-profit and private organizations. What the government could not give, the organizations provided. These organizations offered subsidization, security and support. Working side by side to help the residents through the paperwork, carry out loans, and remodel or rebuild their house, they became the returnees’ heroes. Those who came back, returned to an empty lot with the only wish of having an immediate roof over their heads. Thankful for any help offered by the

organizations, they were not picky about what their houses looked like. Most agreed to whatever designs were displayed to them. Just the mere fact that the greater public outside of New Orleans is making an effort to rebuild New Orleans is gratifying for the residents. Eric, who lives in a house designed and built by 'Project Home Again,' framed a picture of 'Project Home Again's' founder and wife in his house. "I am so grateful for what he did. The government didn't give me money to build my house, but this man gave me a house," he said.

It is plausible that the architects of these organizations, while trying to do a good deed, are taking advantage of the residents' lifelong appreciation to make a playground for their uninhibited designs. Architects ranging from world-renowned Frank Gehry to Tulane University graduate students are seizing this opportunity to invent a brand-new design style in the devastated areas of New Orleans. "We tried to go as progressive as possible. We want to see who we can be in the future," a member of Tulane University's URBANBuild said. By targeting the lower income residents who know no better than to sign over their plot of land, architects are almost guaranteed to be able to design whatever they want. All the residents want is a roof over their head, regardless of how 'futuristic' or 'beach-house like' the designs may seem. Architects, aware of this mentality, are taking advantage of this opportunity to design what they would never be able to design elsewhere. Architects are also aware that these houses will become the symbol of charity and grace throughout New Orleans and have realized that their designs will remain untouched throughout the next decades. The houses will not only become a monument to commemorate the victims, or even more so the public compassion, of Hurricane Katrina, but will also be an additional tourist attraction, offering the chance for the architects to show off their talents. It may be all these incentives that drive architects to continue designing in New Orleans.

As one-sided as this manipulation may seem, this exploitation may actually be coming from both sides. Katie, a member from the Tulane 'URBANbuild,' has worked closely with the community in poorer locations. She admits that Tulane 'URBANbuild' is taking advantage of the empty land to have a hands-on learning process of architecture for the students; but likewise, she said that the lower-income residents are also taking advantage of this time for a fresh start. Using others' charity to receive a completely new house could mean a new start of life with no relation to pre-Katrina life. More readily able to accept change perhaps because they are in need of a change or because they are accustomed to adjusting, lower-income residents are seizing this opportunity to use the architects as much as the architects are using their land. Besides, who would not want a house built by a big named movie star like Brad Pitt?

The district, where the contemporary houses are built, itself will acquire a highly individual character of its own because of the individuality of each house. Due to this eccentricity, the houses will not expand past its boundaries. First, the locations where the houses are being built have either been completely devastated or have previously never been used before, making them a good location for this eccentricity. Those areas are the places most readily accepting of any help. In addition, affordability will put a cap on the amount of construction. This new wave of design will not expand to the rest of New Orleans because it is just not affordable. Limited money will not allow architects to subsidize many the houses and residents cannot afford the full price of a LEED platinum house. Those who do have the money to rebuild will most likely avoid the controversially progressive house. Bruce, an architect in Mississippi, stated that from his experience, those with money want dream houses they envisioned when they were younger. In

most cases, one would think of the 1920's Newport styled mansions. Therefore, the new houses developed from this new wave of design houses will be a small world in itself, imbued with individuality.

Good architecture must consider balancing aesthetic designs with the occupants' needs, while integrating the culture of the environment. Although the new wave of design in New Orleans does not necessarily harmonize the deep-rooted culture with the aesthetic designs, one can assume New Orleans will not tear down or change any of the currently being built houses to become another Pessac. Pessac was a different scenario from New Orleans because it did not have the complex factors of a hurricane or culture or affordability or gratuity. It was torn down solely because it was too *avant-garde* for its time. New Orleans is a labyrinth of different mediums that all loops together at the end. The contemporary houses do indeed fulfill the residents' needs by providing a sturdy roof above their heads and a protective reassurance to fight off future storms. In fact, the houses in New Orleans not only give the occupants sufficient means to live comfortably, but also allow for the residents to begin a new chapter in their lives. Since this trade off between residents starting a fresh life and architects having a free range in design is advantageous to both sides, the damage done by creating a non-traditional house in an architecturally conservative environment is somehow acceptable. Although the vernacular architecture may not be prominent, there is still a strong presence of traditional New Orleans taken into consideration. Lucky to be built in such a culturally welcoming place, the houses from this new wave of design will remain standing for the next decades, but not just because they are built in a generous environment. There are other multiple reasons. One is that the houses are still considered "affordable housing" for at least the population of New Orleans residents who will be subsidized. These residents would not have a house otherwise. In addition, they offer the occupants new opportunities to have a fresh start post-Katrina, starting with a safe home. For the New Orleans culture, which is centered on family and social communication, a new house that allows for this interaction is the most desired gift any resident can receive. Another reason is that the houses are associated with the benevolence of the public. Tearing down the houses will only generate a negative image of New Orleanians being unthankful for what has been done to rebuild New Orleans. Lastly, this new wave of design represents more than just a new style of house, but also New Orleans' resistance and defiance in being defeated by a storm. The progressive houses will remain standing. The historic houses in the historic district will remain historical. But the future development of New Orleans will return back to traditional style.

On-site research: eight days in New Orleans from July 19, 2009 to July 26, 2009 surveying houses and interviewing homeowners, community members, organization members, and architects.

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- ⁱⁱ “Villa Savoye – A Machine for Living.” UltimateHouse. <http://www.ultimatehouse.tv/article.php?id=2> (accessed August 20, 2009).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Philippe Boudon. *Lived-In Architecture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979) 1.
- ^{iv} *Ibid.*, 2.
- ^v Maida Owens. “Swapping Stories: Folktales from Louisiana.” Swapping Stories Louisiana’s Traditional Cultures. <http://www.lpb.org/programs/swappingstories/cultures.html> (accessed September 12, 2009).
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- ^x Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. “Representative Shotgun Houses.” <http://www.cmhpf.org/surveys&rshotgun.htm> (accessed September 12, 2009).
- ^{xi} Personal Communication, New Orleans, July 22, 2009.
- ^{xii} *Directory of Sustainable Materials*. The Global Green House: The Holy Cross Project Visitor Center.
- ^{xiii} Philippe Boudon. *Lived-In Architecture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979) 1.
- ^{xiv} Personal Communication, New Orleans, July 20, 2009.
- ^{xv} Concordia Architecture and Planning. “Lagniappe House.” http://www.concordia.com/home/article/94/Make_It_Right_Affordable_Sustainable_Housing_Prototype_for_Lower_9_in_New_Orleans. (accessed September 20, 2009).
- ^{xvi} *Tulane City Center*. Tulane City Center. 2009.
- ^{xvii} *Ibid.*
- ^{xviii} *Ibid.*
- ^{xix} NOVA. “How New Orleans Flooded.” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/orleans/how.html> (accessed September 9, 2009).
- ^{xx} Personal Communication, New Orleans, July 20, 2009.
- ^{xxi} http://www.b4ubuild.com/faq/faq_0002.shtml
- ^{xxii} *Directory of Sustainable Materials*. The Global Green House: The Holy Cross Project Visitor Center.
- ^{xxiii} Philippe Boudon. *Lived-In Architecture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979) 161.
- ^{xxiv} *Ibid.*

Appendix

Houses placed in order from most progressive in most vernacular.



FEMA trailer in Lower Ninth Ward

FEMA trailers were temporary housing for displaced victims of Hurricane Katrina. Typically 240 square feet, the trailer contains a master bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen.¹ Each is equipped with electricity, air conditioning, indoor heating, running cold and hot water, and oven, a small microwave oven, a large refrigerator, and a few pieces of fixed furniture.²



Make It Right house designed by Trahan Architects in Lower 9th Ward (Type 1)

This house is a play on a typical shotgun house. Approaching a traditional idea with a contemporary approach, the roof was extrapolated to fuse together the entry, circulation, and gathering spaces.³

¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/14/us/14road.html>

² <http://www.fema.gov/assistance/trailer.shtm>

³ <http://www.trahanarchitects.com/>



Make It Right house by Billes Architect in Lower 9th Ward (type 2)

Given the freedom to design whatever desired, Billes Architect designed this 1250 square feet, 3 bedroom home. The house is elevated 8 feet and has a LEED platinum rating in the sustainable energy design, included are geothermal heating and airconditioning along with photovoltaic cells that is estimated to provide approximately 80% of the homes' energy needs.⁴



Billes Architect's house juxtaposed to a vernacular New Orleans Creole cottage.

Elevated eight feet high in addition to being two stories high, Billes Architect's design towers over the neighboring house. The neighboring house was built by the Mennonites, a Christina denomination.⁵

⁴ <http://www.housing.com/node/611/4>

⁵ <http://www.housing.com/node/611/7>



Make It Right house designed by Concordia Architect in Lower 9th Ward (type 3)

This single story version of a Lagniappe House was designed with a 30 degree south facing roof slope to maximize the use of solar energy and natural daylighting.⁶



Make It Right house designed by Concordia Architects in Lower 9th Ward (Type 4)

This double story Lagniappe House contains similar characteristics as Type 3 with the 30 degree slanted roofing to maximize solar energy efficiency, but elevated eight feet. The two levels of porch are used as a socializing factor and also for future rescue docks.⁷

⁶ <http://www.housing.com/node/671/1>

⁷ <http://www.housing.com/node/112/2>



Make It Right house designed by KieranTimberlake Associates in Lower 9th Ward (Type 5)

This design was a prototype for local off-site fabricated subassemblies in later generations. The basic structure and organization is made from of components and assemblies which may vary with its function and appearance. This process offers an alternative approach to the conventional stick-built practices. Not all residents approve of this pre-manufactured idea. Many consider it unstable and dangerous.⁸



KieranTimberlake Associate's house juxtaposed to a vernacular Creole cottage.

Standing next to the colloquial Creole cottage, the KieranTimberlake Associate's house displays the contrast between progressive and vernacular architecture.

⁸ <http://www.housing.com/node/501/7>



Tulane University
URBANbuild
prototype 03

URBANbuild 03 is a bold landmark situated on the corner of New Orleans's Central city neighborhood. Painted bright red and architecturally different from the surrounding houses, this is an example of Tulane University's progressive houses.



Tulane University
URBANbuild
prototype 03

Two stories high and placed on 1200 square feet, this house looms over the neighboring house.⁹

⁹ Tulane City Center



Tulane University
URBANbuild in Central
City
Prototype 04

This one story, 1200 square feet house is situated on the corner of the Central City neighborhood. The screen system is the defining system, replacing the traditional New Orleans shutter system, typically used for shading and hurricane protection.¹⁰



Tulane University's
Tulane in Central City
Greenbuild 1

Greenbuild 1 was a prototype for prefabrication and modular construction. The roofs are built flat to help brace the modules during transportation. For many architects, this characteristic could create future problems with rain settling into the roof, creating leaking problems.¹¹

¹⁰ Tulane City Center

¹¹ Tulane City Center



Alligator House by buildingstudio

This 872 square feet house in Central City was a play on the “Single,” a one-family shotgun residence. Placed in juxtaposition to a vernacular New Orleans cottage, the reason for the name “Alligator” house can easily be seen.¹²



Dry-In house by Cremsen College

The Dry-In House is a mass-customized, affordable housing aimed to target affordability and a unique alternative to the conventional home construction methods.¹³

¹² <http://www.buildingstudio.net/>

¹³ <http://ddbnola.org/>



Gulf Coast Community Design Studio in East Biloxi, Mississippi

Surrounded by empty lots, this house elevated house stands out from the surrounding. Angled roof emphasized by the diagonal staircase provides a contrast to the stark cottages throughout the neighborhood.



Gulf Coast Community Design Studio in East Biloxi, Mississippi

This home is elevated ten feet to prevent future floods from drowning the house. In addition, the excess height allows for space on ground level for a mending shop.¹⁴

¹⁴ <http://www.gccds.org/buildings/nghia/nghia.html>



Global Green house in the Holy Cross District

The house is completely LEED platinum with energy start equipment instead. Raised 4 feet above ground, for a total of 8 feet above sea level, the house was designed to withstand any flooding and Hurricane winds up to 130 mph.¹⁵



Project Home Again house in Gentilly

This house is a combination of California bungalow and camilleback house. The founders of this organization, Leonard and Louise Riggio, had specifically requested for the designs of these houses to blend into the neighborhood.¹⁶

¹⁵ <http://www.globalgreen.org/press/78>

¹⁶ <http://www.projecthomeagain.net/>



Habitat for Humanity's Musician's Village cottage in Upper Ninth Ward

These houses are very similar to vernacular New Orleans architecture. With only two variations of these houses: one with a driveway and one without a driveway, a whole row of brightly painted houses lines the small community.



Katrina Cottage in Mississippi

The Katrina cottage is an affordable house built by modular construction and assembled easily. It is considered "a dignified alternative to the FEMA trailer." Very similar to a vernacular shotgun house, the Katrina cottage is narrow, long, and contains the generous porch with large overhang.¹⁷

¹⁷ <http://www.katrinacottagehousing.org/index.html>



New Orleans shotgun house in the Holy Cross District.

A classic example of a vernacular New Orleans shotgun house: long and narrow with a generous porch and long overhang.