

STAFF REPORT ON LANDMARK NOMINATION OF
MAYLIE'S RESTAURANT
1009 POYDRAS STREET

Maylies Restaurant, the two-and-one-half story Edwardian-style building at No. 1009 Poydras Street, is believed to have been built in 1894 as the Maylie's residence. This building was constructed adjacent to an earlier nineteenth century structure that had served as the restaurant since 1876. The history of this venerable old eating establishment goes back even further, however, to when Bernard Maylie and Hypoloe Esporbe' operated a coffee stand in the old Poydras Market. The market occupied the center of Poydras Street from 1837 until 1932, when it was demolished. The restaurant only served lunches in the beginning, but a dinner hour was soon inaugurated due to popular demand. Until 1925, the restaurant adhered strictly to a "men only" policy. As business increased, the restaurant expanded from the corner building into the ground-floor of the 1894 residence. The second floor of this building, however, still serves as the Maylie family home. The magnificent wisteria vine, that still covers the river-side of the building, originally grew between the two properties. When the buildings were joined at the time that the restaurant expanded, special efforts were made to save the vine by making a hole in the glass-rooted enclosure. The restaurant is not known for the wisteria vine alone, however, but for its excellent food that has been enjoyed by such notable Americans as President Theodore Roosevelt and Will Rogers.

The earlier corner building was demolished in 1959 when Dryades Street was widened, but the restaurant still operates in the 1894 building. The front facade of this building, that faces onto Poydras Street, is supported on the ground floor by a series of cast-iron posts, between which are full length wooden openings. The entrance is protected by a balcony that has a handsome cast-iron railing at the second floor level. This second level, that is constructed of brick, has four shuttered windows that are shaded by an overhanging eave supported by mill work brackets. The projecting gable above this eave is typical of the Edwardian-style of architecture.

continued ...

Maylie's, one of only two New Orleans restaurants run by the descendants of its original proprietors, is reminiscent of the character and cuisine of nineteenth century New Orleans restaurants. The building is also one of the last remaining structures on Poydras Street that's age and scale reminds one of another era/when this area was dominated by the Poydras Market.

On the basis of a careful consideration of the four areas of criteria determining landmark qualification, any one of which will qualify a property for designation, the staff of the Historic District Landmarks Commission finds that Maylie's Restaurant at 1009 Poydras Street meets three of the four categories in that it reflects the broad cultural, political, economic, and social history of the state and community; is identified with historic personages in national, state and local history; and embodies distinguishing characteristics of architectural types, inherently valuable for a study of periods, styles, methods of construction, and indigenous materials or craftsmanship.