

Bultman Funeral Home site to become Borders

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NEW ORLEANS — Covington-based Stirling Properties plans a \$9-million renovation of the former House of Bultman Funeral Home on St. Charles Avenue to accommodate a 24,000-square-foot Borders bookstore.

Borders, a chain that sells books, music and movies, will be the only large-scale national book retailer in Orleans Parish and the only national retailer on St. Charles Avenue.

"Having a Borders bookstore in New Orleans will be a wonderful addition to our community," said Lewis Stirling, Stirling executive vice president. "We have so many wonderful local bookstores, and I feel this will compliment them and help to keep shoppers in Orleans Parish.

In 1943, Fritz Bultman divided three Victorian homes, one allegedly the home of the actress Kitty Karlyle, into five sections and reassembled them at the intersection of St. Charles and Louisiana avenues.

Bultman added a façade reminiscent to George Washington's Mount Vernon.

Stirling Properties worked with the New Orleans Preservation Resource Center and the city's Historic Districts Landmark Commission in planning the project. The façade will be retained and the interior will be gutted to accommodate the store and a cafe.

Woodward Design + Build LLC will begin construction immediately with a slated opening date of November 2008.

Stirling Forterra LLC is owner of the site.

Bultmann was the site of many historical events, including the burials of Jayne Mansfield, Leander Perez and Brigadier Gen. Chennault. Writer Tennessee Williams used to stay at the home, which also doubled as a residence upstairs.

"This property is truly an icon of New Orleans and we are pleased to be involved in saving such a historic structure that, although located in an historic district, falls outside of the jurisdiction of the (National) Park Service and could have therefore have been demolished," Stirling said•