

# Historic district provides facts about research

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Hammond Historic District has created a website for people to keep up with its research into the identity and life of the unnamed slave who is buried with the city's namesake Peter Hammond.

The district has been searching for the name of the slave buried with Peter Hammond and other members of the family in a tucked away graveyard on East Charles Street, not far from City Hall. Researchers discovered a name, Gaston, and believe it is the slave's name.

People can now follow along as those involved in the research learn more about him and work toward discovering the city's lesser-known history. The website is [www.hammondhistoricdistrict.org/gaston-home](http://www.hammondhistoricdistrict.org/gaston-home).

District Director Leah Solomon said the project's overarching goal is to broaden Hammond's history to include the stories of all the diverse groups who played a role in the city's founding and development.

One of the next steps will be to form an action committee to help the district discover those stories, creating a more inclusive history of the city. The group would be made up of community leaders and anyone who wants to be involved, she said.

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The action committee's goals include contributing to programming and research, creating a strategy for forming the inclusive story of Hammond's past and helping with executing the strategy for those two first goals. Once the committee has formed, Solomon said the plan is to hold its first meeting in late January.

She said the district is also hoping to partner with Southeastern Louisiana University in researching Gaston and beyond.

Meanwhile, the district's commission is surveying hundreds of the city's historic structures for a grant-funded project with a consultant. Solomon said the survey so far includes almost 400 properties and the goal is to have 1,400 properties surveyed in the central Hammond area by the end of it.