

**MINUTES**  
**VIEUX CARRÉ COMMISSION**  
**WEDNESDAY, November 5, 2014 - 1:30 P.M.**  
**Civil Service Commission Conference Room**  
**1340 Poydras Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor**

**PRESENT:** Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman  
Daniel C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman  
Leslie S. Stokes, Secretary  
C.J. Blanda  
Jorge A. Henriquez  
Michael A. Skinner

**ABSENT:** Patricia C. Denechaud

**STAFF PRESENT:** Lary P. Hesdorffer, Director; Sarah Ripple, Building Plans Examiner; Nicholas G. Albrecht, Building Inspector; Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Barry Fox, Anthony Johnson, Betty Norris, Robert Pell, Rachel Robinson, Tim Terrell, Robert Vanlangendonck, Lacey Wotring.

**I. ROLL CALL**

Chairman Musso called the meeting to order at approximately 1:40 PM. The membership roll was called. Mr. Hesdorffer noted the presence of a quorum with six (6) of the seven (7) seated Commissioners in attendance. He added that for any motion to pass, at least four (4) positive votes have to be cast.

**II. REVIEW OF MINUTES from Vieux Carré Commission meeting of September 3, 2014**

Mr. Blanda moved, Mr. Taylor seconded, to accept the minutes of the meeting of October 1, 2014 as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Following the adoption of the minutes, the Chairman recognized Mr. Anthony Johnson who wished to address the time-frame and procedure for review and approval of minutes. Mr. Johnson stated that he believed the time taken and delay in obtaining minutes from the VCC and its Architectural Committee was too long and created a hardship for the applicants and the public who wished to see the records sooner. He proposed as a helpful suggestion that minutes be prepared in a more timely fashion for the benefit of the Commission's ability to review them farther in advance and for the users in the public who would benefit by having them available sooner.

**III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Referencing the recent collapse of the structure at 808 Royal, Mr. Musso dispensed with giving a personal Chairman's report, providing more time for the Director's report.

**IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Hesdorffer noted upcoming City Council appeals scheduled for Thursday, November 6, two (2) in reference to the Café Habana project and a separate appeal filed in regard to the 510 Wilkinson project, appealing the Commission's denial of the proposal to construct a new dormer on the rear roof slope in order to accommodate the addition of an interior elevator with a penthouse that extends beyond the confines of the roof. Further, he noted that the VCC's presentation of its proposed 2015 Operating Budget would be reviewed by the City Council on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>.

He went on to summarize the events related to the 808 Royal collapse. He noted the sadness over the loss of the building, felt by many both in and outside the French Quarter community, as well as the very good fortune that no one had been harmed when the structure gave way. He noted evidence of the building's various ills that became apparent as the collapse left those damaged internal/structural elements for examination. He explained that rotted wood and termite damage, along with deteriorated masonry and mortar, as well as unfortunate past use of Portland cement and water intrusion appeared to all contribute to the structural failure. Each of those problems was probably compounded by age and gravity, ultimately leading to the Dumaine side wall falling into the alley and the failure of all structural integrity.

Mr. Hesdorffer also outlined the joint efforts of the Dept. of Safety & Permits, Code Enforcement, NOPD and the NOFD, all of whom worked to secure the site and continuously monitor the entire situation through demolition and debris removal, while protecting passersby as well as other properties

from damage and further complications. The protection of lives and property was paramount throughout the process. Finally, he noted that whatever future treatment may be considered for the property, any work will come before the VCC for review and approval as part of any permitting process.

Mr. Musso summed up the discussion adding that while the VCC continues to conduct regular external inspections of properties in the French Quarter, comprehensive reviews by owners and occupants should be understood as a primary source for discovering problems and planning efforts to repair and properly maintain historic structures *prior* to conditions deteriorating to the point of failure.

#### V. OLD BUSINESS

716 Dauphine St: White Friars South LLC, applicant/owner; Proposal to remove fire escapes, replace select third floor windows & doors, and create new opening in courtyard wall, per application & materials received 07/21/14 & 09/16/14.

Without the presence of the applicant, Ms. Ripple presented the staff report on the proposed renovations noting that the Architectural Committee had recommended approval for the application with certain details to be altered according to VCC standards, as noted. Mr. Taylor moved to approve the proposal consistent with staff analysis and recommendations of 11/05/14. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

[It is hereby noted that this item was listed on the agenda as New Business when it should have been under Old Business, having been given conceptual approval by the VCC on 09/03/14.]

#### VI. NEW BUSINESS

622 Royal St: Barry Fox & Associates, applicant; Richard J Roth Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate entire structure, per application & plans received 09/09/14.

Ms. Ripple gave the staff presentation on the proposed comprehensive renovation of the property. There followed a brief discussion that included questions about the interior placement of the proposed elevator, the increased parapet height on the service structure to conceal HVAC equipment, the fire exiting requirements and the addition of a courtyard stairway for egress, as well as the possibility of seeking a waiver for the stair if equivalencies are met to satisfy the State Fire Marshall. In reply, Mr. Fox agreed to file an appeal with the Fire Marshall's in hopes of getting permission to omit the added courtyard exit stairway in consideration of the sprinkler system that is being installed.

Mr. Taylor moved to approve the overall plans with the proviso that a formal appeal be submitted to the State Fire Marshall to have the added stair omitted and that the outcome of that appeal be documented for the VCC along with the submission of final details for the project. Mr. Blanda seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

207 N Peters & 209-11-15-17 N Peters St: Rachel Davis, applicant; North Peters Riverfront Place, LLC; Proposal to make general building repairs and HVAC installation, per application & materials received 09/22/14.

Ms. Ripple made the staff report on the proposal to make general repairs to the buildings at 207 & 209 N Peters, as a single development with a total of 12 residential in the two (2) combined buildings, which therefore also includes the re-subdivision and separation of 209 from 211-15-17 N Peters and joining it through re-subdivision with 207 N Peters as a single lot, all of which must be considered and approved by the City Planning Commission.

Following discussion of the nature of the residential rental units, the proposal's nature as a tax credit project, and the allowances in the CZO for expanded density as shown, Mr. Taylor moved, Mr. Henriquez seconded, to grant approval of the application, including favorable recommendations to the City Planning Commission regarding the re-subdivisions as well as to the Board of Zoning Adjustments in reference to the density variance. The motion passed unanimously.

924 Dauphine St: Robert Pell, applicant; Vieux Carre Holdings, LLC, Grace E Leblanc Testamentary Trust, Vieux Carre Holdings LLC, owner; Proposal to demolish rear addition, and install new gates, AC units, and synthetic slate roof, per application & materials received 09/30/14. [Note: This meeting marks the beginning of the 30-day layover period]

Ms. Ripple once more presented the staff report on the proposal to renovate the brown-rated building including the demolition of the rear addition, the installation of new gates, HVAC equipment and new roofing shingles, all as per the recommendation of the staff and Architectural Committee. It was further noted that the applicant had requested the waiver of the standard 30-day layover period.

Following the presentation, Mr. Taylor moved to approve the proposal consistent with staff analysis and recommendations of 11/05/14 and including the waiving of the 30-day layover period since the entire building is brown-rated as is the addition slated for demolition. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

## VII. CHANGE OF USE HEARINGS

513 Conti St: Lacey Wotring, applicant; The 307 Company LLC, owner; Proposal to install four (4) air conditioning units, in conjunction with a **change of use** from vacant to mixed use, per application & materials received 09/30/14.

Ms. Ripple presented the staff report on the proposal to install four (4) HVAC condensing units to accommodate a **change of use** from vacant to mixed use, involving the conversion of the building to include commercial use on the ground floor and two (2) residential units on floors 2 & 3 and two (2) residential lofts on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. Based on Section 8.10.1 of the CZO, the increase in density may be allowed if permitted by the VCC.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Taylor moved to grant conceptual approval of the proposal to include the installation of four (4) HVAC units on the roof of the rear addition as well as use of the Section 8.10.1 zoning provisions to allow the development of the four (4) dwelling units on the property. Mrs. Stokes seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

227 Dauphine St: James Healy, applicant; Aegina Corp, owner; Proposal to install signage in conjunction with a **change of use** from vacant to museum/retail, per online application & materials received 10/02/14.

Ms. Ripple presented the staff report on the proposal to install new signage in conjunction with the proposed **change of use** from vacant to museum/retail. Mr. Taylor moved, Mr. Skinner seconded, to approve the proposed signage design pending further submission of additional details that conform to the VCC's sign standards, and following review and approval by staff, a permit may be issued. The motion passed unanimously.

## VII. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

301 Dauphine St: John C. Williams Architects, applicant; Otto Family Trust, Le Moyne Chateau, owner; Appeal of Architecture Committee denial to replace windows with simulated divided-lite windows, per application & materials received 09/05/14.

At the request of the applicant's representative, Ms. Wotring, the item was deferred to the next monthly meeting of the Commission.

## VIII. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, October\_01, 2014 VCC meeting.

Mrs. Taylor moved, Mrs. Stokes seconded, to ratify the actions taken by the Architectural Committee and Staff since the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of October 1, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

With no other business to be considered, Mr. Taylor moved for adjournment. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 PM.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leslie Stokes, Secretary

NOTE: These minutes are a summary of actions taken and are not a verbatim transcription of the meeting.