

## VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Lary P. Hesdorffer  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Minutes of the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of Wednesday, January 7, 2014.

- COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman  
Daniel C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman  
Leslie S. Stokes, Secretary  
C.J. Blanda  
Jorge A. Henriquez  
Michael A. Skinner
- COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Patricia C. Denechaud
- STAFF PRESENT:** Lary P. Hesdorffer, Director; Nicholas G. Albrecht & Mary Frances Craig, Building Plans Examiners; Sarah Ripple, Architectural Historian, Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney.
- OTHERS PRESENT:** Roland Arriaga, Arno Bommer, Richard Brack, Cheron Brylski, Charles Clark, Bryan Drude, René Fransén, Bev Fulk, Walter Gallas, Chuck Garber, CoCo Garrett, Wade Gillham, Carol Gniady, David Hecht, Anthony Johnson, Ross Karsen, Stephanie Larrieu, Meg Lousteau, Zella May, Patricia Meadowcroft, Robert Miller, Betty Norris, Robert Pell, Clayton Randle, Robert Ripley, Rachel Robinson, Lloyd "Sonny" Shields, Diana Smith, Stuart Smith, Sandra Stokes, Peter Trapolin.

## AGENDA

### 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 at least four (4) positive votes are needed in order to pass any action.

### II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Mr. Taylor moved, Mrs. Stokes seconded, to accept the minutes of the Vieux Carre Commission meeting of December 3, 2014, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

### III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Musso introduced Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney, to announce the rules pertaining to decorum and time-frame and procedures for speakers participating in the public hearing. The Chairman said that he would pass on giving a Chairman's report due to the number of speaker cards and the anticipated length of discussion for the items on the agenda.

### IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Hesdorffer noted limited date corrections that had been shown in the revised 2015 schedule of Vieux Carré Commission & Architectural Committee meetings, circulated among the members. Secondly, he announced changes to the titles of two VCC staff members: Nicholas Albrecht, Building Plans Examiner (previously Building Inspector), and Sarah Ripple, Architectural Historian (previously Building Plans Examiner). Furthermore, he noted that applicants were being sought to fill vacancies for building inspector positions.

Additionally, Mr. Musso announced that while the Commission is awaiting the Mayor's appointments to fill the vacancies created by the passing of Dr. Lupin and the resignation of Mr. Lyons, he was appointing Mr. Rick Fifield, AIA, to the Architectural Committee in order to add further professional and preservation expertise to the assist the VCC's two remaining architects who serve on that committee.

### V. OLD BUSINESS

**810 Ursulines Ave:** John Guarnieri, applicant; Frank R Sciacca, owner; Proposed renovation of buildings for use as single-family residence, including installation of glazed enclosure (rear ground floor), new millwork, modification of existing openings, creation of new openings, application of stucco to exposed masonry, and reconstruction of existing carriageway infill, per materials received 04/08/14 & 12/09/14, respectively.

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Ms. Ripple presented the staff report with Mr. Karsen representing the application on behalf of studio WTA. Mr. Skinner then requested clarification about where the new glass curtain walls are proposed for installation; Mr. Karsen explained the location – on the ground floor of the infill structure that connects the main residence and the historic service building – and also pointed out the details shown in the drawings. Mr. Musso further explained why the legally binding covenant is necessary for the Commission to retain authority over the exterior areas that will become interior due to the proposed recommended renovation. Mr. Taylor then moved, Mrs. Stokes seconded, to accept the staff recommendations and **approve** the proposal to rehabilitate the entire building consistent with staff analysis and recommendations of 01/07/15, including the enclosure of some existing exterior surfaces and openings on the ground floor, and thereby authorizing staff to issue a permit. The motion passed with all voting in favor.

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## VI. NEW BUSINESS

**217 Chartres St, 223 Chartres Street:** Ashley King, applicant; SA Mintz, LLC, owner; Conceptual design for interior, structural renovation including two (2) new light-wells and rooftop additions in conjunction with a proposed change in use from vacant to mixed use, per application & drawings received 11/25/14.

Ms. Ripple gave the staff presentation with Messrs. Trapolin, Hecht, and Randle representing the application on behalf of Trapolin Peer Architects. Chairman Musso commented on the applicant's responsibility to provide all necessary information to the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA) for all required waivers, to which Mr. Trapolin noted that the project is scheduled for review by the BZA on Monday, January 12, 2015. The intent is to establish the parameters for density, massing and height before coming back to the VCC's Architectural Committee to resume design development review.

Requiring no further discussion, Mr. Taylor moved, Mr. Skinner seconded, to grant **conceptual approval** to the project within the schematic design phase, noting that subsequent detailed submissions will include further design details relative to the density and open space, as affected by the proposed resubdivision going before the BZA and consistent with staff analysis and recommendations of 12/09/14. The motion passed unanimously.

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## VII. CHANGE OF USE HEARINGS

**1040 Esplanade Ave, 1324 N Rampart St, 1036 Esplanade Ave, 1038 Esplanade Ave:** Myles Martin, applicant; Esplanade Nola LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate structures, in conjunction with a change of use from vacant to restaurant, per online application & materials received 08/12/14 & 12/19/14.

Ms. Ripple gave the staff report with Messrs. Martin and Meenan presenting on behalf of the application. Mr. Blanda requested information on the proposed table arrangements and occupant load, and Chairman Musso explained the process and responsibility of the State Fire Marshal as it pertains to the review of occupant load.

The following public speakers discussed the positives and negatives of the proposed project: Lloyd "Sonny" Shields, legal representation for neighbors adjacent to the subject property (opposed); Meg Lousteau, VCPORA (opposed); Carol Gniady, French Quarter Citizens (opposed); Robert Miller, architect and previous plan reviewer for the State Fire Marshal office (opposed); Arno Bommer, acoustical consultant (opposed); Richard Brack, retired from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (opposed); Sandra Stokes, Louisiana Landmarks (opposed); Chuck Garber, 1032 Esplanade resident (opposed); Rene Fransen, 1026 Esplanade resident (opposed); Anthony Johnson, Citizens Action Committee (opposed); Stuart Smith, Smith Stag, LLC (opposed); Brian Drude, French Quarter Advocates (in favor), Robert Ripley, employee of neighboring business (in favor).

Mr. Skinner then noted his opposition to the open floor plan and standing room space and further stated that the canopy should be used as a canopy only, that it should not be developed for terrace use. Mr. Henriquez asked the applicant about the planned use within the 1310 N. Rampart structure. Mr. Meenan responded that no plans are currently being made to redevelop the property and that 1310 N. Rampart is not part of the Café Habana proposal.

Mr. Blanda moved, and Mr. Skinner seconded, to **deny** the proposal. The motion failed with two votes in favor (Messrs. Blanda and Skinner) and four in opposition (Messrs. Taylor, Musso, and Henriquez and Mrs. Stokes). Mr. Taylor then moved, Mr. Henriquez seconded, to **approve** the proposal, with the proviso that the use of umbrellas on the canopy rooftop is strictly prohibited, and to send a recommendation for **approval** to City Planning Commission for the proposed resubdivision. The motion passed with four votes in favor (Messrs. Taylor, Musso, and Henriquez and Mrs. Stokes) and two votes in opposition (Messrs. Blanda and Skinner).

\*Note: Mr. Taylor left the chamber following the recordation of the vote.

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## VIII. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

**923 Barracks St:** Earl L Larrieu, applicant/owner; Proposal to reconstruct cottage structure, deconstructed without benefit of VCC review or permit, as well as proposed modifications to existing structures, per application & materials received 05/06/14 & 12/02/14, respectively. [STOP WORK ORDER placed 04/16/14; Notice of Violation sent 04/21/14]

Ms. Ripple gave the staff presentation with Mr. Arriaga and Mrs. Larrieu representing the application. Mr. Musso noted for the benefit of the other Commissioners that the proposed design had been reviewed numerous times and that the applicants have accommodated each of the Architectural Committee's comments and concerns. He also reiterated the seriousness with which the Vieux Carre Commission regards any work that commences without the appropriate and necessary permits and advised the applicant to wait for all required permits before starting work despite the fact that the Commission may lift the STOP WORK ORDER on this property in anticipation of the issuance of the final approval and permit. Without needing further information or having questions after hearing the staff report, Mrs. Stokes moved, Mr. Blanda seconded, to **approve** the proposal and to lift the SWO, with the complete plans to return to the Architectural Committee for the final review on January 13, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

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**325 Chartres St:** Robert Pell, applicant; Royal 3000 LLC, Mary C Pate, Maria E Bazan, owner; Appeal of Architecture Committee denial to retain railing installed without VCC permit on second floor gallery roof, per application received 11/25/14. [Notice of Violation received 10/28/14].

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Pell and Mr. Clark present on behalf of the application. Mr. Clark noted that his reason for installing the railing is that he has two small children and further, that guests in his home had been going out onto the gallery area even before there was a railing in place. Mr. Musso clarified that the subject area is in fact a "roof" and not a "gallery." The owner noted there are several other galleries on the same block that are similar in design. Mr. Hesdorffer noted that galleries are not necessarily appropriate for every building and although this building previously had a gallery, it was only at the second floor with a roof above. Ms. Stokes moved to **deny** the application for retention of the railing. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion which passed with Ms. Stokes and Messrs. Henriquez, Musso, and Skinner voting in favor; Mr. Blanda voted in opposition.

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## IX. OTHER BUSINESS

Consideration of proposed Zoning Change from a VCR-1 Vieux Carré Residential District to a VCC-1 Vieux Carré Commercial District for Lots 23, 24, and D or 22, on Square 91 bounded by Conti, Burgundy, Dauphine, and St. Louis, with municipal addresses 917-923 CONTI STREET.

Mr. Hesdorffer presented the details regarding a proposed zoning change scheduled for consideration by the City Planning Commission in the second week of January. Mrs. May spoke on behalf of the owners, stressing the history of commercial use of the subject properties. She noted that the proposed use would be as a restaurant. From the audience, Ms. Lousteau (VCPOA) and Ms. Gniady (FQC) stated their views of opposition to the proposed zoning change from VCR-1 to VCC-1 zoning and that any future tenant or owner could change the property use from restaurant to any of the various commercial uses permitted by VCC-1 zoning. Ms. Meadowcroft also spoke from the public adding that the CPC staff report for the upcoming meeting recommends denial of the re-zoning proposal. With no further discussion, Mr. Skinner moved, Mr. Blanda seconded, to recommend to the City Planning Commission that the noted zoning change proposal be **denied**. The motion passed unanimously.

## X. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, December 3, 2014 VCC meeting.

Mr. Blanda moved, Mr. Skinner seconded, to ratify the actions taken by the Architectural Committee and Staff since the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of December 3, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business to be considered, Mrs. Stokes moved for adjournment. The motion, seconded by Mr. Skinner, passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 4:01 PM.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Leslie Stokes, Secretary

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