

VIEUX CARRE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

LaToya Cantrell  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block  
DIRECTOR

**NOTE: The below minutes are a summary of actions taken. They are not a verbatim transcription of the meeting.**

**Minutes of the VCC Architectural Committee meeting of Tuesday, July 26th, 2022– 1:00 pm.**

**Committee Members Present:** Stephen Bergeron, Rick Fifield, Toni DiMaggio

**Staff Present:** Bryan Block, Director; Renee Bourgogne, Deputy Director; Nicholas Albrecht, Senior Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Senior Plans Examiner

**Staff Absent:** Anthony Whitfield, Inspector; Marguerite Roberts, Inspector

**Others Present:** Gabriel Virdure, Daniel Bell, Jonathan Marcantel, David Carimi, James Brown, Kurt Werling, Zella May, Hank Smith, John Dauer, Asha Ganpat, Chris Stepnoski, Clinton Smith, Joanne Ranger, Raymond Ranger, Walter Zehner, Vincent Catalanotto

## Old Business

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**619 Royal St: 20-30797-VCGEN:** Trapolin Peer Architects, applicant; 619 Royal Street LLC, owner; Review of balcony stabilization work and proposed rail alterations, per application & materials received 06/10/2020 and 07/22/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=846242>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Virdure and Mr. Bell present on behalf of the application. Ms. Virdure stated that the 36" vertical posts were designed because the rail did not have enough strength to resist the necessary load. The engineer, Jamie Saxon, wanted them spaced at every 2'. The team wanted to mockup the rail since there are multiple patterns, and they are not completely uniform since they are wrought iron. Ms. Virdure added that the first option proposed was for stability, with the historic materials between each post. After staff voiced concerns, they proposed to put the historic rail in front of a 42" rail. They also proposed to add a horizontal bar at the bottom to prevent bottles from rolling off, 2" above the decking to make sure it was less visible.

Ms. DiMaggio stated that they had gone over the design of the rail quite a bit, and she questioned if another type of brace could be used that would allow them to space them out further. Mr. Fifield stated that it was important the rail be retained and unchanged as much as possible, and for the applicant to explore reinforcement behind the historic rail. Ms. DiMaggio stated that changing the rail would undermine the significance of the building. Ms. Virdure stated that the existing outriggers were retained at the third-floor balcony, so it was slightly easier, but that the bays were different widths. Mr. Fifield suggested an additive approach, not changing the rail at all, adding height or support behind, possibly angled braces. He stated that this was a design problem. Mr. Bell asked if it should be attached to the posts; Mr. Fifield responded that how they were attached was important, and Mr. Bergeron agreed. Ms. Virdure stated that she would work with staff and hoped they could keep the verticals behind.

Ms. DiMaggio moved for approval of the option with the taller rail and structure behind the unaltered historic rail, with the details to return to the Committee if staff finds it necessary. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**1130 Chartres St: 21-33567-VCGEN;** Sarah Nickelotte, applicant; Soniat Holdings LLC, owner;

Proposal to make structural repairs including installation of new tie rods, new metal lintels, and Helifix reinforcing pins, per application & materials received 12/07/2021 & 07/08/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=909114>

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Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Marcantel present on behalf of the application. Mr. Bergeron asked for clarification on the end wall. Mr. Marcantel stated that it was failing so Mr. Saxon advised trying this method that he had done before in the district. Mr. Fifield stated that a structural report was not submitted for review. He then asked how damaging would this be to the historic fabric. Mr. Marcantel stated that the understood that this proposal was intrusive and drastic. Mr. Fifield stated that they had no assessment. He went on to say that helical ties meant drilling through soft red bricks so it would be impossible to every go back and change this or fix it if another problem occurred. Mr. Marcantel stated that the oak tree was causing the issues. Mr. Bergeron asked if the tie rods would core the wall. Mr. Marcantel stated yes. Mr. Bergeron asked if they would be parallel to an in line with the wall. Mr. Marcantel stated yes. He went on to say that they would be used at the corner to tie the wall back to the South wall. Mr. Fifield asked about the use of typical tie rods. Mr. Marcantel stated that that would be a challenge going through the interior. Ms. DiMaggio asked "challenge because of quantity?"

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron asked if there was a site plan. Ms. Bourgogne asked what the plan was for the tree. Mr. Marcantel stated that they planned to do a barrier underground.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for the deferral of the proposal in order for the applicant to submit the requested documents including the structural engineer's report and a site plan. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**522 Bourbon St: 22-02468-VCGEN**; Zella May, applicant; Anglade 522 Bourbon LLC, owner; Proposal to replace the balcony structure, per application & materials received 01/25/2022 & 07/17/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=913690>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Smith and Ms. May present on behalf of the application. Mr. Smith stated that he agreed with Ms. Vogt and that he had not drawn the scrolls correctly, but they would revise and intended to reinstall the original scrolls.

Ms. DiMaggio moved for **approval** with revisions as noted by staff, with final approval of revised drawings prior to recommencement of work. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**326-30 Chartres St: 22-12297-VCGEN**; John Dauer, applicant; 326-30 Chartres St LLC, owner; Proposal to install helical ties and replace lintels on interior side of exterior structural walls, in conjunction with permitted renovation and violation abatement, per application & materials received 07/11/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=923669>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Dauer present on behalf of the application. Mr. Dauer stated that he had spoken with Mr. Saxon and the VCC grout would be used, not HeliBond. For clarification Mr. Bergeron asked if this was being heard just for the structural impact, not architectural; Ms. Vogt responded yes, there would be no visual impact.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **approve** the proposed interventions with the proviso that the grout be submitted and approved by staff prior to the commencing of work. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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## New Business

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**1312 Dauphine St: 21-33016-VCGEN**; Ganpat Asha, applicant; Asha Ganpat, owner; Proposal to install lamb's tongue rail at front entry, per application & materials received 11/29/2021 and 07/11/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=908213>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Ganput present on behalf of the application. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she found it a "lesser evil" as far as alterations go, noting that it is minimal. Mr. Bergeron stated that he wanted

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to acknowledge how absurd it is for an insurance company to require installing a rail at this location, since the rail would be useless when the shutter was open. She stated that she had been warned she would not be covered without it. Mr. Fifield stated that the BBSA and SFM could waive certain requirements, and could one of these satisfy her insurance? Ms. Ganput responded that she inquired about a waiver, but the insurance company said no. Mr. Block noted that there appeared to be a trend of insurance companies giving less leeway in these matters than previously.

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio moved for **approval** of the rail as proposed with the details to be worked out at the staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**735 Bourbon St: 22-14569-VCGEN**; LN Construction & Exteriors INC., applicant; 735 B St Nola LLC, owner; Proposal to install bird's mouth scuppers in gallery roof gutter, per application & materials received 05/25/2022 & 06/06/2022

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=928552>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Stepnoski present on behalf of the application. Ms. Vogt stated that she needed a response to the other items listed before those permits could proceed. Mr. Fifield clarified that the only items on the agenda were the gutter and bird's mouths. Mr. Stepnoski stated that no gutter could be found to match the existing profile and that they wanted to install a half-round. He added that the gutter had not been replaced but painted by the owner. He noted that the owner would install a copper standing seam roof, but in protest to the additional cost, and asked that Mr. Stepnoski state that to the Committee. Mr. Fifield stated that the Committee could not consider financial hardship, as that was the Commission's role. Mr. Fifield stated that the existing gutter was an important architectural feature of the gallery and could not be changed to a half-round lightly. He noted the historic photo that there were downspouts on either side and a gutter at the main building, and why this was no longer working; Ms. Vogt responded that there was no longer a ½ round gutter at the main building roof, and that the entire rain load was being dumped on the gallery roof. Mr. Stepnoski stated that the water was backfeeding into the building, compromising the gallery roof. Mr. Fifield asked if the proposed bird's mouths would be installed aligned with the columns; the applicant responded yes. Mr. Fifield stated that the reason for the elimination of the gutter at the main building was not explained at all and that if the water from the main roof were diverted, it would likely eliminate the problem. Ms. DiMaggio agreed that changing the profile of the front gutter was a detrimental change with significant visual impact. The applicant then stated that they could not source a matching gutter; Ms. DiMaggio stated that availability would be a hardship.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **conceptually approve** a new copper gutter to match the existing profile, with bird's mouths to be added to align with the columns. Mr. Fifield requested an amendment to the motion to include a ½ round gutter to be installed at the main building roof to direct water to the downspouts and avoid the gallery roof. Mr. Bergeron agreed to the amendment. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the amended motion, which passed unanimously.

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**936 Dumaine St: 22-15627-VCPNT**; Smith Jessica, applicant; Clinton H Smith, owner; Proposal to install brick pavers and brick steps in rear courtyard, per application & materials received 06/28/2022

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=929030>

Ms. Vogt presented the report with Mr. Smith present on behalf of the application. The Committee had no questions and there was no public comment. Ms. DiMaggio moved to **approve** the proposal with final review and approval at staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**810 Bourbon St: 22-17866-VCGEN**; Carimi David, applicant; 810 Bourbon LLC, owner;

Proposal to install new ½ round copper gutters and round downspouts on main and service buildings, per application & materials received 06/15/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=931655>

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Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Carimi present on behalf of the application. Mr. Bergeron asked that

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staff please specify the size of the gutter so as to not have a “ridiculously oversized” gutter. Mr. Albrecht yes.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for conceptual approval with the details to be worked out at the staff level. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**919 Decatur St: 22-19272-VCGEN**; CLS Architects, applicant; Bopp Enterprises#lv LLC, owner;

Proposal to modify previously approved renovation plans including new railing supports, change of decorative fixtures to gas, and construction of a new mechanical screening wall in the courtyard, per application & materials received 06/27/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=932821>

There was no one present on behalf of the application. There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion to defer the application to allow for someone to be present to answer questions. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**827 Ursulines Ave: 22-19505-VCGEN**; M Clark Scott, applicant; Angela Kirby Clark, owner; Proposal to alter attic ventilation, per application & materials received 06/29/2022 & 07/12/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=932945>

Ms. Vogt read the report in the applicant’s absence at his prior request. Ms. Vogt stated that he contacted her after the reports were released to respond to some of the questions raised, noting that the wall was 8” thick, the brick used as infill would match, and the depth would be per the Committee’s recommendation. Mr. Fifield asked if Chinese caps were appropriate for the age of the building; Mr. Block responded that a louvered metal vent in the rear roof slope would be more fitting and less visible.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **conceptual approval** to enclose the gable vents, and **conceptual approval** of a copper vent in the rear roof slope, with final review and approval at staff level. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**922-924 Dauphine St: 22-19945-VCGEN**; Sinopoli Debbie, applicant; Debra A Sinopoli Trust, owner; Proposal to install prefabricated shed, per application & materials received 07/05/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=933389>

Ms. Vogt read the report with Mr. & Mrs. Ranger present on behalf of the application. Ms. Ranger stated that they were new to the neighborhood and VCC process, having just moved. She hoped that the shed would not be visible once her complete plans for the backyard were in place. She added that the shed would be on concrete piers and movable. Mr. Fifield asked when the larger plan would be implemented; Ms. Ranger responded that they were working on developing the plans but had already put a downpayment on the shed. Mr. Block asked if it would be temporary or permanent; Ms. Ranger responded permanent. Ms. DiMaggio asked about the materials; Mr. Ranger responded that they would be wood. Ms. Ranger stated that they were hoping to put grass and pavers around the shed, which she did not believe would be an eyesore. Ms. DiMaggio stated that it was less about it being an eyesore, and more about it being compatible with the neighborhood, and that holding off on the review to see the entire plan for the backyard might help. Mr. Fifield noted that the specs provided for the shed were very vague and non-specific, and asked that they provide more information and full context. He asked for a master plan for the backyard, and specifics on the shed, including materials, and door design. He stated that they could come back for further review at their discretion.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron doubted that the shed would be approvable “out of box,” considering the Design Guidelines state that prefabricated sheds are prohibited, unless the Commission approved it. He added that if it were clad by a carpenter, that might help. Mr. Block noted the criteria for approval, stating that if it could not meet the criteria, the Commission has the ability to take hardship into account. Mr. Fifield suggested a deferral to allow for the

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applicant to provide more information so it could be better evaluated under the Design Guidelines.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **defer** the application, with the applicant to submit more complete materials. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**937 Decatur St: 22-20159-VCGEN**; Spankor, Inc., applicant; 937 Decatur LLC, owner;

Proposal to replace existing eighteen lite entrance doors with new single lite over single panel doors, per application & materials received 07/06/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=933781>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report. There was no one there on behalf of the application. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she agreed with the staff report that the work would be ok if they were under the assumption the new doors would resemble the 2001 photos. Mr. Bergeron stated that he agreed with Ms. DiMaggio. Mr. Fifield stated that if the sill and the window in the door lined up that would be better.

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion for conceptual approval with the details to be worked out at the staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**1015 Decatur St: 22-20581-VCGEN**; Precision Construction Services, LLC., applicant; Rahim Rashkbar, owner;

Proposal to stucco exposed bricks of second and third floor and proposal to convert existing third floor windows to French doors, per application & materials received 07/11/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=934286>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Brown present on behalf of the application. Ms. DiMaggio asked if there was any interior evidence that the current windows were ever doors. Mr. Brown stated no, there is evidence they were always windows.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for the conceptual approval of the stucco with details at the staff level and the deferral of the window conversion. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**1215 Royal St: 22-20801-VCGEN**; Fransen Mills LLC, applicant; June19 LLC, owner;

Proposal to renovate courtyard space including installation of new fountain, per application & materials received 07/12/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=934351>

The applicant asked to be deferred prior to the meeting.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for a deferral. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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## Appeals and Violations

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**533 Toulouse St: 21-26935-VCGEN**; 533 Toulouse St: Gates Erika, applicant; 533 Toulouse LLC, owner; Appeal to retain HVAC equipment, modify HVAC platform, and install roof deck rail, per application & materials received 09/27/2021 & 07/11/2022, respectively. [Notices of Violation sent 04/11/2014, 12/04/2014, 02/13/2015, 03/29/2016, 12/02/16, 02/28/2019. STOP WORK ORDER posted 03/04/2014]

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=900177>

There was no one present on behalf of the application and the report was not presented. Mr. Fifield asked if the applicant was given notice; Ms. Vogt responded that she was, but that the staff recommendation was for deferral to request revisions and additional materials, so she would provide the applicant with a copy of the report so they could prepare for the next hearing.

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Mr. Bergeron moved to **defer** the application to allow for the applicant to revise and resubmit per the staff recommendations. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**532-534 N Rampart St: 22-08856-VCGEN**; Werling Kurt, applicant; Mercier Realty Co Inc, owner;

Proposal to install fiber cement board siding at rear enclosure, per application & materials received 03/24/2022 & 07/15/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=920307>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Werling present on behalf of the application. Mr. Werling noted that the twin building next door was granted approval for the application of stucco in the same area. Mr. Bergeron stated that he would like more information on the neighboring building. Mr. Albrecht noted that the application of stucco was already reviewed and denied by the Committee and would need to be appealed to the Commission. Mr. Albrecht continued that the application under review today was for the installation of the Hardie plank material.

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion to deny the proposal to install Hardie plank siding in the proposed location. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**1001 Dauphine St: 22-18766-VCGEN**; Vincent Catalanotto, applicant; Matassa Investments LLC, owner; Proposal to install structural ties at rear service building, per application & materials received 06/23/2022 & 06/29/2022. **[Notices of Violation sent 11/19/2019, 03/03/2022, and 04/04/2022.]**

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=932422>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Messrs. Zehner and Catalanotto present on behalf of the application. Mr. Zehner stated that he was proposing straps instead of round plates so the loads would not be concentrated. He added that the interior CMU wall had been in place since c. 1965; that the masonry wall had been moving out, and the CMU was supporting the joists. He stated that the wall was actually the rear of two separate service buildings and the Ursulines side building was in much better condition, so the straps were only needed at the St. Philip side building. He added that they would not be visible from the street. Mr. Zehner went on to say that he had not observed recent movement and that the bulge was at the second floor where the ties would be located.

Mr. Fifield asked why helical ties were not being proposed as they had been for multiple other projects recently reviewed by the Committee. Mr. Zehner stated that he did not think they should be used in soft brick walls, only to tie back veneer.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **approve** the work as proposed. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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With no other items to discuss, Ms. DiMaggio moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 2:52 pm. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.