

VIEUX CARRE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

LaToya Cantrell
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block
DIRECTOR

NOTE: The below minutes are in draft form and are a summary of actions taken. They are not a verbatim transcription of the meeting.

Minutes of the VCC Architectural Committee meeting of Tuesday, August 9th, 2022– 1:00 pm.

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

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

Staff Absent: Anthony Whitfield, Inspector

Others Present: Andrea Ford, Gabriel Virdure, Patrick ?, Blake Richard, John Williams, Patrick Capella, Vincent Catalanotto, Jennifer Taylor, Jonathan Marcantel, Karri Maggio

Old Business

619 Royal St: 20-30797-VCGEN: Trapolin Peer Architects, applicant; 619 Royal Street LLC, owner; Proposal to modify courtyard wall construction from previously approved plans, per application & materials received 06/10/2020 and 07/18/2022, respectively.

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

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report with Ms. Ford and a representative of the owner present on behalf of the application. Ms. Ford stated that they had reevaluated the wall after the approved partial demolition and reconstruction was not as feasible as they had expected, so the engineer was now proposing a contemporary footing. She went on to say that this was due to the soil conditions along the fault line running through the property, so they were in a similar situation that they had been in previously with the back wall. She added that the engineer saw no issues with combining the different assemblies. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she agreed with staff and asked Ms. Ford if the engineer could tell them why the two technologies would work together, or if a “break away point” would be needed in case of failure. Ms. Ford stated that the engineer had told them that there would be no issue, but that they were happy to formally submit a letter to that effect. Ms. DiMaggio asked if he had explained why there would be no issue; Ms. Ford responded, “similar soil and similarly sized and weighted footing.” Mr. Bergeron stated, “not being an engineer myself, this seems reasonable.” He asked if they would pour the concrete right up to the existing brick corbel footing; Ms. Ford responded yes. Mr. Fifield asked if the section showing the CMU core was at the pilaster, not the wall; Ms. Ford confirmed this.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **conceptually approve** the work with the proviso that staff receive a document from the engineer stating that there were no concerns over differential settlement. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

740 Barracks St: 21-32681-VCGEN; Andrew Corbett Scott III, applicant; Brad Michael Williams Irrevocable Trust, owner;

Proposal to install Hardie panel vertical siding on the Royal St. elevation, per application & materials received 11/24/2021 & 08/05/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=908060>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report. There was no one present on behalf of the application.

There was no public comment.

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

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

Proposal to renovate courtyard space including installation of new Pennsylvania bluestone, reconstruction of planters, and installation of new landscape lighting, per application & materials received 12/07/2021 & 07/26/2022, respectively.

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

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Marcantel present on behalf of the application. Mr. Marcantel stated that the contractor, David Carimi, had said that there would be substantial loss to the stone material due to it being cemented in place. Mr. Marcantel stated that they were working on sourcing salvaged stone. Mr. Bergeron asked about the extent of the subsurface work. Mr. Marcantel responded that some of the storm drains are tied in to the domestic sewer drains, that there was lots of ponding between the wings, and that grading needed to be done.

Ms. DiMaggio asked if the new installation would include concrete between the stones. Mr. Marcantel responded that he was recommending not to use concrete between stones. Mr. Fifield asked if there were any requirements for stormwater retention. Mr. Marcantel responded that he was suggesting sand joints to help with permeability but that there was no required goal.

Ms. DiMaggio asked about the consolidation of the salvaged historic material to the front of the property. Mr. Marcantel responded that the plan was to intermix the historic with the new material. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she did not believe that would be as successful and that a cleaner break between materials may be better.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to defer the site paving with conceptual approval of the lighting plan with details at the staff level. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

1133-1137 Chartres St: 22-22631-VCGEN; Jonathan G Marcantel, applicant; Soniat Holdings LLC, owner;

Proposal to install new courtyard paving and courtyard lighting, per application & materials received 07/26/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=937110>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Marcantel present on behalf of the application. Mr. Marcantel stated that the intent for the tree lights was to aim them down. Mr. Marcantel also noted that the linear light would be at the seating level. Ms. Bourgogne asked about lighting on the building. Mr. Marcantel stated that they were recommending gas on the main building and electric on the rear.

Regarding the paving, Mr. Bergeron stated that they may need physical samples of the new stone. Mr. Marcantel stated that they were trying to source stone that isn't "fresh." Ms. DiMaggio recommended an approach of salvaging and reusing and then supplementing as needed.

Ms. DiMaggio moved to defer the paving proposal to allow the applicant time to revise the courtyard paving and to provide samples and to defer the lighting in order to see a full lighting plan. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

923 Decatur St: 22-03489-VCGEN; Perez Architects, applicant; Salvadore T Tusa, owner;

Proposal to make structural masonry repairs to the Decatur St. elevation of hurricane damaged building, per application & materials received 01/25/2022 & 07/26/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=914717>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Ms. Maggio present on behalf of the application. Ms. Maggio stated that she spoke with the contractor and that the cornice is stucco over wood framing and does not appear to be removable. Mr. Fifield inquired if they were working with an engineer. Ms. Maggio answered yes, but they couldn't be here today.

Mr. Bergeron asked if Ms. Maggio was confident the contractor could do this work without destroying the building. Ms. Maggio replied that they have relayed that they can do it, that the building is shored, and the mason has reviewed the proposal.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved for conceptual approval of the proposal with the applicant to submit measured drawings and a photo package to document the extent of the work. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1039 Burgundy St: 22-15634-VCGEN; John C Williams, applicant; Michael Katzenstein, owner; Proposal to construct addition on roof of orange rated garage, modify garage doors, enclose courtyard arcade, and install roof deck, per application & materials received 05/24/2022 & 07/26/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=929037>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Capella and Mr. Williams present on behalf of the application. Mr. Capella stated that there were some typos and drafting errors, and that the total height at the parapet was 13' 6". For clarification he stated that the doors would be solid wood, not wood clad, with glass panels. Mr. Williams stated that they were leaving the second-floor parapet at the service ell, and that all new doors would be square-headed doors instead of arched. He added that they would take out the existing door at the rear of the main building and also make it square-headed. He also said that they would like two doors on the rear of the main building, but they understood if only one was approved. Mr. Capella stated that they wanted the new millwork to be more appropriate, and that the other doors in the main building were square-headed, so these would be consistent. Mr. Capella added that the doors on the front building were glass all the way down but the new doors in the rear would have wood panels. He then stated that a lot of the other recommended changes were tied to the roof deck, so their revisions would also depend on whether or not that was approved. Mr. Williams argued that the deck was not against Guidelines as that structure was lower rated and it was the "perfect place for a roof deck." Mr. Capella concluded that they were fine with setting back the Ursulines-side façade and would work with staff.

Ms. DiMaggio stated that she was fine with square headers on the main building but that two doors looked a tad cramped, and that she agreed with staff that the proposed openings on the service ell looked too tall and needed better proportions. She added that the detailing of the doors should be consistent with service ells, not copying the main building. Mr. Bergeron responded that he didn't necessarily agree with the applicant that the doors on the orange rated building were "that bad" and found them to be representative of their time, but he did agree that replacing the door on the rear of the main building made sense. He went on to say that he was "hesitant to allow two," without evidence that two previously existed. Mr. Williams responded that there was no evidence of two but the client had requested it. Mr. Fifield asked the Committee for comments on the roof deck. Mr. Bergeron stated that staff felt it went against guidelines and that he did not disagree with their interpretation, but asked exactly what they said. Ms. Vogt responded that the Guidelines "highly discourage" any additions on buildings less than three full stories in height. She noted that it did meet some criteria, such as the building rating, but that she could not recall any other buildings or instances where the VCC had approved a roof deck on a building that was only one story in height. Mr. Williams stated that he disagreed with this interpretation, and that the Guidelines encouraged new construction. Both Ms. Vogt and Ms. Bourgogne stated that staff had no objection to the addition, but to the activated, occupiable outdoor roof deck on a one-story building in a residential overlay district. Mr. Williams argued that the owners already had access to the roof top, which previously had a rail. Ms. DiMaggio stated that the difference was that the VCC does not have jurisdiction over use, but does have jurisdiction over the physical elements and formalization of something that is highly discouraged by the Guidelines, which made her pause. Mr. Capella stated that the building had always been commercial in use, historically. Ms. Vogt agreed that that was a criteria that had been met, as the VCC prohibits these types of additions on buildings that were constructed as residential, which is why staff was not arguing this point. Mr. Capella stated that they had done site studies to try to minimize visibility. Ms. Bourgogne addressed the Committee, stating that the issue was that if they agreed to this, they would be architecturalizing the roof deck and saying that it was approvable on a one story building. Mr. Fifield asked if these changes would be forwarded to the Commission for a public hearing; Mr. Block and Ms. Bourgogne both answered yes. Mr. Williams stated that the roof deck was the reason for their clients moving into this home and they were setting it back to be more manageable, but that they had a door now. Ms. Bourgogne asked Ms. Vogt if the door had been installed illegally; Ms. Vogt responded that the door itself was an issue and was definitely in violation, but that the opening was of dubious provenance and staff had been unable to establish if it was part of the service ell

when it was built or if it had been added later, so the issue was “murky.” Mr. Capella stated that the door had been in violation that had been cleared; Ms. Vogt stated that it was still unresolved and was a material issue for the prefabricated door that was not appropriate. She added that staff was not currently following up on the door violation since this proposal is currently under review, but would need to be addressed if this proposal does not continue.

Mr. Fifield asked for public comment. An unidentified member of the public addressed the Committee, stating that he thought it was a good proposal that would provide outdoor space, and that he did not understand why there was a rule that did not allow it on a one story building.

Mr. Capella addressed Ms. Bourgogne’s concerns about the roof deck setting a precedent, stating that this condition was “rare.” Mr. Block responded that there were similar conditions in the same overlay district, and that it does happen, and that it was disingenuous to see it drawn in such a sterile way when there would end up being furniture, possibly plants, umbrellas, etc. so it would not end up looking clean as shown. Mr. Williams repeated that this would be bringing a family in to the French Quarter and he appreciated consideration.

Mr. Bergeron suggested that if the property had been in the owner’s family for some time, maybe they had access to drawings from when the orange-rated building was built that might substantiate the door and use of the roof as a roof deck. Mr. Williams said they would look. Mr. Fifield stated that that wouldn’t change whether or not it was a good idea, since it would formalize and architecturalize the element. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she applied the Guidelines to each building individually but that she did not find this to be a strong case for two reasons. One, that the applicant had been talking about visibility from the street, but that the Design Guidelines give jurisdiction over everything the air touches, and since this was a one-story building, it would have a tremendous impact on the viewshed, particularly from surrounding properties. Second, since this would be returning the building to single family use, the same occupants would also have access to the courtyard, so this would be adding an additional outdoor space which made it harder to justify.

Ms. Vogt noted that ultimately, the decision for the roof deck and multiple other aspects of this proposal would lie with the Commission, and that the Committee could choose to forward a positive recommendation, a negative recommendation, or no recommendation. Mr. Fifield asked for a motion. Ms. DiMaggio moved for deferral of the items pertaining to the main building, service ell, and rooftop addition, and to revise based on comments today, including millwork details and proportions, and to forward a negative recommendation for the roof deck to the Commission. Mr. Fifield asked for clarification that large portions of the proposal would be deferred; Ms. DiMaggio stated that she did feel that some aspects of the proposal could be conceptually approved and finalized at staff level, but that other portions would need to be revised based on the Commission’s decision regarding the roof deck. Mr. Fifield stated that he thought it would be cleaner if the proposal moved forward in one piece. Ms. Vogt stated that the Committee could choose to conceptually approve a rooftop addition with this massing, form, materiality, etc, but with millwork and other elements of the addition to be revised pending the decision of the Committee regarding the roof deck since this would influence what direction the application proceeds.

Ms. DiMaggio revised her motion to **conceptually approve** the work at the main building and service ell and rooftop addition, with future millwork revisions following a ruling from the Commission on the proposed roof top deck, with a **negative recommendation** to be forwarded for the rooftop terrace. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

New Business

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>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Richard present on behalf of the application. The applicant stated that 7 rail supports was probably too much and that they could probably go with 4, perhaps 3. Mr. Fifield asked “so what do you need?” The applicant stated that he would need to speak with the structural engineer. The applicant then went on to say that they didn’t like the current placement of the wall mounted sconces on the second floor either. He then stated that they planned to have recessed lighting in the doorways so they could just remove the decorative fixtures altogether. He then moved on to the proposed wall in the rear stating that they proposed coating, Flex Coat, was a finish they had used in other projects. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she would

like to see the decorative fixtures removed and that she was not familiar with the Flex Coat product. Ms. Bourgogne asked about the generator seen on the plans, asking if that was proposed or existing. Mr. Richard replied that they would be proposing one at some point.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for the deferral of the application in order to allow the applicant time to work with staff on today's concerns. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Fransen present. Mr. Fransen noted that they were just seeking conceptual approval at this time and would be putting the drain back where it was historically. Mr. Fransen stated that the drain would be off the walls everywhere. Mr. Bergeron asked if they had enough material to patch the courtyard paving. Mr. Fransen stated that they were able to source the same material.

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion for conceptual approval with the drain relocation conversation as it developed. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Appeals and Violations

1001 Dauphine St: 22-20322-VCGEN; Harold LeBlanc, applicant; Matassa Investments LLC, owner; Appeal of staff denial to install asphalt architectural shingles on Green rated buildings, per application & materials received 07/07/2022 & 07/26/2022, respectively.

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Catalanotto present on behalf of the application. Mr. Catalanotto asked if he was allowed to patch and repair the existing roof, saying he was "just trying to understand his options." Ms. Vogt stated that 1001 and rear were Fire Free, which was discontinued and not available for patching. She added that the Guidelines recommend replacing a roof slope if 8% of it or more is damaged. Mr. Catalanotto asked why the property report stated that there were 4 roofs in question. Ms. Vogt stated that the rear kitchens were one roof slope, but in fact were two buildings. Ms. DiMaggio stated that the Architecture Committee must rule on architectural issues only, but that the Commission could consider hardship, if his reason for proposing asphalt was due to cost.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **deny** the installation of asphalt roofing at this location. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

522 Bourbon St: 22-20779-VCGEN; Taylor Jennifer, applicant; Anglade 522 Bourbon LLC, owner; Proposal to install structural wall brackets on interior side of third and fourth floor exterior walls of brick observation tower, per application & materials received 07/12/2022 & 07/26/2022. **[Notices of Violation sent 11/01/2019 and 07/07/2021]**

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=934237>

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report with Ms. Taylor present on behalf of the application. Ms. Taylor stated that she had drawings from engineer Walter Zehner, that had not been properly uploaded to the application. Ms. Vogt noted that the drawings reviewed had only shown the locations, not the brackets themselves. Ms. Taylor presented them to the Committee and staff. Mr. Fifield noted that they were minimal impact. Ms. Vogt stated that the exterior crack must be repointed at the very least, so some exterior work would be required. Ms. Taylor stated that, based on the photos provided by staff, she found repointing to be required as well. Mr. Fifield stated that if this was the only intervention needed, that was great. Ms. Taylor also noted that the existing lintels were stone, not wood, and that Mr. Zehner had thought the brackets were reasonable to keep the tower from moving.

Ms. DiMaggio moved for **approval** of the work, with the applicant to digitally submit the detail drawings from Mr. Zehner that were reviewed at the hearing, and with exterior repairs to be completed to satisfy staff and resolve the violation. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

636-638 Dauphine St: 22-20958-VCCAM; Waguespack Gregory, applicant; GSW Properties LLC, owner;
Proposal to retain keypad door hardware, per application & materials received 07/13/2022. **[Notice of Violation sent 05/31/2022]**

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report although there was no one present on behalf of the application. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she was in agreement with the staff report and that the finish is the sticking point.

Mr. Bergeron moved to deny retention of the keypad hardware but to approval the installation of a similar lock with the finish to be approved by staff or painting of the existing lock. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

With no business left to discuss Ms. DiMaggio moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bergeron and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:56 pm.