

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, April 11, 2023 – 1:00 pm.**

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

**Committee Members Absent:** Toni DiMaggio

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

**Others Present:** Erika Gates, Miles Martin, David Carimi, Nikki Szalwinski, Daniel Winkert, Peter Trapolin, Steve Olson, Michael Pousson, Brian O'Reilly, Richard Dragisic, Kenneth Labbé

## MINUTES

### New Business

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**1231 Bourbon St: 23-01334-VCGEN;** Brian J O'reilly Jr, applicant; Lauricella Bourbon Properties LLC, 1231 Bourbon Owner LLC, Bourbon Maison LLC, owner; Proposal to install new swimming pool in courtyard, per application & materials received 01/20/2023 & 02/28/2023, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=959591>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. Dragisic present on behalf of the application. Mr. Dragisic stated that they had brought paving and tile samples and that their building had a limited relationship with the neighboring building only through the entrance/ servitude. He added that the existing pavers were not Pennsylvania blue stone and that his side of the building has a wall while the opposite side had a fence. He felt there is a strong separation between the 2 buildings, and thought the proposed material is closer to other courtyards in the French Quarter.

Mr. Fifield asked the applicant why they wished for a raised pool, noting that it was contrary to the Design Guidelines. Mr. Dragisic stated that the yard was small, and a raised pool would allow them to create a wall and avoid hazard. Ms. Vogt noted that the property was once one parcel until it was split in 2019. Mr. Dragisic stated "well, it is separate now!" He noted that several adjacent properties had raised pools and showed a photo from the Guidelines that showed a small step up. Ms. Vogt noted that the pools referenced by the applicant were installed prior to the publication of the current Guidelines, and clarified that the pool example in the Guidelines was adjacent to a lawn, and that the pavers were only slightly raised in comparison with the softscape. Mr. O'Reilly stated that it was important that the pool be raised for drainage purposes. Ms. Vogt noted that drains would typically be located around a flush pool in order to prevent runoff into the pool.

Mr. Bergeron asked if staff had any concerns about the proposed wall. Ms. Vogt explained that the last renovation had included a wood fence in this location for trash screening and storage, so she did not find it to be an issue. Mr. Fifield asked if the proposed paver was a natural stone. Mr. Dragisic responded yes, as far as he knew it was 19<sup>th</sup> century reclaimed from another New Orleans courtyard.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Fifield stated that he understood why the applicant preferred a raised pool. Mr. Bergeron asked why the VCC Guidelines did not allow them, and if the Guidelines were explicit; Ms. Vogt reiterated that the Guidelines were explicit, but noted that the rationale was not included. She also added that fountains and other raised water features could only be a maximum depth of 18" per the CZO. Mr. Fifield stated that there were other ways to keep runoff from entering the pool, and asked why it was raised 12", adding that the Committee needed clear motivation if they were to make an exception to the Guidelines. Mr. O'Reilly responded that 12" was typical for raised planters and fountains and that it would allow them to use 12" pavers. He added that anything lower than 12" would be a different look and feel. Mr. Bergeron commented that a contrasting paver or tile would also alert

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people to the water's edge.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **conceptual approval** of the pool and pavers, with final review and approval at staff level, with the proviso that the pool must be flush to comply with the Design Guidelines. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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**521 Dauphine St: 23-08079-VCGEN**; Winkert Daniel, applicant; 521 Dauphine Street LLC, owner;

Proposal to renovate building including removal of non-historic fencing, per application & materials received 03/24/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=967236>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Winkert present on behalf of the application. Mr. Winkert stated the following: the spikes are not ok with Safety and Permits so we would just cut the spikes off and want to add planters to the area between the sidewalk and stairs. We also have to figure out the side doors with Safety and Permits and code. They are not egress doors but there seems to be some confusion.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Winkert stated that the plan reviewer had a problem with the clear width and height of the side doors. Mr. Bergeron stated that the work appeared to be restoration of previously existing conditions.

Mr. Bergeron made a motion for conceptual approval of the proposal with the details to be worked out at the staff level. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**1026 Saint Louis St: 23-08183-VCGEN**; Peer Architects Trapolin, applicant; Patois LLC, owner;

Proposal to install new retractable courtyard covering, per application & materials received 03/27/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=967317>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Trapolin present on behalf of the application. Mr. Trapolin stated that they were just trying to expand their seating area and make it more comfortable for guests outside. Mr. Trapolin stated that a more solid option would provide more all-weather protection. He went on to say that he was unaware of the installation of the cover in the alley.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Fifield asked how Mr. Trapolin would address the issues of precedent. Mr. Trapolin responded that they were not looking to enclose the space, only looking at retractable options.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to deny the application. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**327 Bourbon St: 23-08305-VCGEN**; Gates Erika, applicant; Karno 327 Bourbon Real Estate LLC, owner;

Proposal to install a series of tie rods on the Bourbon St. and Conti elevations of the main building, per application & materials received 03/28/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=967410>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Carimi, Mr. Martin and Ms. Gates present on behalf of the application. Ms. Gates stated that they were preserving a lot of the interior plaster work including a ceiling medallion but that a lot of the walls were severely damaged, so they had to come out. Mr. Martin stated that the SHPO tax credits were still being used and that there was a lot of water damage and sagging at the front. Mr. Fifield asked if the tie rod had a domed shape. Mr. Martin stated that they were not trying to do anything fancy here and that they would supplement with extra drawings. Mr. Bergeron asked on slide 78, it seemed there was an intent to not interfere with the balcony but he assumed that it would. He asked for clarification or if this would be worked out on site. Mr. Carimi stated yes, it would be located between the lookout and the purlin. Mr. Fifield noted that some statement from the engineer is important regarding the placements of the plates.

There was no public comment.

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Mr. Bergeron made the motion for conceptual approval with details at the staff level specifically the details at the front balcony street façade. Mr. Fifield asked for an amendment to the motion to require a letter from the structural engineer regarding the proposal. Mr. Bergeron accepted the amendment. Mr. Fifield seconded the amended motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**400 N Peters St: 23-08364-VCGEN**; Steve Olson, applicant; Jackson Square Investment II LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate building including installation of new roof with modifications, installation of new windows on the river elevation, and modifications to an existing entry gate, per application & materials received 03/28/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=967466>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Olson and Mr. Pousson present on behalf of the application. Mr. Pousson stated that they did present an SBS option for the roof and that they would like the flexibility to go with either material. He stated that the roof color would be grey. Mr. Pousson continued that the proposed windows were from Quaker and that they would be able to maintain the profiles and mimic the style of the current windows.

Mr. Fifield stated that there was no frame at the top of the window and asked if the applicants could provide dimensions on the window details.

Mr. Pousson noted that they had significant damage from Hurricane Ida including the roof, stucco cracking, and windows blown out. Mr. Olson noted that they could achieve an impact rating with metal windows. Regarding the proposed changes at the entrance on N. Peters, Mr. Pousson noted that the rest of the openings on the front and sides of the building had storefront glass. He continued that the intent was to create an enclosed conditioned space and recess the ATM.

Mr. Fifield stated that he was uncomfortable with the incremental changes on this building. He went on to say that it was hard for him to see the impact on the historic fabric or if there was even any historic fabric left and that the drawings show an attempt to homogenize the building. Mr. Olson noted that the intent was to get metal windows close in appearance to the existing.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to defer the application in order to allow the applicant time to further detail the proposal based on today's discussion. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**1226 Chartres St: 23-08332-VCGEN**; Zach Smith Consulting & Design, applicant; 1216 Chartres LLC, owner; Proposal to construct new electrical closet on side elevation of main building, per application & materials received 03/28/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=967491>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Martin present on behalf of the application.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for approval with a positive recommendation to be forwarded to the full Commission. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**1220 Chartres St: 23-08412-VCGEN**; Zach Smith Consulting & Design, applicant; 1216 Chartres LLC, owner; Proposal to construct new electrical closet on side elevation of main building, per application & materials received 03/29/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=967491>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Martin present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield stated that for this and the previous application he did not see a negative impact on the building because of the construction of the structure.

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There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for approval with a positive recommendation to be forwarded to the full Commission. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**926 Toulouse St: 23-08670-VCPNT**; Juster Rita, applicant; The Jeff and Rita Juster Revocable, owner; Proposal to install new keypad deadbolt at main entrance door, per application & materials received 03/31/2023. <https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=967724>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report although there was no applicant present. Mr. Fifield clarified that the owners were maintain the existing handles on the door. Mr. Albrecht replied that the handles would be retained.

Mr. Bergeron moved to approve the proposed replacement hardware. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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## Appeals and Violations

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**819 Bourbon St: 23-06960-VCGEN**; Labbe Construction Co LLC, applicant; Beomjune B Kim, owner; Appeal to retain HVAC equipment and condenser lines installed without benefit of VCC review and approval, per application & materials received 03/25/2023. <https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=966137>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Labbé present on behalf the application. Mr. Labbé stated that he was the contractor and that the HVAC subcontractor could not attend and the architect was no longer involved. He stated that he thought this was the only option, as the service ell walls are solid masonry and that if they went underground the lines were not long enough and turns would not work. Mr. Fifield asked if the engineer had visited the site; Mr. Labbé responded no. Mr. Fifield stated that retention of these conditions was not even close to something that staff or the ARC would approve, and that this was not the standard at all, noting that the lines had not been laid with any care or organization. He asked why they had not gone inside; Mr. Labbé responded that they would have to go through the solid wall. Mr. Fifield noted that that was done all the time. Mr. Labbé stated that the lines would be too long. Ms. Bourgogne stated, "we would rather see the units moved than this." Mr. Labbé asked if it would be possible to cover the lines; Mr. Fifield responded that they were obscuring architectural features and reiterated that the lines had been installed with no regard for placement, with multiple brick penetrations throughout, even entering at headers. He stated that he did not find the argument for retention convincing.

Mr. Labbé stated that this was a historic tax credit project and that the work had been inspected and a certificate of occupancy issued. Ms. Vogt clarified that the mechanical was inspected by a third party and that no permits had ever been issued form Safety and Permits or VCC for the mechanical work, and that only a temporary CofO had been released by DSP. Mr. Bergeron stated that he could not imagine any architect being ok with this installation, and that he could not see NPS approving it either. Ms. Bourgogne added that no solution had been presented and that maybe some lines could be run inside, while some could run underground, or units could be moved. Mr. Labbé stated that the architect had called for VCC inspection, so he was confused about the work not being approved. For clarification, Ms. Bourgogne added that the architect stated on site that she had been just as shocked as staff was when she saw how the lines were installed. Ms. Vogt explained that they had been granted conceptual approval as part of the overall renovation permit but that no mechanical permits had been issued.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **denial** of the appeal to retain the equipment and lines as installed. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Fifield noted that the decision could be appealed to the full Commission by notifying staff in writing within 30 days.

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At approximately 2:27 PM Mr. Bergeron moved to adjourn. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.