

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 25, 2023 – 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: Marguerite Roberts, Senior Inspector; Nora Goddard, Inspector

Others Present: Robert Cangelosi, Drew Hoyle, Charles Zimmer, Andrew Stephens, John Williams, Mike Buckley, Erin Holmes, Daniel Raines, John Reed, Joey Carlson, Rene Fransen, Fleming Etheridge, Kurt Werling, Dymtro Udych, Colin Savoie, John MacNeil

MINUTES

Old Business

1215 Dauphine St, 911-15 Governor Nicholls St: 21-18881-VCGEN; John C Williams, applicant; Gov Nichols Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to build two new two-and-a-half story buildings, per application & materials received 06/29/2021 and 03/29/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=891017>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Messrs. Williams and Stephens present on behalf of the application. Mr. Williams stated that all issues had been addressed and that they would be going before the Encroachments Committee tomorrow. He stated that he understood there were some concerns with open space but that it had been reviewed and approved by Zoning recently and they wanted to move forward. Mr. Stephens stated that they had worked to simplify the gallery and were happy to discuss further with staff. Mr. Fifield stated that this project had been reviewed extensively by the VCC and ARC, explaining that the approval had expired due to timeframe and that approval was again required as a formality. He then asked for public comment. Daniel Raines, Erin Holmes, John Reed and Mike Buckley voiced opposition to the proposal.

Mr. Fifield stated that the Committee could either endorse the previously approved design or reconsider, noting that there was some controversy. Ms. DiMaggio noted that the project had last been reviewed fairly recently, with the same Design Guidelines and Committee members. She stated that it sounded like the only reason it returned to the Committee was for due diligence of new construction details, noting that building code compliance had been updated and that the Design Guidelines had not changed. Mr. Bergeron agreed, stating that he was rarely opposed to second guessing designs but that it had been approved recently and met the Design Guidelines. He stated that it was important that the Committee be predictable in their decisions and not let a project go this far into approval and permitting just to revoke approval at a later date, adding that the Committee and Commission had both determined that the work met the Design Guidelines. Ms. DiMaggio stated that this had only returned to the Committee due to a delay in approvals from other agencies and that the character of the design had not changed, just minor details involving the gallery and removal of the gas lanterns that had been previously approved. Ms. Vogt clarified that her recommendation had been for conceptual approval, as this would allow for further development of the gallery and small revisions at staff level prior to permit. Mr. Williams added that SHPO had approved the design, not just the VCC, and that he found it to be a good infill project.

Ms. DiMaggio moved for **conceptual approval** with revisions to be completed per staff recommendation, with final review at staff level, and with the proviso that the violations at the historic building must be addressed and corrected prior to permit issuance. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Fifield addressed the audience, stating that any decision of the Architecture Committee could be appealed to the Commission by anyone.

New Business

909 Ursulines Ave; 23-06620-VCGEN; Fransen Mills LLC, applicant; Sterling S Willis, Sterling S Willis, owner; Proposal to modify landscaping, install new patio, new fountains, and replacement fence and gates, per application & materials received 03/14/2023 & 04/11/2023, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=965681>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Messrs. Fransen and Etheridge present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fransen stated that the front fence had deteriorated and they wanted to protect it with stucco and make the height uniform for security. He responded to the report saying that the building might be a shotgun, but that they had additional space that used to be a different building. He added that they wanted to be able to separate the cars from the rest of the space and create a terrace, and that the client wanted the urns. He also explained that the barbeque was not a permanent fixture and would be eliminated. Mr. Fifield asked staff if there were violations on the property; Ms. Vogt responded that she was unsure. Mr. Fifield noted that the building was generally well maintained.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Fifield stated that the site is an extraordinary lot and that the proposed landscaping work would not have a negative impact on the preservation of the house. He asked if there was a standard for matching styles; Mr. Block responded that the Guidelines said to keep style and age consistent, and that staff had found the design more appropriate for high style architecture. Mr. Fifield noted that the site was not modest. Mr. Bergeron agreed. Ms. DiMaggio stated that she agreed with the staff report but that the property did have this large yard now, which changed its history. However, she added, some aspects such as the stucco and lanterns did not fit. Mr. Fifield asked for comments on particular aspects of the design. Mr. Bergeron stated that it was important the gates and walls match the house but that he did not object to the stucco. Mr. Fifield asked staff for recommendations; Ms. Vogt responded that she had some recommendations for revisions throughout, particularly for the gates, but that staff wanted a general direction from the Committee first. Ms. DiMaggio again noted the lanterns; Mr. Block agreed that the Committee had been taking a more conservative approach. Ms. Bourgogne stated that different lights would be more appropriate. Mr. Fifield agreed that bringing the design more into line with the style of the house would be good, to balance with a more modest building. He added that he wanted to see the proposal return before construction documents.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **conceptual approval** with construction documents to return to the committee. Ms. DiMaggio suggested deferral since there were still elements of the design in question. Mr. Bergeron amended his motion to deferral, with revisions per discussions with the Committee. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

340 Chartres St; 23-07236-VCGEN; Werling Kurt, applicant; Mercier Realty & Inv Co, Mercier Realty & Inv Co, owner; Proposal to install new pavers, fence, gate and lighting at existing parking lot, per application & materials received 03/16/2023 & 04/11/2023, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=966272>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Werling present on behalf of the application. Mr. Werling stated that they had discussed putting low lights in the columns but that he had visited the site at night and it was already very bright, so he did not think there would be any benefit. Mr. Block asked if the lights were required. Ms. Vogt stated that they had been in the previous proposal and that it was unreliable to count on maintenance of streetlights. Ms. Bourgogne asked if lights would be added where the building used to be; Mr. Werling stated that they would be both up and downlights. Mr. Block responded that only downlights would be approvable, not uplighting. Mr. Werling stated that the fixtures would be dimmable and that he would provide paver samples. Ms. DiMaggio asked if he owned the adjacent walls; Mr. Werling stated that per his surveys, two of the four were party walls, but that one of the other walls already had lights on it. Mr. Bergeron asked if he had a good relationship with that neighbor; Mr. Werling responded that he did. Ms. DiMaggio stated that the lights could be mounted to posts instead, if there was an issue.

Ms. DiMaggio moved for **approval** of the gate, fence, pavers and drainage, and **deferral** of the lighting until mockups could be viewed in situ, with final review and approval at staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

912 Royal St: 23-09388-VCPNT; Cangelosi, Jr Robert, applicant; Pochard LLC, owner;

Proposal to renovate the courtyard including the construction of a new arbor structure, per application & materials received 04/10/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=968453>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Cangelosi present on behalf of the application. Mr. Cangelosi stated that this was just a preliminary review. Ms. Bourgogne asked if they were reusing the stone. Mr. Cangelosi stated yes. Mr. Fifield asked if the arbor was to be between the two planting beds. Mr. Cangelosi stated yes. Mr. Fifield stated, "from the gate you only see the side." Mr. Cangelosi stated yes.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to defer the application in order to allow the applicant more time to develop the proposal. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

921 Chartres St: 23-09555-VCGEN; Hoyle Designs LLC, applicant; Jennerson M Guillory, owner;

Proposal to install synthetic decking on front, street-facing gallery, per application & materials received 04/11/2023.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=968644>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Hoyle present on behalf of the application. Mr. Hoyle stated that they were curious if the synthetic would be approved on the front. Mr. Hoyle noted that he does see synthetic decking at other locations and noted the changes that are required with that work.

Ms. DiMaggio noted that there had been several previous reviews and comments regarding the use of synthetic decking on green-rated buildings in covered locations. Ms. DiMaggio continued that this proposal seemed to be aligned with those others that were not approved and so that she was in agreement with staff. Finally, the addition of several additional purlins was always a concern. Mr. Fifield noted that the submitted documents are very coherent and easy to follow and thanked the applicant for that.

Ms. DiMaggio moved to deny the proposal for synthetic decking, with the applicant to revise the proposal to change damaged areas with matching wood decking. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Appeals and Violations

1008 Dauphine St: 20-48257-VCGEN; Maple Ridge Architects, applicant; Angela C Johnson, owner; Review of mockup for front elevation millwork, in conjunction with ongoing renovation, per application & materials received 12/08/2020 & 04/13/2023, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=866616>

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report with Messrs. Carlson and Savoie present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield stated that this roof had had an independent gutter, while others often had an integrated gutter and entablature. He stated that he wondered when this point of departure occurred. Ms. Vogt agreed that it was very different from most, but that there was nothing to indicate that this was not the original condition. Mr. Carlson directed attention to a historic photo from the 1920s of the adjacent building that showed the cornice at 1008. Ms. Vogt asked if they had intended to do a mockup of the older proposal; Mr. Savoie responded that they had meant to do the stepped down design.

Mr. Carlson asked if the windows were acceptable, which Ms. Vogt responded that they were close. Mr. Fifield asked if the mockups were representative of the drawings; Ms. Vogt responded that the top band was, and Mr. Savoie asked if they wanted the bottom band modified as well. Ms. DiMaggio responded yes, and that she was leaning towards the stepped reinterpretation for the bottom band.

Ms. Szalwinski addressed the Committee, asking if any research had been done on the building title or contract.

She also noted that the scoring made no sense and had no correspondence to the apertures, and that it looked awkward.

Mr. Bergeron noted that the keystones had not been redone when the stucco was applied and scored. Mr. Savoie stated that staff had pointed that out. Mr. Carlson stated that scoring lines at the side elevations had been carried through to the front elevation.

Mr. MacNeil addressed the Committee, stating that the renovation was much improved over the property's previous state, but that he did have concerns about how the frieze would be attached. He also noted concerns with existing elements that were glued and nailed, joints being skewed, and remaining gaps in much of the work.

Ms. Vogt noted that the frieze windows at the front were still not right. Mr. Fifield stated that the bands would have been recessed in plaster and that he was concerned the materials being used were too thin. He stated that even if the proportions and profiles were right, the material and attachment were concerns. He added that the applicant should provide more information about the materials, dimensions, and attachments, as the details were not there in the drawings yet. Mr. Carlson stated that he was confused but wanted to do things correctly. Mr. Bergeron stated that the original condition looked to be applied, with the stucco dying into it. He asked the Committee about chipping out the plaster and patching with thicker materials; Mr. Fifield was concerned this work might deteriorate and peel off.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **deferral** with the applicant to revise their submittal per this discussion, and with the applicant to work with staff on revising the mockup. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Next AC Date: Tuesday, May 9, 2023

With no further business to discuss, Ms. DiMaggio moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 2:32 PM. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.