

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 9, 2024– 1:00 PM.

Committee Members Present:	Rick Fifield, Stephen Bergeron, Cynthia Steward
Staff Present:	Bryan Block, Director; Renee Bourgogne, Deputy Director; Nick Albrecht, Principal Plans Examiner; Noah Epstein, Inspector
Staff Absent:	Erin Vogt, Principal Plans Examiner; Marguerite Roberts, Senior Inspector;
Others Present:	Jerry Eames, Spencer Johnson, Myles Martin, David Pons, Kenneth Bordenave, Erika Gates, Patrick Roland, Mark Heck, Katherine Harmon, Nikki Szalwinski, Zach Smith, Pearson Smith, Alan Harris, Suzanne Winkler, Leo Duvernay, Christin Willie, Tim Dwyer

Minutes

Old Business

1022 Dumaine St: 23-31897-VCGEN; Ronald Blancher, applicant; F B Lutz, owner; Proposal to install new mechanical equipment and platform on roof and rear service ell balcony, per application & materials received 11/20/2023 & 03/25/2024, respectively.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=R4E7TE#>

Mr. Block read the staff report with Mr. Blancher and Mr. Eames present. Mr. Eames stated that they could install a screen if needed. Mr. Blancher stated that he was concerned the screen might be more obtrusive. Mr. Bergeron noted that the proposal put the platform proud of the dormer and wondered if they could slide it back to improve the sight lines. Mr. Fifield agreed that the platform should not be proud of the dormer, as it made the platform more prominent. Mr. Fifield asked if the platform would interfere with existing vents; Mr. Bergeron pointed out that they were closer to the ridge. Mr. Eames was concerned that if they pushed the platform back, it would then be too high up the slope. Mr. Fifield asked how big of a load was going on the spanning members of the roof. Mr. Eames stated that the structural engineer would provide calculations and support that would allow the load to spread. Mr. Block agreed that the platform should be pushed back. Mr. Epstein agreed but added that the visibility was pretty limited either way.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **conceptually approve** the proposed rooftop rack location with the proviso that it be setback to be even with the face of the adjacent dormer.

New Business

728 Governor Nicholls St: 23-20835-VCGEN; Jeremiah Alexander Johnson, applicant; Marina Costopoulos, owner; Proposal to install new generator in courtyard, per application & materials received 07/31/2023 & 03/19/2024, respectively.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=HKD4YF#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Johnson present. Mr. Johnson had no response to the staff report. Mr. Bergeron asked how the connections would be run to the generator to which Mr. Johnson stated they would be run through the interior wall. Ms. Bourgogne asked how wide the alleyway was and Mr. Johnson said he was unsure. Mr. Bergeron asked if the lines would be subsurface or on top of the brick paving. Mr. Johnson said they

would be on top of the brick paving. Mr. Fifield expressed his concern about the generator placement and location and asked if another location was explored. Mr. Johnson stated that every other wall contains windows and doors.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Fifield expressed concerns about the conduits between the generator and the location of the equipment. Mr. Johnson asked if subsurface would be better. Ms. Steward asked about a stand for the generator. Mr. Johnson stated that it would be a concrete pad with an aluminum stand. Mr. Bergeron asked if there would be any screening. Mr. Johnson noted that screening would require clearances from the equipment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to defer, to allow the applicant time to submit additional material based on the discussion; revised plans, elevation drawings, and the routing of wiring and piping is all needed for review. Ms. Steward seconded the motion and the motion passed.

740 Royal St: 24-04611-VCGEN; George T Lingo, Jr., applicant; St Ann/Royal LLC, owner;

24-06975-VCGEN; 740 Royal St: Myles Martin, applicant;

Proposal to correct violations and renovate building including the installation of new mechanical equipment and new balcony support brackets, per application & materials received 03/11/2024.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=XCMVNZ#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Martin and Mr. Brown present on behalf of the application. Mr. Martin stated the following: regarding the mechanical lines - we will be flanking directly to the building and then towards the interior. Rails- we can change the color. Balcony structural changes- we will wait for the structural engineer, but she said she preferred the columns. Mr. Bergeron referred to slide 59 and stated, the columns are not continuous to the ground and asked if the structural engineer was aware. Mr. Martin stated no, she was not. Mr. Fifield stated that there should be some analysis of the cantilever on the 2nd floor. Mr. Martin agreed that they needed to do this. Mr. Brown stated that without the columns to the 1st floor, it wouldn't work. Mr. Fifield stated that he would like to hear that from the structural engineer. Mr. Fifield asked Mr. Martin if there were detailed millwork drawings. Mr. Martin stated that it had been submitted.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to adopt the staff recommendation for mechanical, defer the balcony and approve the lighting and conversion of window to doors, with all details at the staff level. Ms. Steward seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

828 Burgundy St: 24-05499-VCGEN; David Pons, applicant; David H Pons, owner; Proposal to install Aeratis decking on the third-floor balcony, per application & materials received 02/28/2024 & 03/22/2024, respectively.

Mr. Block read the staff report with Mr. Pons and Mr. Bordenave present on behalf of the application. Mr. Bordenave stated the space between the sleepers would be 12 and a half inches and 13 inches. Ms. Bourgoigne stated the owner/ contractor sent an email to Ms. Vogt. Mr. Fifield asked if no modifications would be made to the stringers as a result of this work, which Mr. Bordenave confirmed. Mr. Bordenave added that the third floor gets abused in harsh conditions and that they were leaving the second floor alone entirely. Mr. Fifield stated that the lack of alterations to the purlins was significant and should be taken into account.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **conceptual approval** of the Aeratis decking at the third-floor balcony, with the proviso that all surfaces be painted as recommended by staff. Ms. Steward seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

229 Royal St: 24-06694-VCGEN; Christin Willie, applicant; 229 Royal Street LLC, owner;

Proposal to construct new one-story gallery, per application & materials received 03/08/2024 & 03/26/2024, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=U5JV6P#>

This item was removed from the agenda prior to the hearing.

815 Dauphine St: 24-07233-VCGEN; Bell Daniel, applicant; David P Walling, owner; Proposal to install new alcove security gate, per application & materials received 03/13/2024.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=RFRGAL>

The item was deferred due to lack of representation on behalf of the application.

97 French Market Place, 430 Barracks St, 1240 Decatur St: 24-08347-VCGEN; Proposal to renovate building including the construction of new rooftop walking surface, per application & materials received 03/22/2024.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=P336PL#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Heck present. Mr. Heck said this is for monthly maintenance of the hood for the Louisiana Pizza Kitchen. Mr. Heck stated they have been having continuous issues with broken slates from the workers walking on the roof to service the hood. Mr. Heck concluded noting that the proposal seemed like the best way to access the hood. Mr. Fifield asked if Mr. Heck would consider this a least harm proposal. Mr. Heck responded that he would and noted that and the work proposed will be reversible, there would be no changes to the profile of the building or new roof penetrations.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to conceptually approve the proposal, acknowledging the minimal visibility and that this is completely reversible, and noting that the approval is for the life of the exhaust fan. Ms. Steward seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Appeals and Violations

730 Saint Louis St: 23-17764-VCGEN; Joseph Walter Lewis, Jr., applicant; Latval Investments LLC, owner; Appeal to retain work completed without benefit of VCC review and approval, including fence, gate, and security alterations, and to correct longstanding violations, per application & materials received 08/28/2023 & 03/21/2024, respectively. **[Notices of Violation sent 05/15/2008, 08/05/2013, 04/25/2016, 02/16/2017, 09/18/2018, 05/17/2019, 12/05/2019, 03/09/2020, 12/11/2020, 04/29/2021, 01/21/2022, 01/23/2023, 05/12/2023, 07/07/2023. STOP WORK ORDERS posted 04/26/2022, 05/23/2022, 05/11/2023.]**

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=XQ70AR>

Mr. Block read the staff report with Mr. Fabacher present on behalf of the application. After reading the staff report, Mr. Block added that staff had received an email from a neighboring property that had been forwarded to the Committee. Mr. Fabacher stated that he checked the zoning ordinance and stated that he believed to have followed permeability requirements per the CZO. Mr. Block responded that he was unsure of the zoning ordinance but as stated in the report Mr. Fabacher would need to contact the Zoning Department and confirm requirements.

Mr. Fifield asked if this proposal resolved all the violations on the property. Mr. Block responded, “No, I don’t think so.” Ms. Bourgogne stated that there were some signage issues, and she was unsure what was being handled at staff level. Mr. Block noted that much of it could be handled at staff, and not all of the violations would be before the Committee. Ms. Bourgogne stated that there was some uncertainty regarding ownership of the carriageway. Mr. Fifield asked if there was a survey of the property, to which Mr. Epstein responded by saying “I have one that I can send you.” Mr. Fifield asked if the concerns raised by the neighboring property were part of the review today; to which Mr. Block said no, we are only talking about the materials. Mr. Fifield asked if there was something to be resolved with the carriageway; Mr. Block stated that staff was recommending deferral for the overall application and that that may provide an opportunity to resolve these issues.

Mr. Fifield moved on for questioning. Mr. Bergeron stated that there was a lot to be considered. He asked if it was appropriate for staff to read the public comment email from Ms. Monteverde. Mr. Block consented to the email being read by Mr. Epstein, which he did.

Mr. Fabacher asked if the neighboring property had any open violations; Mr. Epstein responded that they did.

There was no other public comment.

Mr. Bergeron stated that today's conversation was very narrow and that only three items were being addressed; Mr. Fabacher responded that they agreed to fix the other violations and that only three were in contention. Ms. Bourgogne asked if staff could get a time frame for when work will be completed, noting that they had daily fines from the adjudication department. Mr. Fabacher responded, "however long it takes to get the building permit." Mr. Bergeron asked if 6 months would be appropriate to complete the work; Mr. Fabacher responded it would.

Mr. Bergeron moved consistent with the staff recommendations to **defer** the paving, pending confirmation on zoning requirements and ownership, and **conceptual approval** of work for the courtyard fence, wood gate, and electrical work, to be completed within 6 months of permit issuance. Ms. Steward seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1118 Burgundy St: 23-26495-VCGEN; Jason Harrell, applicant; Kent G Nicaud, owner; Appeal to retain work without permit violations for metal cap flashing and loggia soffit installed without benefit of VCC review and approval, per application & materials received 09/26/2023 & 03/19/2024. **[Notice of Violation sent 06/19/2020]**
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=VX6VML>

Mr. Block read the staff report with Mr. Smith present on behalf of the application. Mr. Smith stated that staff had worked extensively with the architect to resolve the majority of the issues. He stated they would work with staff on the keypad, and that retaining the PVC for the plumbing would be the least invasive option. Mr. Fifield asked if the applicant would be willing to screen the mechanical equipment; Mr. Smith stated that he thought that was fair and could be worked out with the staff. Mr. Block stated that he thought it would be very helpful in this situation. Mr. Fifield asked if the existing conditions met mechanical code; Mr. Smith thought that the platform was likely not large enough for working space. Mr. Fifield asked for a detail of the screen so staff could ensure access and airflow were adequate.

Nikki Szalwinski addressed the Committee on behalf of FQC, stating that she was concerned about the wall the HVAC was attached to and that it might be compromised structurally. She added that the keypad indicated it was a short term rental. Mr. Fifield asked which structure was supporting the platform; Ms. Bourgogne stated that the platform was spanning between the main building and dependency, not the parti wall indicated by Ms. Szalwinski.

[Ms. Smith arrived during the discussion]

Mr. Bergeron moved to **approve** and **deny** the proposed work, consistent with the staff recommendations, with the proviso that the applicant submit a proposal for mechanical equipment screening. Ms. Steward seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1200 Decatur St: 23-25341-VCGEN; Gates Erika, applicant; 1200 Decatur Street LLC, owner;
Proposal to address violations including proposal to apply stucco lintels above window and door openings, per application & materials received 09/15/2023 & 03/04/2024, respectively.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=ZFJTFP#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Ms. Gates present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield asked how the stucco was to stick to the wall. Ms. Gates stated that that was something she would have to discuss with the mason. Ms. Bourgogne reminded the ARC of the French Market side parapet that was rebuilt without permit under 2 SWOs. Ms. Gates acknowledged this and stated that they were aware it had to be rebuilt. Mr. Bergeron asked staff if an applied stucco lintel detail was in fact something they had approved before. Mr. Block stated yes that he could think of a few on N Rampart. Mr. Fifield stated that yes, they had but usually it was a proactive design element whereas here it was being used to cover up bad work. Ms. Gates stated, "this is really only completing the work started 8 years ago." Mr. Fifield reiterated that it "looked like a band aid." He went on to say that they needed documentation of what was going to happen with details and dimensions and how it would be applied and work. Lastly, he added that the history of repairs without permit here was troubling and gave him pause.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to defer the application to allow time for the applicant to revise the proposal with sections details and scholarship on the adjacent building or historic photos of this building for determination. Ms. Steward seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

439-41 Royal St: 24-07959-VCGEN; Gates Erika, applicant; The Tortorici Building LLC, owner; Proposal to perform structural work at masonry cracks, per application & materials received 03/20/2024.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=SULYCQ>

Mr. Block read the staff report with Ms. Erika Gates and Mr. Harris present on behalf of the application. Ms. Gates stated that the application began a while ago but there had been legal issues with the owner and tenant. Ms. Gates stated that the proposal will address staff-level violations that need to be addressed, and that the revision to the railing would be beneficial. She added that they would submit the requested architectural details to staff.

Mr. Harris stated that they would need to install lintels as drawn to shore it, but that the final installed condition would be turned in as requested by staff. Mr. Harris stated that he would have to check the span and would either go with a flat blade or a “T” within the inside and insert it up. Mr. Fifield asked it would be galvanized metal or rusted; Mr. Harris responded galvanized. Mr. Fifield opened questions from the committee. Ms. Steward stated that more information was needed about the structural repairs. Mr. Fifield stated that the drawings were fragmented, not comprehensive. Mr. Harris stated that it is simple and a small area of repair that would be shored first. Ms. Steward responded that she would like to see a photograph of where the repairs would take place. Mr. Bergeron asked staff if this needed to return to the Committee or if it could be taken care of on the staff level. Ms. Bourgogne responded that Commission review was needed. Mr. Fifield asked if the Committee had any comment on the rail; hearing none, Ms. Bourgogne noted that BBSA review would be required.

Nikki Szalwinski asked if there was a way to utilize the VCC Foundation to inform future owners about when a building was last repointed. Mr. Block responded by while that was a lovely idea, there were 4000 buildings in the Quarter and that type of survey would require a lot of manpower that neither the VCC staff or Foundation could provide.

Ms. Bourgogne noted that the balcony is still being occupied and asked the engineer if it should be shored in order to be occupiable. Mr. Harris stated that that was not in the scope of his inspection. Inspector Epstein stated that there was a previous engineer’s report submitted stating that the balcony was not safe. Mr. Fifield asked if the balcony was cited; Mr. Epstein responded yes. Mr. Block stated that DSP had been notified of this but that the VCC would follow up with them.

Mr. Bergeron asked what about the proposal required Commission review. Mr. Block stated that he did not believe it needed to, as the building’s rating was not particularly significant.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **conceptual approval** with final details to be worked out with the staff, and to forward a **positive recommendation** to the BBSA for retention of the historic rail. Also, the applicant should resubmit architectural drawings to the staff as requested. Ms. Steward seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1004-1006 Royal St: 24-07606-VCGEN; Christin Willie, applicant; Royal Hotel Investors LLC, owner;

Proposal to retain light fixtures and keypad door hardware installed without benefit of VCC review or approval, per application & materials received 03/15/2024.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=NEVA06#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Dwyer and Ms. Willie present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield noted the haphazard nature of the lighting installation. Ms. Willie stated the following: we were already under a renovation and insurance required lighting, so we just did it. It was out of necessity, not originally in the plans. Mr. Fifield asked if they could and were willing to fix this. Ms. Wille stated that they could paint and adjust the location of the lights. Mr. Block noted that the VCC was not against lightning but that the lighting should work with the architecture.

Ms. Willie went on to say that at the present time they could not change the hardware but that they actually didn't like it and would be changing it in the next 2-3 years as it would likely not last too much longer.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to defer for one month to allow the applicant time to propose corrections. Ms. Steward seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

641 Bourbon St: 24-07972-VCGEN; Abry Brother, Inc., applicant; 641 Bourbon Street, LLC, owner
Proposal to install two new tie-backs on the first floor of the Bourbon St. elevation, per application & materials received 03/19/2024.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=RXREKJ#>

There was no one present on behalf of the application. Mr. Bergeron moved to defer the application. Ms. Steward seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

601 Royal St: 24-08412-VCGEN; Duvernay Leo, applicant; Su Lu Ette De LLC, owner; Appeal to retain exterior PVC pipes, per application & materials received 03/22/2024. **[Notices of Violation sent 04/21/2017, 02/28/2019, & 07/23/2019]**
603-05 Royal St: 24-08418-VCGEN; Duvernay Leo, applicant; Su Lu Ette De LLC, owner; Appeal to retain exterior PVC pipes, per application & materials received 03/22/2024. **[Notices of Violation sent 04/21/2017, 02/28/2019, & 07/23/2019]**

Mr. Block read the staff report with Ms. Winkler and Mr. Duvernay present on behalf of the application. They did not have a presentation but stated that the work would be very expensive and a hardship to replace with appropriate materials. Mr. Fifield asked if the lines could be run on the inside of the building, where they should be. Mr. Duvernay stated that that would "be even more" and would need to be studied. Mr. Bergeron stated that it was very clear it was a violation of the Guidelines and there was no way the Committee could approve retention.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Winkler stated that she read painting the pipes could protect from UV rays. Mr. Fifield stated that that could be mentioned at the Commission.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **deny** the appeal based on lack of architectural merit and lack of compliance with Design Guidelines. Ms. Steward seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

232 Bourbon St: 24-05586-VCGEN; 232 Bourbon St: Duvernay Leo, applicant; Marcia G Dimartino, owner; Appeal to retain and screen mechanical equipment installed over alley, per application & materials received 02/28/2024 & 03/01/2024.

Mr. Block read the staff report with Mr. Duvernay present on behalf of the application. Mr. Duvernay stated that he had reached out but had not received any information from the owner about where the property line was.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **defer** this application as more information is needed. Ms. Steward seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

325 Bourbon St: 24-08774-VCGEN; Katherine Harmon, applicant; Quarter Holdings LLC, owner;
Proposal to correct or retain violations including proposed retention of courtyard structure and mechanical equipment, per application & materials received 03/26/2024.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=0KC6VA>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Ms. Harmon present. Ms. Harmon stated that she was here on behalf of the tenant, not the property owner. The tenant wanted to know if the committee would consider changing the materials of the wall and screen. Mr. Fifield asked why Ms. Harmon was present if it was not on behalf of the owner. Mr. Fifield then asked who was liable for the outstanding violations to which Inspector Roberts stated that it would be the property owner's responsibility. Ms. Harmon then stated that she agreed with the staff report but said it was worth a try. Mr. Block said that the violations took place before the current tenant. Mr. Fifield asked what the mechanical division said, to which Mr. Albrecht said the work was not permitted.

Nikki Szalwinski, in the audience, commented that the mechanical equipment does not meet code as installed.

Noting that nothing had changed with the proposal except for more mechanical equipment, Mr. Bergeron made the motion to deny the proposal. Ms. Steward seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Next AC Date: Tuesday, April 23, 2024

At approximately 3:07 PM Mr. Bergeron made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Steward seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.