

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 8, 2025– 1:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Cynthia Steward, Stephen Bergeron

Committee Members Absent: Rick Fifield

Staff Present: Bryan Block, Director; Renee Bourgogne, Deputy Director; Nick Albrecht, Principal Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Principal Plans Examiner; Joseph Newman, Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent: Marguerite Roberts, Senior Inspector; Noah Epstein, Inspector

Others Present: Daniel Winkert, Daniel Zangara, Jacob Stryder, Akeem Martin, John Williams, Andrew Stephens, Katherine Harmon, Patrick Schambach, Sarah Schambach, Scott Taranto, Stanley Walker, Richard Choate, Alan Wold, Paula Peer

AGENDA

Old Business

531 Dauphine St: 24-00633-VCGEN; Daniel Winkert, applicant; Hiller Et Al Pukof, owner; Proposal to construct new masonry fence with a wood gate across the front property line, per application & materials received 01/09/2024 & 03/19/2025, respectively.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=F1B1YS#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Winkert present. Mr. Winkert noted the material change to masonry from the previously proposed wood fence.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Steward made the motion for the conceptual approval of the proposed masonry wall with any details at the staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

810 Esplanade Ave: 24-26624-VCGEN; Betsy Fifield, applicant; Ibu and Bapak LLC, owner; Proposal to make masonry repairs to the building including the installation of new helical ties, per application & materials received 09/03/2024 & 03/12/2025, respectively.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=V6LF5U#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Zangara and Mr. Stryder present on behalf of the application. Mr. Stryder noted that the cracks are not starting at the foundation and that if the foundation cracks, you would see wall cracks starting from the foundation.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron noted that if there was a structural engineer’s report that he would feel more comfortable with the proposal. Ms. Steward made the motion for conditional approval based on staff review of a structural engineer’s report regarding causation and for the wall to be monitored. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

414 Burgundy St: 24-31897-VCGEN; Lynnette Gordon, applicant; Kevin Davis Enterprises Inc,

Proposal to renovate building including making structural repairs and installing new wall ties, per application & materials received 10/17/2024 & 03/24/2024, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=YJUC4A#>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Martin present on behalf of the application. Ms. Steward commented that she was inclined to leave the cracked lintel in place.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Steward made the motion for conceptual approval of the proposal with the proviso that all details would go through staff per the staff report. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

809-11 Dauphine St: 25-04558-VCPNT; Schambach Patrick, applicant; Patrick B Schambach, owner; Proposal to install shutters at side and rear entrances, per application & materials received 02/12/2025 & 03/20/2025.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=1U2LK3>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Schambach, Mr. Taranto and Mr. Walker present on behalf of the application. Mr. Schambach stated that the doors obviously had had shutters, but that there was dispute about their age. Mr. Taranto stated that the original mortises were present and the louvers would not be fragile, and the shutters would be able to open. Mr. Schambach added that the railings would prevent the shutters from opening but that he did not mind, since it would prevent the doors and transoms from leaking. Ms. Steward stated she was unsure if this could be allowed per the Guidelines given the staff report. Mr. Block stated that staff was responsible for upholding the Guidelines, but if the Committee or Commission had leeway if they felt that there were extenuating circumstances. He added that the shutters were anachronistic, however.

Ms. Bourgoigne stated that usually shutter operation complicated the installation of a handrail, not the other way around. Ms. Steward added that these rails were inappropriate and could be replaced. Ms. Vogt responded that she had offered to help the applicant with a proposal to remove the rails and install an approvable replacement. Ms. Steward commented that she was more comfortable with shutters at the back if the handrails were replaced with an improvement. Mr. Bergeron stated that he did not have a problem with the addition of shutters. Ms. Vogt clarified that there was evidence that shutters had been present, they just were unlikely to have been original, and could have been added in the early 20th century. Mr. Schambach stated that the rear of the building was an addition, anyway, and that they had thought about replacing the stairs. Ms. Vogt stated that staff needed a proposal to respond to. Mr. Bergeron stated that shutters would make conditions awkward at the side entrances as well. Mr. Taranto stated that they could move the lights, etc. Ms. Vogt stated that she could provide guidance, as long as the applicant was aware that installation would create a domino effect of other issues.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Steward moved for **conceptual approval** of the proposed shutters with the proviso that new handrails and any other related changes go through staff. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

622 Pirate's Aly: 25-08558-VCGEN; Loretta Harmon, applicant; Joseph E Dominach, Michael W Leroy, Kevin T Lawlor, Bay Shore Investments Inc, Rumberos LLC, Pirates Alley Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to perform structural framing repairs, replace roof, and modify courtyard drainage, per application & materials received 03/18/2025.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=117WKQ>

Ms. Steward moved to **defer** the application at staff's request to allow for a site visit. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

641-643 Dauphine St: 25-08573-VCGEN; Guercio Roy, applicant; Guercio Roy A Jr, owner;

Proposal to replace existing painted gutters and downspouts with new copper gutters and downspouts, per

application & materials received 03/18/2025.

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

There was no public comment.

Ms. Steward made the motion for the approval of the new downspouts with the additional suggestion for a boot, not plastic, preferably cast-iron. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

227 Chartres St: 25-08786-VCGEN; Richard Choate, applicant; NEW HOTEL MONTELEONE, owner; Proposal to relocate Hotel Monteleone cooling tower from 624 Bienville/200 Royal to the roof of the building at 227 Chartres, per application & materials received 03/20/2025.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=R1FS1B>

Ms. Bourgogne read the staff report with Mr. Choate present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Choate stated that the new chiller would have its own structure on the interior, all the way to an independent foundation, and that the new piping would go through the existing bridge over Exchange Place which already has an existing servitude. Ms. Vogt stated that it would still require BBSA approval due to crossing property lines and a public right of way. Ms. Bourgogne stated that Mr. Choate should start that application process right away as there are long lead times for BBSA review. Ms. Vogt stated that staff needed a clear picture of how the lines get from the roof of 227 Chartres to the bridge at Exchange Place. Mr. Choate stated that they would develop sections and diagrams to show the run of the line at all properties.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Steward moved to **defer** the proposal. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

621 Saint Louis St: 25-09195-VCGEN; 621 Saint Louis St: Farouki Sabri, applicant; Royal O Real Estate Holdings LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate rooftop terrace, including new wall openings to create semi-enclosed area adjacent to existing pool deck, per application & materials received 03/25/2025.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=2SJFD8>

The applicant notified staff in advance that they would be absent. Ms. Vogt read the staff report at their request.

There was no public comment.

With no discussion needed, Ms. Steward moved for **conceptual approval** of the proposal as previously approved, with any changes to be handled at the staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

519 Toulouse St: 25-09233-VCGEN; Architects Trapolin-Peer, applicant; 515 Toulouse LLC, owner; Proposal to construct rooftop addition and roof deck in conjunction with an overall renovation and **change of use** from *vacant to restaurant (standard), live performance venue, reception facility and bar*, per application & materials received 03/25/2025.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=1CRADJ>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Peer and Mr. Wold present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Wold stated that they were still in a very conceptual stage and were only seeking review of the massing at this time. He explained other reviews the project is undergoing with other departments, noting these will address use and the height waivers mentioned in the staff report. He went on to give a general overview of the plans and the history/timeline of their development. Mr. Wold commented on various reasonings behind design choices in the project, including restricting most of the proposed work to the roof so as not to drastically change the shell, and abiding by rooftop setbacks per the Guidelines. Ms. Peer commented on the difficulty with developing a property of this size without divvying it up, and that this use for the building would avoid demising walls. Mr. Block asked the applicants if they would pursue tax credits; Mr. Wold responded that the owner is interested in that option.

Ms. Steward stated that conceptually she felt that this was a respectful approach to the existing building, particularly that it retained most of the sawtooth roof. Mr. Bergeron agreed, and stated that he was less concerned with alterations, considering the building is yellow rated. There was a brief discussion regarding the decision to put the roof deck on the more residential side of the building vs. the more commercial Toulouse side; Ms. Peer commented about this also coming up at the neighborhood participation meeting. Ms. Peer explained that it would be a spill-out space and not its own venue, and that they had put it on this side of the roof in order to avoid cutting into the sawtooth roofs on the Toulouse side. Mr. Block agreed with preserving the integrity of the existing architecture, but noted that he was bringing it up because staff had gotten calls from the public.

Ms. Bourgogne asked about the Entergy vault and, if there was a possibility it would have to move, would it end up on the roof? Mr. Wold responded that if it did, it would likely move to the ground floor in the building and the plan right now was to maintain it in its current location.

Ms. Holmes of VCPORA addressed the Committee, stating that this was a unique opportunity in terms of the Plan Development process and the project itself. Ms. Holmes noted her excitement about a property of this size being able to be put back into use, and her interest in the proposed use, but did express concerns about the rooftop deck and more precedent setting of activation of rooftops. Ms. Holmes commented on the high parapet walls but noted that the override might be an issue with the Guidelines, adding that there are compromises in these big unique projects. Ms. Holmes stated that the activated rooftop terrace probably needed more consideration, noting that she was concerned with future ownership changes that they did not expect the City to enforce restrictions on sound and hours of operating. She concluded that VCPORA is not 100% against it, but that there needed to be more communication.

Following public comment, Ms. Peer noted they are anticipating some sort of proviso might be needed in the Plan Development process for if this property changed ownership in future. Ms. Peer also noted the name of the developer and previous work their firm has done with them, as well as the belief in their approach and respect for historic buildings. Ms. Steward stated that she heard the concerns, but that use was not within the Committee's purview and that, architecturally, she had no issues with conceptually approving the massing. There was a brief discussion of the potential for shifting the center massing on the roof, and the reasoning behind the proposed location, with Mr. Bergeron commenting he found the current proposal to be non-invasive. He added that he felt Mr. Fifield would agree with the discussion.

Ms. Steward moved for **conceptual approval** of the rooftop massing, with the understanding that additional design work and reviews would follow with the VCC and other applicable agencies. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Appeals and Violations

1039 Burgundy St: 22-15634-VCGEN, 25-02287-VCGEN, 25-02467-VCGEN, 25-04178-VCGEN; John C Williams, applicant; Michael Katzenstein, owner; Review of proposed changes from VCC approved plans, including additional mechanical equipment, gas lighting, and alterations to roof material, per various applications & materials received between 05/27/2022 & 03/25/2025. **[STOP WORK ORDER posted 03/12/2025]**
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=1CRADJ>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. LeJeune present on behalf of the application. Mr. LeJeune stated that the mechanical elevation showed their intent for the final appearance and defunct lines would be removed. He stated that the penetrations were at the ceiling level since there were limited locations for chases on the interior due to a stair. Ms. Vogt stated that staff had never been given a clear proposal of what all would be going on this elevation. Mr. Bergeron responded that he was trying to get the full picture and asked if he heard correctly that all this work was happening without permits; Ms. Vogt responded that the VCC had issued a subpermit for the overall renovation, but none of the subcontractor work had been permitted by anyone, and DSP had not yet issued the master permit for the overall renovation. Mr. Bergeron asked Mr. LeJeune if this project kind of got away from his office with Mr. LeJeune replying a little bit yes, and that he had tried reaching out to DSP to find out what course of action they would like them to take but had not gotten any responses. Mr. Bergeron noted that this project had been managed by several different architects during its review process, adding that continuity of care is important. Mr. LeJeune stated that the contractor had made some decisions without consulting them, and that changes had been made to the proposal, such as the roof. Ms. Bourgogne stated that

staff could not issue a permit for a roof on an addition that had been built without permits from DSP, and recommended that Mr. LeJeune go across the street to meet with DSP after the meeting. Mr. Bergeron asked if the subcontractors went rogue, or if their work had not been planned, stating that the elevation looked as if it had not been planned. Mr. LeJeune responded that the contractor and subcontractors began carrying out this work, and they had not been made aware.

Ms. Steward asked how the Committee could move the project forward, since the proposal felt incomplete and unready for approval, asking staff what they suggested. Ms. Vogt responded that the Committee could give staff the ability to approve a resubmittal at staff level if they felt they did not need to see it again. Ms. Vogt stated it was largely a matter of getting a complete proposal so that all parties were on the same page, with Ms. Bourgogne noting that it was very important for the contractor to have a set of approved and stamped drawings on site. Mr. Block asked the Committee if they were conceptually comfortable with the applicant using the alleyway as a mechanical courtyard; Ms. Steward responded that this area was already approved for equipment, but that she thought they probably have code compliance issues in addition to any design issues. Ms. Bourgogne added that the submittal should show the intent for all lines. Mr. Bergeron noted not being particularly sympathetic to the exposed interior brick wall as a reason to have all the conduit and lines on the outside of the building. There was a brief discussion about the water heater and incomplete information related to that item. Mr. LeJeune stated the last plan was for it to be in the attic. Mr. Bergeron stated that the additional HVAC units in the alley were fine, but that the applicant should study the penetrations further and propose a nicer alternative.

Mr. Bergeron and Ms. Steward agreed that the light fixtures were fine as long as they were downlight only. Mr. Bergeron stated that the roof changes were fine. Ms. Bourgogne commented that the cap flashing that would remain was not good. Ms. Vogt asked if the service ell walls were brick or wood frame; Mr. LeJeune responded that they were brick.

Mr. Bergeron asked for public comment. Ms. Holmes of VCPOA stated that there was a lot of asking for forgiveness from such a well-seasoned applicant. Mr. Bergeron responded that this kind of thing happens a lot, and that sometimes it happens a lot with the same architecture office, which is frustrating.

Ms. Steward stated that she could see conceptually approving the additional units, but not the penetrations, as more information was needed. She added the whole wall should be coordinated between the trades. Mr. Block noted it's disingenuous to say the utilities were not visible because they were behind a gate, as the upper portion of the lines were clearly visible and needed to be cleaned up. Mr. Bergeron stated that he was fine with conceptual approval of most of the proposed work, but not the lines and penetrations.

Ms. Steward moved:

- to **conceptually approve** the additional HVAC units and **defer** the lines and penetrations, with the applicant to resubmit and return to the Committee.
- to **conceptually approve** the gas fixtures but **defer** all other gas-related items, to be resubmitted by the applicant along with a revised proposal for lines and penetrations.
- to **conceptually approve** the proposed electric lighting, with the proviso that it only be downlighting and that uplighting is prohibited.
- to **conceptually approve** the revised roof material.

Mr. Bergeron seconded the motions, which passed unanimously.

520 Bourbon St: 25-03691-VCGEN; Loretta Harmon, applicant; Anglade 522 Bourbon LLC, owner; Proposal to modify millwork and relocate light fixtures at courtyard enclosed without permit, per application & materials received 02/07/2025 & 03/17/2025. **[STOP WORK ORDERS posted 09/30/2015 & 04/25/2016, Notices of Violation sent 05/02/2016, 11/29/2016, 02/27/2019, 11/01/2019, 07/07/2021, & 12/28/2023]**

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/PrmtView.aspx?ref=NLUB7J>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Harmon present on behalf of the application. Ms. Harmon stated that she agreed with the staff report.

There was no public comment.

With no discussion needed, Ms. Steward moved for **conceptual approval** of the proposal with final review and

approval to be handled at staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At approximately 2:39PM Ms. Steward made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.