

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Lary P. Hesdorffer
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Vieux Carré Commission meeting of **Wednesday, December 3, 2014.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman
Daniel C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman
Leslie S. Stokes, Secretary
C.J. Blanda
Jorge A. Henriquez

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Patricia C. Denechaud
Michael A. Skinner

STAFF PRESENT: Lary P. Hesdorffer, Director; Sarah Ripple & Mary Frances Craig, Building Plans Examiners; Nicholas G. Albrecht, Building Inspector; Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney.

OTHERS PRESENT: Hilary Irvin, Anthony Johnson, Meg Lousteau, Carol Gniady, Patricia Meadowcroft, Mike Sherman, René Fransen, David Morris, Avery Cootes, James F. Dixon, Allie Conlay, Kirk Fabacher, John C. Williams, Betty Norris, Rachel Robinson.

AGENDA

I. ROLL CALL

Chairman Musso called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 PM. The membership roll was called. Mr. Hesdorffer noted the presence of a quorum with five (5) of the seven (7) seated Commissioners in attendance. He added that at least four (4) positive votes are needed in order to pass any action.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES – Vieux Carre Commission meeting of November 5, 2014

Mr. Taylor moved, Mrs. Stokes seconded, to accept the minutes of the meeting of November 5, 2014 as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Chairman Musso discussed the problem issue of the illegal use of French Quarter properties for short term rentals and encouraged residents to voice concerns and opposition directly to the New Orleans City Council and Mayor’s Office, in addition to providing comments to the Vieux Carré Commission.

IV. DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Mr. Hesdorffer presented the proposed 2015 schedule of Vieux Carré Commission & Architectural Committee meetings for review and adoption. Additionally, he introduced the newest VCC staff member, Building Plans Examiner Mary Frances Craig.

Mr. Taylor moved, Mr. Blanda seconded, to accept the 2015 schedule for VCC and AC meetings; the motion passed unanimously.

V. OLD BUSINESS

629 St Peter St: Kristine Shull, applicant; 629 St Peter, LLC, owner; Proposal to make repairs and minor replacements throughout property, including demolition of second story, addition and installation of rooftop platform and HVAC equipment, per online application & revised drawings received 09/09/14 & 11/17/14. **[Note: this meeting marks the end of the 30-day layover period]**

Ms. Ripple gave the staff presentation with Mr. Fabacher representing the application. Mr. Fabacher agreed that the existing nine-over-nine windows on the St. Peter elevation are a historic element of the façade and noted that they will be retained as such; revised drawings eliminating the proposed French doors and retaining the nine-over-nine sashes will be provided prior to permit issuance. With no other objections, Mr. Taylor moved, Mr. Blanda seconded, to **approve** the proposal consistent with staff analysis and recommendations, including the demolition of the second story addition. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

111 Iberville St: John C. Williams Architects, LLC, applicant; Badine Land Ltd, owner; Review of conceptual design proposal to renovate structure, construct addition all as part of and in conjunction with a change of use from vacant to hotel, including re-subdivision of adjacent parcels, per application & materials received 10/14/14 & 11/18/14, respectively.

Ms. Ripple presented the staff report with Mr. Williams present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso clarified that the existing building is part of an existing conditional use application to allow the proposed hotel use. He then opened the floor to public comments.

The following speakers addressed the Commission offering statements including positive recommendations as well as negative criticism for the proposed hotel: Allie Conlay, French Quarter Business League; James Dixon, resident; Avery Cootes, urban planner; David Morris, 1721 Fourth St.; René Fransen, 1026 Esplanade Ave.; Mike Sherman, developers' representative; Patricia Meadowcroft, VCPOA; Carol Gniady, French Quarter Citizens; and Meg Lousteau, VCPOA.

Mr. Hesdorffer reminded those in attendance, as well as the Commissioners, that the review at hand is for the conceptual design, that a City Planning Commission hearing is still required for the proposed resubdivision, and that the VCC staff still has questions/issues regarding the information provided pertaining to the intended lot size and required/proposed open space square footage. Mr. Williams commented about some proposed changes in the open space at the direction of the developers, also noting that the project is scheduled for City Planning Commission (CPC) review at its meeting of 12/09/14. He added that the CPC staff report has recommended approval.

Mr. Blanda asked whether any consideration had been given to converting the building into condominiums/residential use, to which Mr. Williams noted the developer had given much thought to residential use. Mr. Blanda also stated his concern regarding the added traffic congestion that will affect the area surrounding the proposed hotel, considering what already exists as a result of the Canal Place shopping mall and hotel complex as well as current taxi-cab congestion.

With no further questions or comment, Mr. Taylor moved, Mr. Henriquez seconded, to grant **conceptually approval** of the proposal, consistent with staff analysis and recommendations. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

301 Dauphine St: John C. Williams Architects, LLC, applicant; Otto Family Trust, Le Moyne Chateau, owner; Appeal of Architecture Committee denial to replace windows with simulated divided-lite windows, per application & materials received 09/05/14.

Prior to the staff making a presentation, the applicant requested that the item be **deferred** until the January meeting. Without objection, the Chairman ruled that the item be deferred until a time when the applicant requests that it be rescheduled.

VIII. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Vieux Carre Commission meeting of Wednesday, November 05, 2014.

Mr. Taylor moved, Mrs. Stokes seconded, to ratify the actions taken by the Architectural Committee and Staff since the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of November 5, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business to be considered, Mr. Taylor moved for adjournment. The motion, seconded by Mrs. Stokes, passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30 PM.

APPROVED: _____

Leslie Stokes, Secretary

NOTE: These minutes are a summary of actions taken and are not a verbatim transcription of the meeting.