

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block
DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, November 1, 2017 - 1:30 P.M.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman
Daniel C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman
Leslie S. Stokes, Secretary
Angela King
Mamie Gasperecz
Rick Fifield

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Bill Keck
Adrienne Thomas
Patricia C. Denechaud

STAFF PRESENT: Bryan D. Block, Director; Renée Bourgogne, Architectural Historian;
Nicholas G. Albrecht, Building Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Building Plans
Examiner; Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney

STAFF ABSENT: Erika Gates, Inspector; Tony Whitfield, Inspector;

I. ROLL CALL

Chairman Musso called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 PM. A quorum was established with the presence of six (6) of the nine (9) seated Commissioners present.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Mr. Taylor moved, Mr. Fifield seconded, that the minutes of the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of October 4th, 2017 be approved as previously circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Musso discussed the ongoing and next phases of Bourbon St. construction. Mr. Musso noted that the next phase of construction will be a bid process rather than a contract. Mr. Musso continued that Entergy will begin their work a couple weeks ahead of time and that pedestrian walkovers will be featured at major intersections. Mr. Musso concluded that the next phase was not scheduled to begin until after Jazz Fest.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Block gave the following Director's Report:

- Oral arguments for the VCCF lawsuit regarding City Council overriding VCC process will be heard tomorrow, Thursday, November 2 at 10:00am, Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal, 410 Royal Street. Please show your support by attending to demonstrate what a serious and influential case this is. If you're interested in reading the pleadings, the staff can provide a link to a Dropbox file: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/qka1xqbg5i0t3es/AAATdOzdS1LUgX2CSum-EtXSa?dl=0>
- Rooftop Subcommittee Draft Resolution to be discussed in Other Business
- Proposal to approve synthetic decking to be discussed in Other Business

V. OTHER BUSINESS

- Ratification of proposed 2018 Commission and Architecture Committee meeting dates

Mr. Taylor moved to accept the meeting dates as proposed. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- Presentation of rooftop subcommittee draft resolution

Mr. Taylor moved to modify the Design Guidelines to include the proposed amendments regarding Rooftop Additions. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- Discussion of previously approved synthetic decking installations and possible changes to the VCC Design Guidelines regarding these materials

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation regarding synthetic decking materials. Mr. Musso added to the staff suggested criteria that the decking also be required to be painted.

Mr. Fifield noted that there are different specific products with different characteristics, some of which feature a PVC coating that prevents painting. Mr. Taylor noted that equivalent historic materials are not available in the market and stated the Commission may need to look at alternatives. Mr. Musso stated that there are other exotic woods and that an increase in their demand in the area may help to lower prices.

No motion regarding synthetic decking was offered.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

820 Dauphine St: 17-04426-VCGEN; Shea Trahan, applicant; The Academy Of Sacred Heart, owner; Proposal to construct new row of four (4) townhouses in rear parking area, per application & materials received 02/07/17 & 10/17/17, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=703912>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Trahan and Mr. Trapolin present on behalf of the application. Mr. Trapolin stated that the new building was taking cues from the existing structures on the site and that they wanted the new building to be contemporary without being too bold. Both Mr. Taylor and Mr. Fifield agreed with Mr. Trapolin. Mr. Fifield stated that the fit was quite successful overall. Mr. Taylor moved for conceptual approval consistent with the staff report. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion.

622 N Rampart St: 17-21985-VCGEN; Elizabeth Phelps, applicant; Freddie Joseph, Jr Fandal, owner; Proposal to demolish portion of rear, brown-rated addition as part of overall building renovation, per application and materials received 06/23/17 & 10/04/17, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=721659>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Ms. Phelps present on behalf of the application. Mr. Taylor concurred with the staff report and moved for approval waiving the 30 day layover period. Ms. Gasperecz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

1011 Governor Nicholls St: 17-24677-VCGEN; Lewis Robinson, applicant; David D Benoit, owner; Proposal to install a raised porch and mechanical equipment screen on the rear elevation of the main building, per application & materials received 07/19/17 & 10/03/17, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=724518>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Robinson present on behalf of the application. Mr. Taylor moved for approval of the application consistent with the staff report with final review and approval to be completed by staff. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion.

VII. CHANGE OF USE HEARINGS

512 Conti & 516 Conti St: 16-24076-VCGEN & 16-24074-VCGEN; Michael Tabb, applicant; 516 Conti LLC, owner; Proposal to resubdivide properties, renovate vacant buildings, and construct new egress stair tower and rooftop deck, in conjunction with a **change of use** from *vacant* to

commercial/residential, per application & materials received 07/22/16 & 10/16/17, respectively.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=594705>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Tabb present on behalf of the application. Mr. Muso pointed out to the applicant that the rear building had no access. He also advised that the applicant remove the roof deck. Mr. Taylor stated that he was ok with the resubdivision and moved for conceptual approval consistent with the staff report. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion. Mr. Musso told the applicant to revise the drawings for the next meeting. Mr. Tabb stated that the number of units was incorrect on the drawings and that the developer was proposing 9 units. Furthermore Mr. Tab specified that the developer would be seeking a variance as they are technically only allowed 7.

VIII. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

939 Iberville St: 17-28331-VCGEN; John C. Williams, applicant; French Quarter Apartments Limited Partne Rship, owner; Appeal of Architecture Committee denial to retain awnings constructed in deviation of previously approved plans, per application & materials received 08/15/17.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=728001>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Heck and Mr. Williams present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso noted that several changes were made without the applicant informing the VCC staff, the Architecture Committee, or the Commission.

Ms. Lousteau, in the audience representing VCPORA, noted that an action like this negates the effort of the VCC staff, the Architecture Committee, and the Commission and that this type of behavior should be actively discouraged.

Mr. Fifield inquired about the argument for the retention of the awnings. Mr. Williams noted that the approved awnings were the same color and also extended out 3' from the building. Mr. Williams stated that the builder thought it would be better if the awnings flashed into the windows and that he could get the contractor to change them.

Mr. Taylor inquired that, as the project architect, doesn't Mr. Williams have the right to reject non-conforming work? Mr. Williams replied that he does.

Mr. Fifield inquired if Mr. Williams was presenting the proposed retention as a hardship. Mr. Williams replied that he has been asked by the owner to appeal this to see if it can be approved.

Mr. Musso noted that although the number of awnings has also changed from the approved plans, there is no objection to the increase in number. Mr. Fifield cited the applicant's willingness to discuss with the owner the status of the awnings and moved for deferral to allow the applicant an opportunity to discuss with the owner the possibility of changing the awnings to the ones that were approved. Ms. Gasperecz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

626 Bourbon St: 17-06727-VCGEN John C. Williams, applicant; Grace T Granger LLC, owner; Appeal to lift Stop Work Order placed for demolition of windows, doors and wall infill completed without benefit of VCC review and approval. **[STOP WORK ORDER posted 09/27/17]**

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=706178>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Williams present on behalf of the application. Mr. Taylor moved that the stop work order should remain in place with all supplemental material to be submitted to staff in order for the application to return to the Architecture Committee for

further review. Ms. Gasperecz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

IX. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, October 4, 2017 VCC meeting.

Mr. Taylor moved to ratify the Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, October 4th, 2017 meeting. The motion, seconded Ms. Stokes, passed unanimously.

With no other business to discuss, Mr. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:34 pm.