

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block  
DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, September 6, 2017 - 1:30 P.M.**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Daniel C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman  
Leslie S. Stokes, Secretary  
Bill Keck  
Mamie Gasperecz  
Rick Fifield  
Adrienne Thomas

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman  
Angela King

**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**

Vice-chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 PM. A quorum was established with the presence of six (6) of the nine (9) Commissioners present.

**II. REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Mr. Fifield moved to approve the minutes of 07/05/17 as previously circulated. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

No chairman's report was presented.

**IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Block presented a report as follows:

- a. Rooftop Addition Subcommittee
  - i. A draft resolution is currently being circulated between committee members
  - ii. Should have for VCC review and adoption at the October 4 hearing
  - iii. Will include language to be included in amendments to both Design Guidelines as well as CZO
- b. VCCF data base update
  - i. map done by the end of Sept. (see slide)
  - ii.
  - iii. The next step is a review of the map before it can go-live.
  - iv. Working with City IT dept with hopefully most completed by mid-October.
  - v. A detailed update and description of project is provided.
- c. Proposal to modify the CZO for the inclusion of Vieux Carré zoning districts prohibiting existing required open space from being converted to impermeable paving
  - i. Requiring any new construction to have at least 30% permeable open space
  - ii. Added to future proposed modifications of DGs
  - iii. Tyler Antrup, Urban Water Program Manager to answer questions

**V. FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS – Annual Election of Officers**

The following officers were nominated and elected:

Nick Musso, Chairman

Daniel Taylor, Vice-chairman

Leslie Stokes, Secretary

Melissa Quigley, City Attorney, confirmed that elections normally to be held at the July hearing but were postponed this year due to issues of quorum. The elections for 2019 should expect to be scheduled for the July, 2018 hearing.

## VI. OTHER BUSINESS

**Discussion of proposed modification to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO) for the inclusion of Vieux Carré zoning prohibiting existing required open space from being converted to impermeable and requiring any new construction to have at least 30% permeable open space.**

Mr. Taylor requested that the Staff research variability within the district to better understand the consequences such a requirement could have on the historic conditions. How would historic materials comply with this regulation. Staff is to provide a report at the October 4, 2017 hearing. We will ask that a representative from CPC or the Resilience Office attend to answer questions.

Rick Fifield moved to defer the matter until the October 4, 2017 hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion of previously approved installations of synthetic decking and future similar applications.**

Daniel Taylor reported that, due to the declining quality of contemporary wood products available there is professional concern with requiring their continued installation in certain applications such as horizontal balcony and gallery decking (i.e. the current wood products available require an onerous maintenance schedule and/or too frequent replacement).

Currently there have been a number of permit approvals for the installation of such material explicitly as test cases so that the AC and VCC can better understand the appropriateness of this as an alternative to historic material. The AC has voted to currently only approve synthetic materials that require paint which bonds molecularly with the surface of the decking.

Mr. Fifield was concerned that blanket approval of this material could lead to a wholesale removal of historic fabric. Approval should only be considered if this installation is for the replacement of non-historic material, part of an appropriate maintenance cycle and not be allowed as a replacement for intact historic material.

As there is an increase in the number of applications before the Commission for such installation Mr. Taylor requested that staff draft a motion to approve by the Commission to allow the installation under the following conditions:

- Staff approvable
  - Green rated buildings or lower
  - Paintable material only
  - Uncovered balcony and gallery decking
  - Replacement of non-historic decking or deteriorated historic decking
- VCC review required (case by case)
  - Blue or purple rated buildings
  - Covered balcony or gallery decking
  - Replacement of non-historic decking or deteriorated historic decking

Melissa Quigley stated that this will require an administrative procedure and change to the existing design guidelines as well as a public hearing. As such she will work with staff to draft a motion stipulating the above recommended guideline modifications.

Rick Fifield moved that Ms. Quigley and staff draft such a motion to be presented at the next VCC hearing. Leslie Stokes seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

**429 Bourbon St: 17-14531-VCGEN**; Ralph Long Architect, applicant; 429 Bourbon St LLC, owner; Proposal to construct new rooftop addition with outdoor terrace in order to accommodate a change of use on the upper floors from vacant to short term rental, per application & materials received 04/25/17 & 08/02/17, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=714068>

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Ralph Long present representing the application.

Leslie Stokes moved to grant conceptual approval of the proposal with the application to return to the AC for detail review. Rick Fifield seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

**204 Decatur St: 17-25076-VCGEN**; Harry Smith Jr, applicant; Decatur Live LLC, owner; Proposal to install new standing-seam metal canopy on front elevation, per application & materials received 07/11/17.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=724732>

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Smith representing the application.

Mr. Fifield moved to **conceptually approve** the application with details to be worked out with the staff. Ms. Gasperecz seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

## VIII. CHANGE OF USE HEARINGS

**301 Decatur St: 17-21624-VCGEN**; Karim Zaoui, applicant; Royal Street Investments, LLC, owner; Proposal to replace existing mechanical equipment in conjunction with a proposed change of use from *Restaurant, Specialty* to *Restaurant, Standard*, per application & materials received 07/21/17 & 08/14/17.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=724873>

Mr. Albrecht presented the staff report after which Bryan Block explained that the applicant and their attorney had agreed to modify the business model so that it would comply with requirements for a standard restaurant as opposed to a fast food restaurant. The attorney representing the owner, Bob Ellis, present to represent the application, reiterated that this establishment would operate with doors closed and that he was prepared to draft a memo establishing this fact for the file. He further stated that the applicant, who has several other identical businesses is keenly aware of the need to follow all applicable regulations so as not to jeopardize any of his ABO licenses.

Mr. Fifield moved that the VCC recommend approval of the proposed change of use with the proviso that this facility must continuously operate as per the stipulations of a standard restaurant found in the CZO, must maintain exterior doors in the closed position except for entering and exiting and that no exterior mechanical equipment can be modified to accommodate the operation of this facility with doors open. Mr. Ellis shall provide a letter as mentioned previously for the file. The motion passed unanimously.

## IX. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, July 5th, 2017 VCC meeting.

Leslie Stokes moved that the actions be ratified and Mamie Gasperczy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.