

**City Planning Commission  
Meeting – December 09, 2014**

**CONSIDERATION – SUBDIVISION DOCKET – 156/14  
Applicant: Behind the Levee, LLC**

**Prepared By:** Bao Robert Nguyen  
**Date:** November 11, 2014  
**Deadline:** January 06, 2015

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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Proposal:** Resubdivision of two lots, D and E, which are fronting on Robert E. Lee Boulevard to lots D1 and E1, which will front on Argonne Boulevard.

**Location:** Square 43-A, Lakeview, Second Municipal District, bounded by Robert E. Lee Boulevard, Argonne Boulevard, Conrad, and Marshal Foch Streets. The municipal addresses are 918 Robert E. Lee Boulevard and 7106 Argonne Boulevard. (PD 5)

**Zoning:** LRS-1 Lakeview Single-Family Residential District

**Current Land Use:** The two existing lots are located at the intersection of Robert E. Lee Boulevard and Argonne Boulevard. Historic Sanborn maps did not show that there was any development on the two existing lots. They are still currently undeveloped.

**Required:** The applicant proposes to resubdivide the two existing lots which currently faces Robert E. Lee Boulevard into two new lots that will face Argonne Boulevard. The two existing lots measure 53.25 and 50 feet in width, 120 feet in depth, and approximately 6,000 square feet in area. The applicant proposes to resubdivide the two existing lots into two new lots, Lots D1 and E1, each of which will front on Argonne Boulevard rather than Robert E. Lee Boulevard and measure 60 feet in width, 103.25 feet in depth, and 6,195 square feet in area. The resubdivision proposal must be considered for one reason. The resubdivision would cause there to be a reversal in lot frontage, with frontage of the lots rotating from Robert E. Lee Boulevard to Argonne Boulevard. This condition requires the resubdivision to be considered by the City Planning Commission.

*Minimum lot width, depth, and area*

Lots within the LRS-1 District are required to have a minimum width of 40 feet, depth of 90 feet, and an area of 5,000 square feet. The two proposed lots would each meet the lot width, depth, and area requirements.

*Reversal of lot frontage*

According to **Article 5, Section 5.1.8** of the *Subdivision Regulations*, the City Planning Commission will look with disfavor upon proposals for reversal of lot frontages that will result in:

- a. Required rear yards abutting required side yards;
- b. Required side yards abutting required rear yards;
- c. Required front yards opposite required side yards,

unless the existing lot pattern within 500 feet on both sides of the proposed subdivision on each affected street contains development on which 50% or more lots have similar frontages. (Reversal of lot frontages, which will result in placing lot frontages on a major street are generally acceptable unless such reversals result in hardship to owners of the adjoining properties.) Since the rotating of the proposed lots to face Argonne Boulevard would cause the proposed lots' required rear yards to abut the required side yards of the adjacent lots on Robert E. Lee Boulevard and the proposed lots' required front yards to be opposite the required side yards of the lots fronting on Robert E. Lee Boulevard on the opposite side of Argonne Boulevard, the reversal of lot frontage must be considered by the City Planning Commission.

**Utilities & Regulatory Agencies:**

The City Planning Commission, when reviewing a proposed subdivision, requests responses from the Department of Property Management Division of Real Estate and Records, Department of Public Works, Department of Safety and Permits, Sewerage and Water Board, and Entergy regarding the compliance of the proposed subdivision with the building codes, zoning ordinance, and other regulations governing development in the city.

The various departments and divisions have yet to make a response on the proposed subdivision.

**LOT SIZE**

**Existing**

**Lots:** Lot D fronts on Robert E. Lee Boulevard and measure 53.25 feet in width, 120 feet in depth, and 6,390 square feet in area. Lot E also fronts on Robert E. Lee Boulevard and measure 50 feet in width, 120 feet in depth, and 6,000 square feet in area.

**Proposed**

**Lots:** Proposed Lot D1 and E1 would each front on Argonne Boulevard and measure 60 feet in width, 103.25 feet in depth, and 6,195 square feet in area.

## ANALYSIS

### **Development in the Vicinity:**

The site, located at the intersection of Robert E. Lee Boulevard and Argonne Boulevard, is near the northeastern edge of the LRS-1 Lakeview Single-Family Residential District. The LRS-1 District, which spans most of the Lakeview neighborhood between Robert E. Lee Boulevard, Orleans Avenue, the Orleans/Jefferson Parish border, and Interstate 610, is divided into rectangular squares that are fairly consistent in shape and size, with lots of generally uniform shape and size. These squares are set within a network of mostly narrow, single-lane streets which carry mostly local traffic, although there are occasional instance of larger, multiple-lane arterial streets which carry traffic traveling through the neighborhood. Most squares also have an alley for rear yard access.

Focusing particularly on the area immediately surrounding the site, the subject site is located on one a series of nearly square-shaped squares, Squares 43A through 49A, which are bounded by Robert E. Lee Boulevard, Argonne Boulevard, Conrad, and Louisville Streets. On six of these seven squares (Squares 43A through 48A, which are along Robert E. Lee Boulevard between Louis XIV Street and Argonne Boulevard), all of the lots with frontage on Robert E. Lee Boulevard (including the lots at the subject site) face Robert E. Lee Boulevard, not the cross streets intersecting with Robert E. Lee Boulevard. The other lots front on the other streets that bound the squares. In contrast, on the remaining square (Square 49A, which are on Robert E. Lee Boulevard between Louisville and Louis XIV Streets), only a single lot do not front on Robert E. Lee Boulevard. None of these squares have alley access.

Aside from the group of seven squares that includes the subject square, most squares in the surrounding area, including those squares opposite Robert E. Lee Boulevard and Argonne Boulevard from the subject square, are long, rectangular squares. On most of these squares, most lots front on Robert E. Lee Boulevard.

Individual lots usually measure about 50 feet in width and about 120 feet in depth. Most parcels are developed with single-family residences, though there are some instances of two-family residences at sites that were historically used for two-family residential purposes. The housing stock is varied, with a mix of older structures dating from the area's original development in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and newer structures built since Hurricane Katrina. The older structures include many ranch-style, slab-on-grade homes, while newer structures built since Hurricane Katrina incorporate a variety of styles in accordance with the tastes of individual property owners, with many featuring traditional design elements. Unlike earlier structures, which were usually built at grade, many newer structures are elevated significantly above grade and are more likely to have second stories, causing many of them to stand much taller than the older structures. Despite these differences in the physical characteristics of the residences themselves, they have consistent front setbacks of approximately twenty feet and rear yards that measure at least twenty feet. Off-street parking is uniformly provided, usually within paved driveways located within side yards.

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING ORDINANCE AND THE SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS:**

*Reversal of lot frontage*

The resubdivision would cause the lot frontage to change from Robert E. Lee Boulevard to Argonne Boulevard. This change in lot frontage would result in the required front yards of the new lots being opposite the required side yard of the lot across Argonne Boulevard from the site. It would also cause the new lots' required rear yards to abut the required side yard of the adjacent lot. (It should be noted that existing lots also have rear yards that abut the required side yard of an adjacent lot.)

In accordance with **Article 5, Section 5.1.8** of the *Subdivision Regulations*, the City Planning Commission usually looks with disfavor upon this type of proposal unless most properties within 500 feet have similar frontage. In the case of this site, lot frontage within this 500 foot radius is varied; most of the lots front on the east-west streets extending through the area but others front on north-south streets. However, focusing particularly on Robert E. Lee Boulevard, we find that all lots but one along Robert E. Lee Boulevard have their primary frontage on that street, not on cross streets.

On the north and south side of Robert E. Lee Boulevard, there are nineteen (19) squares total that have frontage. This includes all squares between West End Boulevard and Orleans Avenue. Only four (4) of the squares have lots fronting on the cross streets. Of these squares, there are only four (4) lots that front on cross streets. These lots are located primary on the easternmost and westernmost parts of the street, relatively distant from the subject site. The staff believes that the new lots should be consistent with that and should also front on Robert E. Lee Boulevard.

The new lots should also front on Robert E. Lee Boulevard due to the Subdivision Regulations general preference that lots front on major streets rather than minor streets. While the Subdivision Regulations do not explicitly state that lots should front on major streets rather than minor streets where possible, this is implied by the fact that **Article 5, Section 5.1.8** states that reversal of lot frontages which place lot frontages on major streets will be generally acceptable. This implies that reversals of lot frontage which switch lot frontage from a major street to a minor street will generally be less acceptable. The staff believes the proposed lot reversal of lot frontage from Robert E. Lee Boulevard to Argonne Boulevard is also not desirable for that reason. The reversal would be counter to the intent of the Subdivision Regulations, in the staff's view.

The applicant's reason for proposing to rotate the lots from Robert E. Lee Boulevard to Argonne Boulevard are described as changing the lot frontage to build single family residence according to the application. Under current lot configuration, the two existing lots are not deficient according to the current zoning and are of appropriate size to build single family residences. Though the reversal of lot frontage might give easier access to the lots, it would arguably detract from the attractiveness of this portion of Robert E. Lee Boulevard. Regardless, the staff must make its recommendation based on compliance

with the objectives of the Subdivision Regulations. For the reasons discussed above, the staff believes that the reversal of the lot frontage proposal is not consistent with the intent of the Subdivision Regulations and believes it should not be supported.

### **SUMMARY**

Subdivision Docket 156/14 is a request to resubdivide two existing lots measuring 53.25 and 50 feet in width, 120 feet in depth, approximately 6,000 square feet in area and which face Robert E. Lee Boulevard, into two new lots, which would each be 60 feet in width, 120 feet in depth, and 6,195 square feet in area and front on Argonne Boulevard. The new lots, as well as the original lots, would not be deficient of the LRS-1 Lakeview Single-Family Residential District's requirements. As such, the creation of the lots with a reversal of lot frontage front Robert E. Lee Boulevard to Argonne Boulevard must be considered by the City Planning Commission under Policy B. The proposal does not create a general improvement from the original plat. Also there are a few lots that front on the cross streets which intersect Robert E. Lee Boulevard. The subject site is with an a 500 feet radius where all of the lots that have property lines on Robert E. Lee Boulevard are fronting on Robert E. Lee Boulevard. New Lots which front on Argonne Boulevard rather than Robert E. Lee Boulevard would be inconsistent with the orientation of these surrounding lots towards Robert E. Lee Boulevard and so the staff believes the reversal of lot frontage cannot be supported. Additionally, since Robert E. Lee Boulevard is a higher capacity street then Argonne Boulevard, the reversal of lot frontage towards Argonne Boulevard would be inconsistent with the Subdivision Regulations' implied objective of having lots front on higher capacity streets rather than lower capacity streets where possible. For these reasons, the staff believes the reversal of lot frontage is not supported under the Subdivision Regulations.

### **PRELIMINARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION<sup>1</sup>**

The staff recommends **DENIAL** of Subdivision Docket 156/14, a request to resubdivide two lots with frontage on Robert E. Lee Boulevard to create two new lots with frontage on Argonne Boulevard.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

1. The reversal of lot frontage is not justified under the Subdivision Regulations because most lots on the nineteen (19) squares of Robert E. Lee Boulevard around the site front on Robert E. Lee Boulevard. Additionally, the reversal would cause the lot frontage to be shifted from a higher capacity street to a lower capacity street, which would be inconsistent with the Subdivision Regulations' implied objective of having lots front on major streets where possible.

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<sup>1</sup> The preliminary staff recommendation is subject to modification by the City Planning Commission

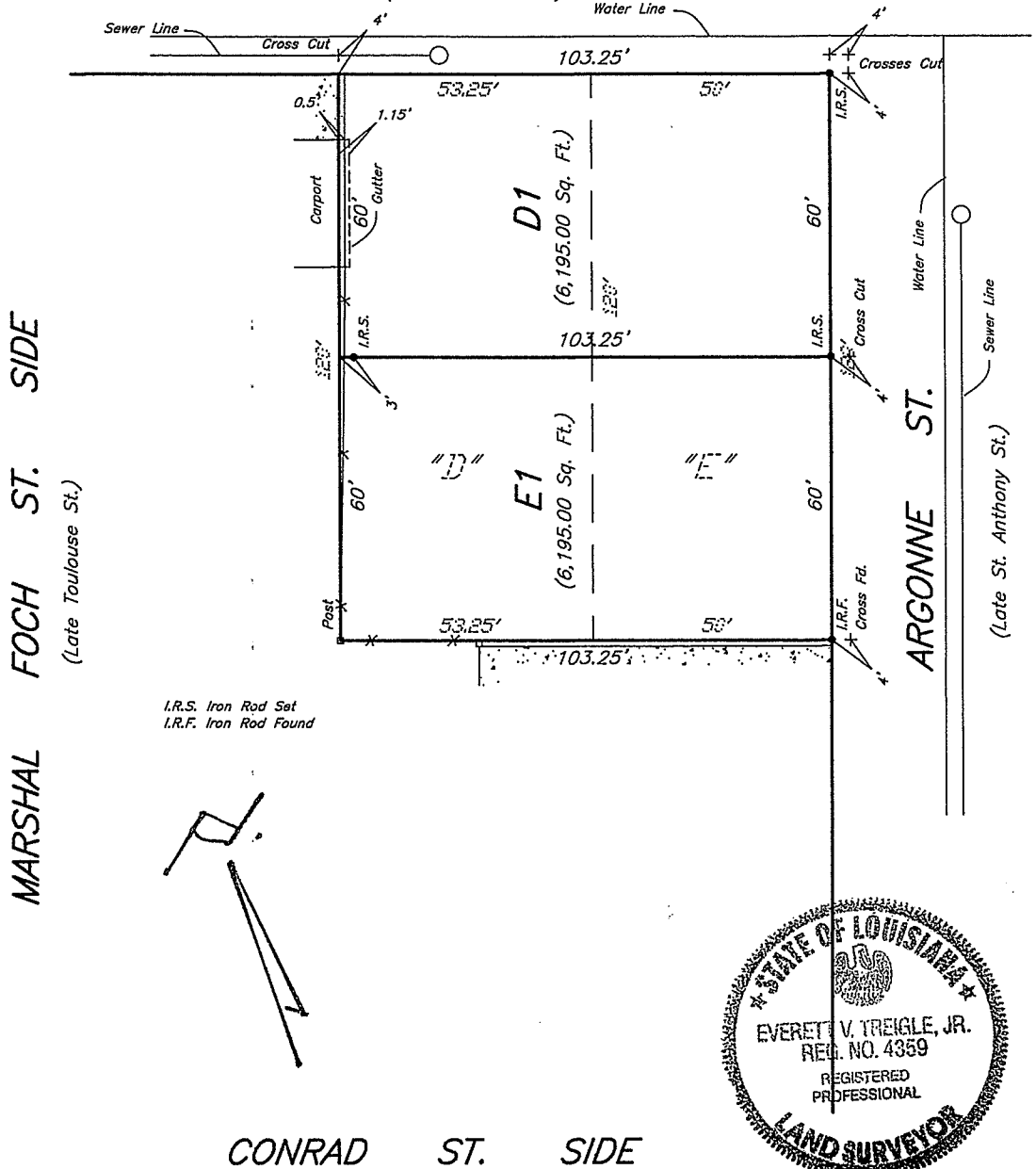
**SQ. 43-A, LAKEVIEW  
SECOND DISTRICT**

ORLEANS PARISH  
NEW ORLEANS, LA

A Resubdivision of Lots "D" & "E" Into Lots D1 & E1.

**ROBERT E. LEE BLVD.**

(Late Adams Ave.)



MARSHAL  
FOCH ST.  
(Late Toulouse St.)  
SIDE

CONRAD ST. SIDE

I.R.S. Iron Rod Set  
I.R.F. Iron Rod Found



Note:  
Improvements may not be to scale for clarity.  
The dimensions shown prevail over scale.

THE SERVITUDES SHOWN ON THIS PLAT ARE LIMITED TO THOSE FURNISHED TO US. THERE IS NO REPRESENTATION THAT ALL APPLICABLE SERVITUDES ARE SHOWN HEREON. THE SURVEYOR HAS MADE NO TITLE SEARCH OR PUBLIC RECORD SEARCH IN COMPILING DATA FOR THIS SURVEY.

Note: No trees in Public R/W.

THE FEDERAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION FLOOD HAZARD BOUNDARY MAP INDICATES THAT THE ABOVE DESCRIBED PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN FIA ZONE A-3 (-2.5')

90° Lot angles as per plan of sub.

Date: October 28, 2014

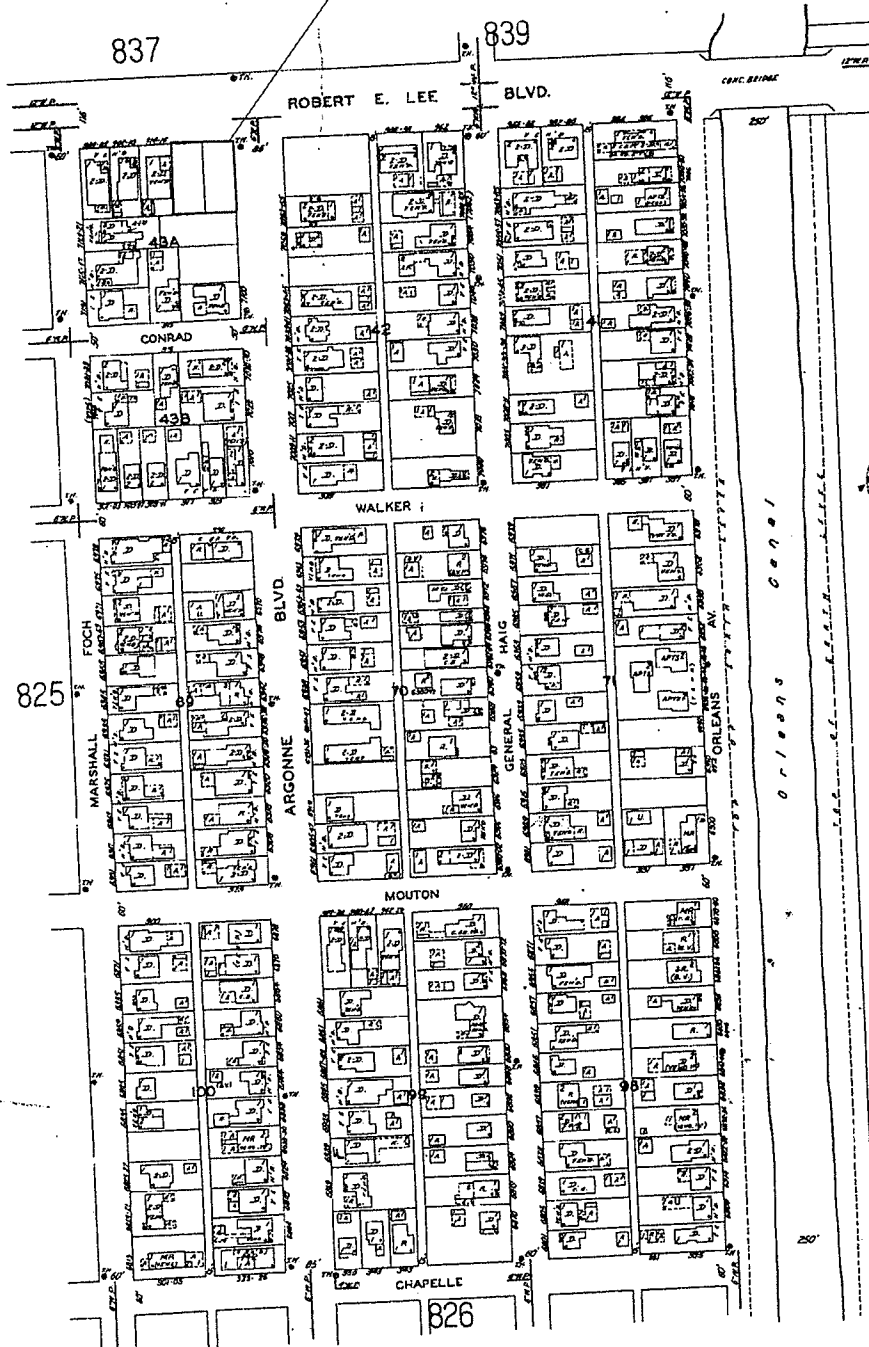
Scale: 1" = 30'

This plat represents an actual ground survey made by me or under my direct supervision and control and meets the requirements for the Standards of Practice for Boundary Surveys as found in Louisiana Administrative Code TITLE 46:LX, Chapter 25 for a Class "C" survey.  
Made at the request of Behind The Levee, L.L.C.

Gilbert, Kelly & Couturie, Inc., Surveying & Engineering  
2121 N. Causeway Blvd., Metairie LA 70001 (504) 836-2121

827

Subject Site



SD 156/14

SCALE OF FEET  
0 50 100  
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Subject Site