Stephen Kroll

From: Michelle Kimball <mkimball@prcno.org>
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 4:59 PM
To: Stephen Kroll
Subject: Fwd: Your upcoming vote on the Canal Street buildings opposite from One Canal Place

Michelle Kimball
Sent from my iPhone
www.prcno.org

Begin forwarded message:

From: Elizabeth Ryan <eryan@coatsrose.com>
Date: February 4, 2015 at 10:52:43 AM CST
To: "lcantrell@nola.gov" <lcantrell@nola.gov>, "sgguidry@nola.gov" <sgguidry@nola.gov>, "shead@nola.gov" <shead@nola.gov>, "jarwilliams@nola.gov" <jarwilliams@nola.gov>, "nramsey@nola.gov" <nramsey@nola.gov>, "jcbrossett@nola.gov" <jcbrossett@nola.gov>, "jagray@nola.gov" <jagray@nola.gov>, "jtharris@nola.gov" <jtharris@nola.gov>, "aaclark-rizzio@nola.gov" <aaclark-rizzio@nola.gov>, "kgbutler@nola.gov" <kgbutler@nola.gov>, "mlmartin@nola.gov" <mlmartin@nola.gov>, "jdpourciau@nola.gov" <jdpourciau@nola.gov>, "bscornelison@nola.gov" <bscornelison@nola.gov>, "aamaklansky@nola.gov" <aamaklansky@nola.gov>, "dcdickerson@nola.gov" <dcdickerson@nola.gov>, "bmoliver@nola.gov" <bmoliver@nola.gov>, "nicole@webreconsulting.com" <nicole@webreconsulting.com>, "mkimball@prcno.org" <mkimball@prcno.org>
Subject: Your upcoming vote on the Canal Street buildings opposite from One Canal Place

I strongly oppose any demolition/modification of these buildings. They are the rare survivors of an earlier era that preserve the area's unique period architecture.

Elizabeth Haecker Ryan

COATS | ROSE
A Professional Corporation

Elizabeth Haecker Ryan
Director

One Canal Place
365 Canal St., Suite 800
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130
Direct: 504.299.3085 | Fax: 504.299.3071
ERyan@coatsrose.com

HOUSTON | CLEAR LAKE | AUSTIN | DALLAS | SAN ANTONIO | NEW ORLEANS

www.coatsrose.com

SUMMARY HISTORICAL BACKGROUND Square 133 bounded by Canal, Magazine, Tchoupitoulas and Common
Prepared by William D. Reeves, Contract Historian. 504 866 3049

The buildings on this square are significant because of their age, their origin, their economic role in New Orleans history, and their place in the cityscape of New Orleans. The square is significant initially because a variety of racial and ethnic groups developed the square in the space of a year after it came on the market. Prior to 1840 the square had been part of the commons surrounding the Vieux Carré involved in an ownership dispute between the City and the Federal Government. Once the dispute was settled, the City auctioned the lots and a remarkable variety of individuals purchased them. They included one single woman, several Anglo merchants, a French merchant, two African-American businssmen, a prominent Jewish merchant, and an Irish merchant. The prices they paid for the bare lots were substantial for the time, averaging $10 a square foot for the corner lot at Magazine and Common, $7.40 for the corner of Magazine and Canal, and $5.45 for the lots along Common. Building contracts have been located for 11 buildings, an exceptionally good coverage. They were all signed in the 3 months following the sale of the lots. At least one of the building contracts for 3 lots specifically mentions that the buildings shall be completed by November 1 of the same year (1840). As an example of inter-racial, inter-religious, and inter-ethnic cooperation to develop the City of New Orleans it is unparalleled.

The buildings are well-documented in images. The Persac drawing from 1860 shows the row of buildings exceptionally clearly, documenting their existence in a continuous line down the face of Canal and around onto Tchoupitoulas. A 1922 image from John Smith Kendall's History of New Orleans shows the facade of Schwartz Bros in good condition with a fine porte cochere extending to the street. Two 1940s images document the corner building when it was occupied by United States Rubber Company and then when it was available for rent. Both show the fine granite piers along Magazine Street.

The investors who constructed the buildings did not construct them for their own use. They erected them as investment properties to lease to the burgeoning merchant population of the City. The square originated as a center for commission merchants. These were men who purchased the cotton and sugar from the country plantations and resold it to Philadelphia, New York, and English markets. Their commission was commonly two percent on sales and a second two percent on their purchases for the plantations. The early commission merchants were Waterman and Bro. on the corner of Magazine and Common and G. A. Barelli further down Common. W. W. Montgomery, who developed lots 6, 7, and 8, was one of the most prominent in the city.

The subsequent use of the buildings is a tribute to their adaptability. The solid brick firewalls, heavy timbers, granite sills and lintels have allowed many businesses to occupy their interior spaces. Over the years the square evolved slightly to become rather more wholesale grocery businesses--those who supplied the eatables and drinkables for the many coffee shops and taverns throughout the city. Among these firms were Gray and Norris at 52 Canal, Bloom, Cerf, and Meyer at 54 Canal, George and Garner at 44 Canal and 63 Common, Dudley & Nelson at 48 Canal and 67 Common. Gray and Norris advertised that they supplied Red Jacket Bitters, Phoenix Mills coffees and spices, fancy brands tobacco, black hair moss, and fire and burglar-proof safes. Cuban Jose Domingo sold cigars and tobacco from at least two sites along Canal street.

Numerous other businesses played an important role on the square. Particularly conspicuous was the saddlery business. Before the Civil War, German Joseph Bockius at 52 Canal and Magee & Kneass at 6 Magazine specialized in supplying leather goods, including shoes, harnesses and saddles for horses and mules. After the war George Horter operated the major saddlery and harness business at #6 Magazine in partnership with Edward Fenner. About 1884 Baker, Sloo & Company took a lease on the site where they manufactured saddlery and harnesses. Horter also leased #54 Canal, the building that backed up into his store at #6 Magazine. The hardware business was another important business on the square represented by Henry J. Mullen operating from #52 Canal and #71 Common which backed up to the Canal street store.

Around these core businesses were a variety of other uses. There were two sail lofts on 4th floors towards the end of the century. G. L. Kouns & Bro were steamboat agents and for a while there were two firms specializing in paper supplies. G. W. Dunbar manufactured cordials and canned shrimp and oysters at #3 Tchoupitoulas.

By the 20th century there a clear tendancy to combine the various stores into larger units. Exemplifying this tendancy was Schwartz Bros., who opened a large dry goods store at the corner of Canal and Magazine, on lots 6 and 7, and eventually lots 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. It was succeeded by United State Rubber Supply. Columbia Mills leased several buildings. Lots 1-3 were leveled about 1890 and replaced by a nine story building for offices. Other buildings have been leveled comparatively recently, creating the hole in the square now occupied by parking, a camera store, and a T-shirt shop.

The history of these buildings demonstrates an important aspect of the history of New Orleans in the ante-bellum era. Their history establishes that their solid, timeless masonry construction is suitable to many new uses.

Yet much of the story remains to be learned. Precious little time has been devoted to uncovering the history of this square. More needs to be learned about Julien Colvis and Joseph Dumas, the African-American businessmen who owned four buildings in the square. Jacob Levy Florance owned buildings in many neighboring squares as well as this square. What was his role in the City? W. W. Montgomery was married to an Italian countess, how come? When and why did the buildings on lots 1-3 get torn down?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON SQUARE 133. (As of April 14, 1996)

A. HISTORY OF THE ELEVEN LOTS ON WHICH THE BUILDINGS ARE PROPOSED TO BE DEMOLISHED

Lot 4. #8 Magazine, now 110 Magazine. Purchased from the City in 1840 by Jacob Levy Florance. The Florance family had moved to New Orleans from Charleston in 1827. A few years later their friend Judah P. Benjamin followed them to New Orleans and stayed with them for a while. In 1861 E. S. Sheldon worked as a clerk in the store on this site. By 1875 John M. Gould operated a shoestore there. In 1885 Marx Weil of New Orleans purchased the building from Florance's heirs and in 1916 sold it to the Schwartz Brothers for their dry goods store.[1]

Lot 5. #6 Magazine, now 108 Magazine. Purchased from the City in 1840 by James Magee. In 1859 they sold the lot and storehouse to their son Michael Magee for $25,000. Magee & Kneass ran a saddlery business here in 1860. One of their employees was Andrew Starck, who operated as a shoemaker out of this address in 1860. In 1884 Michael sold it to George Horter for $17,000. Horter had entered the saddlery business before 1880 in partnership with Edward Fenner. Later he operated from 90 Common as Horter & Rice, manufacturers of saddlery and harness. In 1884 he leased the building to Baker, Sloo & Company for a rental of $2,200 a year. This company manufactured saddlery and was operated by Alfred T. Baker, Thomas Sloo and Charles M. Whitney.[2] The company later purchased other lots on the square, and by 1898 had become Sloo and Whitney. Charles M. Whitney also operated the Whitney Iron Works at 861 Tchoupitoulas. In the 20th century it became part of Schwartz Bros. In 1894 Horter sold lot 5 to Samuel Dalsheimer, who operated the firm of Dalsheimer & Worms, importers and jobbers of notions, hosiery and men's furnishings in the next block of Canal at No. 76. In 1897 Dalsheimer sold the building to Marx Weil who sold it to the Schwartz Bros. Dry goods in 1916.[3]

Lot 6 and 7. # 2 and 4, later 100 Magazine; also assigned street numbers 56, 58, 60, 62, and 64 Canal. William W. Montgomery, president of the Bank of Louisiana, purchased these two lots, along with lot 8, from the City of New Orleans in 1840 for the very princely sum of $37,700 for the three. In 1855 he donated the two lots to his daughter Euphrosine A. Montgomery, wife of

1 City Directory 1861; H. B. Censas V. 21, No. 101, Jan 20, 1840; A. Hero Jr. NP, v. 54 p. 1138, Mar 5, 1885; T. A. Schuber v. 2 No. 168, April 17, 1916.
2 HB Cenas NP Jan 20, 1840 (COB 28/77); James Graham NP for D I Ricardo NP, Sep 15, 1859; Benj. Ory NP, v. 8 #127, June 16, 1884; City Directory 1860.
3 JC Wenck NP, #324, Oct 30, 1897; T. A. Schuber NP, v. 2 #168, April 17, 1916.

the Count Olivier de la Rochfoucald. The donation was valued for later estate purposes at $60,000 and they contained two four-story brick buildings.[4] In 1860 Jacob Sibild worked at #62 Canal, Richard Talbot was an accountant at 64 Canal, and No. 60 Canal was leased by Broock & Col, paper box makers. Euphrosine Montgomery resided in Paris and sometime soon after the turn of the century leased the buildings to the Schwarz Bros, a wholesale dry goods store.[5] It anchored this portion of Canal Street that was known from the 1880s through the 1920s as the Wholesale District. This was in contrast with the Retail District of Canal centered around Maison Blanche, founded by another Schwartz family, and D. H. Holmes. The Schwartz Bros consisted of Leon C. Schwartz, Samuel Schwartz, and Victor Herbert. Leon E. Schwartz married Adeline Trautman. He was president of the Jewish Widows and Orphans Home and the Harmony Club. In 1907 the Schwartz Bros. purchased the buildings from the Countess. By 1917 Schwartz Bros had assets totaling $1,678,000. A fine photograph of Canal Street taken from a balcony of Schwartz Bros. in 1922 shows the smooth scored facade and the handsome porte cochere entrance to the emporium.[6] This dry goods store operated another decade before becoming the wholesale house for United States Rubber Products. In 1946 Charlotte Steinberg (later Mrs. Fred Gottesman) purchased the buildings she intends to tear down for $135,300.[7]

Lot 8. #54 Canal, later 434 Canal. W. W. Montgomery purchased this lot from the City of New Orleans in 1840 and donated it to his daughter Countess Alexandrina Marie Irene Christine Caroline Gianazzodi Pamparato, the widow of William Henry Montgomery and heir of her brother Roger William di Montgomerie aka Ruggerio Gugliolmo di Montgomerie. At her death in 1918 Schwartz Bros. purchased the property. In 1866 L. Bloom, D. Cerf, and L. Meyer ran a wholesale grocers in wines, liquors, cigars and tobacco. In the 1880s George Horter, who owned the key lot 5 that backed into lot 8 also ran his saddlery business here.[8]

Lot 9. #52 Canal, later 430 Canal Street. Builder Alexander Baggett contracted with R. W. Montgomery to construct two brick stores four stories high in March, 1840. The Canal Street building was to be 25' wide and 55' deep, while the Common Street building was to be 72' deep. In 1860 Joseph Bockius operated a saddlery from the building. Right after the Civil War Gray &

4 H. B. Cenas NP, Jan 20, 1840; T. Guyol NP, v. 32 #393, June 20, 1855.
5 City Directory 1861; Scott E. Beer, NP, July 27, 1907.
6 John Smith Kendall, History of New Orleans (Chicago, 1922), v. II, p. 672.
7 MT Woodward NP, May 1, 1946.
8 H. B. Cenas NP, Jan 20, 1840; COB 155/485; TA Schuber NP, Aug 14, 1918; Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory and River Guide for 1866 and 1867 (St. Louis, 1866).

Norris operated their commission agency and purchasing bureau here. It was the wholesale agents for Red Jacket Bitters, Phoenix Mills Coffees and Spices, fancy brands Tobacco, black hair moss, and fire and burgalr-proof safes. In 1880 Henry J. Mullan was operating his hardware store from this building. The next year he purchased the adjoining property.[9]

Lot 10 or A. #50 Canal Street, Later 426-428. Louis A. Barbarin, a merchant tailor, purchased this lot from the City and kept it ten years. In 1850 he sold it with its 4 story building to Julien Colvis, African-American businessman, for $13,200. After Colvis' death this property passed to his daughter Marguerite Colvis, the wife of Jacques Ambroise Jonquil, resident of Paris. In 1881 this lot was occupied by a substantial four story building leased by Jose Domingo for a cigar store. That same year Marguerite Jonquil sold the building to Henry Mullan, who about the same time purchased the building facing Common Street. He operated a hardware store there. In the 20th century Columbia Mills leased both buildings and joined them into one.[10]

Lot 11. #48 Canal Street, later 422-24 Canal. L. A. Finley Jr. operated a brokerage from the building in 1866. Sharing the building was the wholesale grocery of Dudley & Nelson who also leased Dumas' building at #67 Common.[11] Today this building is known as the Friedberg building, along with its rear building facing Common on lot 21. Architect James Freret was employed to add the 5th floor and present facade after 1880.

Lot 21. #67 Common, later #427-9 Common Street. Julien Colvis and Joseph Dumas, African-American businessmen, purchased this lot from the City of New Orleans and on March 3, 1840 signed a building contract with Sidle and Stewart for a 4 story brick storehouse. They apparently went into business together as merchant tailors about 1835. Colvis had married Mathilda Bermoudy in 1829 and by her he had four children--Joseph, Marguerite (who married Jacques Jonquil), Jeanne Amelie (who married Auguste Coutanceau) and Mathilda (who married Pierre Eloie Sicord). After his wife's death in 1842, he remarried Marie Elisa Allain, who died in 1846. To sort out the various interests, the two partners, Colvis and Dumas, divided their holdings, each receiving about ten important properties around the city. In the partition this building went to Joseph Dumas.

9 Bldg Contract, Wm. Christy NP, Mar 16, 1840; City Directory 1860; Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory and River Guide for 1866 and 1867 (St. Louis, 1866).

10 LT Caire NP, v 75, #69, Feb 14, 1840; T. Guyol NP, v 15 No. 182, Mar 18, 1850; E. Bouney NP, v 23, #23, Mar 14, 1881; Lease Oct 1, 1914, COB 303/597.

11 Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory.

After the Civil War Dudley & Nelson operated a wholesale grocery from the building, along with its rear building that faced Canal.[12] More research is needed on Joseph Dumas.

Lot 22 or B. #69 Common, later 431-3. Colvis and Dumas, African-American businessmen, also purchased this lot from the City of New Orleans and on March 3, 1840 signed a building contract with Sidle and Stewart for a 4 story brick storehouse. In the partition between Colvis and Dumas in 1846 this building went to Joseph Dumas, but Julien Colvis wanted it so much he purchased from Dumas for $15,000. Martin Shubelsky worked as a clerk in the store there in 1861. Jeanne Colvis inherited the property from her father after Colvis' death in 1863. In 1881 Mrs. Jeanne alias Amelie Colvis, wife of Auguste Coutanceau, sold the property (a 4 story brick building) to Henry J. Mullen for $8,000.[13]

Lot 23. #71 Common, later 435-37. This is the second building constructed by R. W. Montgomery employing Alexander Baggett, Builder. This building on Common Street was to be 72' deep. In 1866 H. G. Mullen & Co. operated a hardware and cutlery store here.[14]

B. HISTORY OF THE TWELVE OTHER LOTS ON SQUARE 133

Lot 1. #14 Magazine, later 122. The original building on this site was erected by Dakin & Dakin for Jacob Levy Florance, the owner of lot 1 and lot 4. It is likely the building on lot 4, still standing, was also constructed by Dakin & Dakin since the pattern for the other buildings was to erect multiple buildings for one owner using one architect. J. Waterman & Brother soon leased this building for their wholesale hardware store and kept it until well after the Civil War.[15]

Lot 2. #12 Magazine, later 116. Purchased by Austin Woolfolk, by 1866 it was the location of J. N. Morrivou, wholesale druggist. Between 1885 and 1895 the building was torn down and replaced with the present building.[16]

---

12 T. Guyol NP, Jan 26, 1846; Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory.

13 City Directory 1861; Building Contract T. Seghers, NP, v. 35 #126, Mar 3, 1840; T. Guyol NP, v. 4 #197, April 27, 1846; E. Bouncy NP, v. 10, #37 Mar 16, 1869; E. Bouncy NP, v. 23, #24, Mar 4, 1881.

14 Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory and River Guide for 1866 and 1867 (St. Louis, 1866).

15 City Directory for 1853 , 1861 and 1866.

16 Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory and River Guide for 1866 and 1867 (St. Louis, 1866).

Lot 3. #10 Magazine, later 114.

Lot 12. #46 Canal, later 420 Canal. Empty lot today.

Lot 13. #44 Canal and #63 Common, later 421 Common and 416-18 Canal. Mrs. Celeste Marigny Livaudais purchased this lot in 1840. P. D. Sourdes worked as a clerk in the Common Street end in 1861. By 1866 Jose Domingo operated his tobacco and cigar shop from 44 Canal. He soon moved it to #50 Canal. The rest of the building, both on Canal and Common, was operated by George and Garner as a wholesale grocery.[17] Empty lot today.

Lot 14. #61 Common, later 417-419. One of the buildings erected by Alexander Baggett for William H. Avery.[18] G. A. Barelli operated a commission merchant business here in 1853, succeeded by John C. Barelli and Josiah Mitchell by 1861. They were the consul of Portugual and the Kingdom of Two Sicilies.[19] Empty lot today.

Lot 15. #59 Common, later 413-15. Alexander Baggett erected this building for Wm. Avery in 1840. The building contract specified that the buildings were to be completed and delivered by November 1, 1840, just eight months after the contract was signed. By 1866 the G. L. Kouns & Bros were operating a wholesale grocer and steamboat agency from the site.[20] Empty lot today.

Lot 16. #1 Tchoupitoulas and #34, #36, and #38 Canal. Later 103 Tchoupitoulas, and 404 and 406 Canal. Alexander Baggett erected a fine corner building on this lot in 1840. Demolished in the 20th century and replaced with a T shirt shop.

Lot 17. #3 Tchoupitoulas, later 105 Tchoupitoulas. Colvis and Dumas, African-American businessmen, purchased this lot and erected the building using the services of Sidle and Stewart in 1840. This lot passed to Colvis in the partition of 1846 and then to one of his children after his death in Paris in 1863. Each of the children inherited $33,000. In 1854 this was the wholesale grocery firm of Speake and McCreary. Sir Henry Morton Stanley, the renowned explorer, came to New Orleans from Liverpool in 1854 as an orphan named John Rowlands and worked in this store. The young boy was befriended by an acquaintance of McCreary and Henry Hope Stanley adopted the boy, giving him his

17 City Directory 1861; Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory and River Guide for 1866 and 1867 (St. Louis, 1866).

18 H. B. Censas, NP v. 21 #345, March 7, 1840, NONA.

19 City Directory for 1853 and 1861.

20 Bldg Contract HB Cenas v 21 #345, Mar 7, 1840. Denson & Nelson's New Orleans and Mississippi Valley Business Directory and River Guide for 1866 and 1867 (St. Louis, 1866).

name. Twenty years later G. W. Dunbar's Sons, Packers of Semi-tropical products and manufacturers of French cordials and fruit syrups, operated from the building. Founded in 1865, by 1895 it employed 150 hands. It canned about 60,000 cans a day of shrimp, oysters, green turtle, preserved figs, orange preserves, figs in cordial, okra etc.[21]

Lot 18. #5 Tchoupitoulas, later 109. Paul Tulane purchased this lot in 1840 and erected the building thereon. (Still standing)

Lot 19. #51, 53, 55, and 57 Common, later 401-407 Common, also #7 Tchoupitoulas, later 113. The structure was erected by Austin Woolfolk and is today one of the best detailed buildings on the square. Erected 1840, this building was owned by James H. Dudley by 1852, and he sold it to Miss Ida Slocomb and George W. Munson by 1866. In 1860 A. F. Dunbar operated a store from #51 Common. E. R. Stevens & Co. operated a paper warehouse from #55 and 57 Common.[22]

Lot 20. #65 Common, later 423-25 Common. Original building erected by Celeste Marigny Livaudais. Empty lot today.

21 Building Contract T. Seghers NP, v. 35 #126, Mar 3, 1840; Mary Louise Christovich et al, New Orleans Architecture, vol. 2, p. 214; City Directory 1861.

22 Mary Louise Christovich et al, New Orleans Architecture, vol. 2, p. 214; City Directory 1861.

Tour Planning Review
Vol. 64 #3 1993

14

JANE S. BROOKS AND ALMA H. YOUNG

Revitalising the central business district in the face of decline

The case of New Orleans, 1973–1993

This paper presents the goals and strategies of downtown revitalisation pursued by the City of New Orleans between 1973 and 1993. The impacts of the growth management programme, instituted in 1975, are reviewed, with special attention paid to four geographical areas downtown. The creation of the programme required the active participation of a coalition of government and business leaders, but more and more the decisions about the economic future of downtown New Orleans are being made by the private sector.

In their quest to become more competitive with other communities, city officials have over the past twenty years shown an increasing interest in local economic development policy and planning. Cities attempt to improve their economic position by competing with other jurisdictions for investment and affluent residents.[1] In doing so, cities have adopted widely differing development policies: some relentlessly pursue growth, while others remain indifferent.[2] For those cities pursuing growth, local office-holders are most likely to ally on development issues with business interests, i.e. those who control the city's economic assets and hence make its economic decisions. This coalition between politicians and business interests is a constant feature of urban politics.[3]

In creating this coalition, many cities pursue what has come to be known as the 'corporate-centre approach',[4] which emphasises growth and real estate development, particularly in central business districts. The goals of this approach are increased economic growth and tax base expansion, with little concern about the distribution of benefits.

The key elements of the 'corporate-centre approach'[5] include:

- The importance of private-sector decisions in determining economic development outcomes;
- The public sector's role being limited to the creation of an economic and social environment conducive to increased private investment (e.g. public resources are used to fill 'the gap between the level of resources investors

are willing to devote to projects and the level required for project implementation';[6]
- Attracting advanced services establishments and other growing sectors along with the re-shaping of urban space, especially in the central business district.

Hill has described Detroit's pursuit of the 'corporate-centre strategy':

> Overall investment priorities are to transform this aging industrial city into the modern corporate image . . . [with] an emphasis upon recommercialization rather than reindustrialization, and an orientation toward luxury consumption that is appealing to young corporate managers, educated professionals, convention goers, and the tourist trade.[7]

To pursue such a strategy, planning must be insulated from most neighbourhood groups, the poor and minorities. The negotiations that take place between government and business interests are kept from public scrutiny. Unlike Peterson's view that development policy is consensual because growth generates benefits for 'the city as a whole', we know that business interests and public preferences may not (and often do not) coincide.[8] For instance, spending on development activity may reduce spending on other services; development decisions may impose undue burdens on certain geographical areas and groups; profits remain in the hands of private groups rather than with the public, which captures only a percentage of the benefits.

Therefore, in most cities the goals (and planning) of such a strategy are established by quasi-public economic development corporations, which usually do not allow for broad-based participation. These corporations are part of what Stoker[9] has termed 'shadow governments'. The use of the public or quasi-public authority, a non-elected development decision-making agency frequently endowed with its own revenue sources, removes development policy from the democratic political process. As Elkin[10] concludes, city politics is 'a political order with a public and private face', with land use negotiations taking place far from the public gaze.

The geographic emphasis in most corporate-centre strategies favours central business districts and their surrounding areas. In the process of redeveloping the central business district, a new city, albeit smaller and more specialised, is created in the downtown areas of many older urban jurisdictions. Older cities become 'transaction centers, islands of affluence and activity surrounded by decay, unable to provide enough jobs to sustain their surplus population. Public resources flowed to the renewal of downtown areas at the expense of poorer neighborhoods'.[11] These downtowns become areas for advance services, high-tech activities and tourism, with luxury consumption in terms of shops, leisure activities and housing.

To finance development in these areas, local officials have devised ingenious ways to raise capital, often directing tax revenues towards specified ends rather than the general fund. Municipal governments have set up special assessment and tax districts, whereby a portion of property taxes levied on structures within the area are returned to it. Generally, these funds are used for further capital expenditures, as backing for loans, or to pay for supplemental services. Such mechanisms have the effect of turning over various municipal governmental powers to private business. Most of these subsidies are earmarked for thriving downtown areas.[12]

It is the purpose of this paper to describe and analyse strategies used to encourage growth and development in downtown New Orleans between 1973 and 1993. Leadership in economic development planning in New Orleans can be characterised as following the corporate-centre approach.[13] New Orleans was chosen because it is an old city with a relatively healthy downtown (one that never experienced the major slumps of many other cities) that underwent a major planned revitalisation effort. First, we discuss the antecedents to the planned redevelopment. Second, we describe the three major elements of the revitalisation effort, namely: 1) a growth management programme to guide future change; 2) a special taxing district charged with implementation; and 3) an incentive zoning ordinance. Third, we analyse some of the changes that have occurred to four major areas of downtown (Canal Street, Poydras Street, the warehouse area and the riverfront) since the revitalisation effort was put into effect. Finally, we conclude by discussing some of the renewed planning efforts to stem the decline of recent years.

The antecedents of redevelopment in New Orleans

During the past 30 years, business and government leaders in New Orleans made several key decisions which created the conditions under which a corporate-centre strategy could flourish. The first was the decision in the 1960s to build, at public expense, the $164 million Superdome, a megastructure that opened on Poydras Street in 1975 as a downtown convention/sports arena. That decision transformed an area of deteriorating warehouses and railyards into a six-lane street lined by more than six million square feet of office space.[14]

The second was the decision by the preservation community to defeat the proposed Riverfront Expressway, a six-lane elevated highway along the edge of the Mississippi River in the French Quarter meant to provide better access from the suburbs to the central business district (CBD).[15] For the first time in seventy years, New Orleanians began focusing on non-maritime uses for the riverfront. The defeat of the expressway in 1969 meant that the riverfront remained available for redevelopment into tourist facilities, which today are growing rapidly in that area. The defeat also meant that the demands of the preservation community would have to be factored in when planning for the development of downtown New Orleans.

The third was the decision by the New Orleans public port authority (known locally as the Dock Board) to phase out some of its under-utilised and outmoded downtown riverfront wharves and make them available for non-maritime use. The Dock Board's decision furthered the efforts of a group of local business leaders to develop a world's fair along the downtown riverfront. These two decisions have led to dramatic changes in that area, changes geared largely to commercialisation, with tourists and upscale professionals as the main beneficiaries.

By the mid-1960s, changing land uses were becoming apparent throughout downtown, as the private sector awakened to the value of downtown land and to the possibilities for redevelopment. Major new developments were constructed, including the International Trade Mart Building and the Rivergate at the foot of Canal Street. In the wake of these changes came land speculation, inadequate parking and the demolition of many, sometimes architecturally significant, buildings. Because no controls then existed on the bulk and height of buildings, high-rise developments that were beginning to appear lacked quality design standards. The city's tallest building, the 52-storey One Shell Square, was built on Poydras Street in 1972. No consideration was given to pedestrian amenities. Preservationists began to express concern about the changes to the New Orleans skyline, especially as they impacted on the neighbouring French Quarter. When the forty-storey Marriott Hotel was built in 1972 on the French Quarter side of Canal Street, it caused a major uproar among preservationists, who felt it had a negative visual impact on the Quarter.

These concerns led to the formation of a coalition of business interests, preservationists and other civic leaders, who decided there was a need for a planning mechanism to coordinate activities and to guide and control future growth and development in the CBD.[16] That significant growth was to occur downtown was not debated; by the 1970s CBD growth as a strategy of economic development had been accepted by most civic leaders. In 1972 then Mayor Moon Landrieu (1970–78) and the Chamber of Commerce called for a study to create a programme to guide growth and development in the CBD. The costs of the study were to be shared equally between city government and business. The consulting firm of Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd (WMRT) was retained to develop the plan in 1973.

After studying New Orleans and the projects already being constructed, the firm concluded that New Orleans' problem was not how to achieve growth (the problem faced by most old cities), as growth was coming to New Orleans like an avalanche. The problem for New Orleans was how to manage growth, and thus the 'Growth Management Programme' was adopted in 1975.[17]

Major elements of New Orleans' revitalisation effort

THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

A key feature of the Growth Management Programme (GMP) was to focus development in areas where high-intensity land use already existed, rather than allow it to take place on scattered sites where it could provoke resistance from neighbourhood groups, especially preservationists. Downtown's adjacent French Quarter is not only a historic district, but also a neighbourhood where many preservationists live. The GMP, then, hoped to accommodate the needs of both the pro-growth coalition and the preservation community. Accordingly, another feature of the GMP was that historic buildings and areas should be preserved. Thus, development should accommodate historic continuity.

Specifically, the GMP established eleven general goals for the New Orleans CBD (see Table 1). Besides the two goals stated above, the Growth Management Programme called for the strengthening of downtown as the administrative, office, retail and entertainment centre of the region; phasing out of maritime functions along the downtown riverfront in favour of pedestrian uses; protecting and developing residential communities within the central area; and retaining a strong retail core on Canal Street, which should not be undermined by nearby competition.

Table 1 *Goals of the Growth Management Programme, 1975*

1.	Strengthen downtown New Orleans as the administrative, office, retail and entertainment centre of the region. Major new development should be concentrated in multi-purpose centres at Poydras Street, the riverfront, and the Superdome area. All major commercial development should be located in the heart of the CBD (i.e. uptown of Iberville Street).
2.	Promote growth while preserving historic continuity. New developments, in areas with historic buildings, should relate architecturally to the existing buildings to achieve this goal. When possible, historic buildings should be renovated and put to use. All demolition of such buildings must be halted.
3.	'Return to the Riverfront'. Maritime functions along the CBD riverfront should be phased out as soon as possible to allow new development. Pedestrian use should be encouraged along the riverfront and developments should not block public access and view.
4.	Provide a full range of activities downtown which attract residents as well as visitors. Focusing on the uptown side of Poydras, these activities might include residential development and smaller retail and service outlets, with an orientation toward the pedestrian.
5.	Achieve an integrated transportation system, balancing automobile facilities with transit and pedestrian uses. Pedestrian amenities and movement corridors (i.e. malls) should be developed. Large parking concentrations should be developed; inter-area transit, such as a shuttle bus, should be promoted between peripheral parking areas and employment centres.
6.	Retain a strong retail core on Canal Street, which should not be undermined by nearby competition. Canal Street and surrounding streets should be landscaped to increase pedestrian traffic vital to retail businesses. Service traffic should be separated from the pedestrian and the automobile.
7.	Strengthen the bond between the CBD and the Vieux Carre. High-rise construction should be located away from the Vieux Carre. Major hotel development should not occur within the Quarter, but within walking distance to promote tourist and retail activity.
8.	Protect and develop good residential communities within the central area. Nearby residential neighbourhoods, including the Vieux Carre, should be preserved. Residential opportunities should be provided for a full range of income levels and new residential construction should be near high employment centres.
9.	Establish a detoxification and rehabilitation centre for the treatment of Skid Row inabitants and the eventual elimination of Skid Row itself.
10.	Encourage design distinction through zoning and other control devices that ensure a high level of urban design, architectural and landscape quality.
11.	Forge a public/private partnership to carry out the GMP and thus institutionalise the process.

To carry out these goals, the GMP recommended several tools for implementation. The three major tools include the creation of historic districts to ensure historical continuity and character; major zoning legislation; and the creation of a special tax district to serve as a financing and planning mechanism for the GMP.

THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The special taxing district was created by the state legislature in 1974 and approved by the city voters in a 1975 referendum. Known as the Downtown Development District (DDD), the tax district is financed by a special property tax levied on all CBD sites. These funds are used only within the district, for programmes ranging from supplemental services to capital improvements. The DDD is administered by a nine-member board of commissioners, five nominated by the Chamber of Commerce and four nominated by the public sector—all named by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. Thus, in its make-up the board represents a public-private partnership, and personifies the working relationship between the city government and the downtown business community. The DDD also represents the agency charged with institutionalising the growth management process.

The Board's primary responsibility is the presentation of an annual plan specifying the public improvements, facilities and services proposed for the district. The district's plan is reviewed by the City Planning Commission and then submitted to the City Council, where it is adopted, and the tax level established in accordance with projected expenditures. The annual revenues collected from the special ad valorem tax on real property in the CBD have risen from $975 000 in 1976 to approximately $3.6 million in 1988, where they have levelled off through 1992.

The only limitation on the projects undertaken by the DDD is that they be 'special and in addition to all services, improvements and facilities' that the city already provides. Tax district funds are not meant to be a substitute for city funds, but an addition to regular city expenditures and investments in the CBD. To avoid duplication of administrative efforts and expense, all services are to be provided through existing departments and agencies of the city.

For the first several years, the DDD concerned itself largely with service delivery through supplementing city services, such as subsidising additional police patrols, running shuttle buses within the CBD, developing cultural events and maintaining additional sanitation pick-ups. In the early years a priority was the elimination of Skid Row, through detoxification programmes and rehabilitation assistance, as well as the physical and economic redevelopment of the area. The detoxification programmes have not fared very well, but the redevelopment assistance has been creatively implemented by the Historic Faubourg St Mary Corporation (HFSM).

Basic funding by the DDD has enabled HFSM, a private, non-profit foundation, to create a revolving loan fund to purchase key historic buildings that comprised a major part of Skid Row. Ten buildings have been bought and resold by HFSM for a total of $2.2 million invested by the organisation for property acquisition. In the process, Skid Row has become smaller and smaller, as the residents have been displaced to the neighbouring Lower Garden District, which has witnessed the establishment of a number of soup kitchens in recent years. However, the Archdiocesan shelter for the homeless, Ozanam Inn, never left the area and continues to draw large numbers of the homeless for meals and shelter.

In more recent years, capital projects became a prominent feature of the DDD's annual plans. The 1980 Plan was the first time the Board recommended that part of the tax-generated revenue be used to support large-scale capital projects over a long-term span. By 1983, the amount budgeted for capital projects was $3 574 183, while the services budget was only $1 613 500. The main aim of the capital projects was to provide public infrastructure in an attempt to lure private investment and to attract consumers downtown.

In keeping with the recommendations of the GMP, the DDD planned and implemented three major capital projects: the Canal Street Sidewalk Improvement Project, the St Charles Street Improvement Project, and the Lafayette Mall. Canal Street is the main retail area of the New Orleans CBD, the most heavily travelled pedestrian corridor, and contains buildings of historical and architectural significance. St Charles Street has historical significance, too, since it contains Gallier Hall, the original seat of city government, and the St Charles Streetcar, which has been on the street since the late nineteenth century. The Canal Street and St Charles Street projects provided amenities for pedestrians (including street furniture, street trees, distinctive lighting, informational kiosks) as well as a unified streetscape to highlight the streets' distinctive contribution to downtown. The Lafayette Mall provides a pedestrian movement corridor from the river and the convention centre to the Louisiana Superdome. Pedestrian amenities such as auto-restricted areas, transit shelters and open spaces have been provided.

In developing capital projects, the DDD provides staff support to city departments for grantsmanship, long-range planning and implementation activities. City departments are responsible for executing the capital projects. The DDD staff also assist developers by providing technical assistance on funding programmes, tax and other incentives and available project and market information. Through the siting of physical improvements, the DDD attempts to focus development in certain areas, but it has no power to force developers into those areas. The ability to regulate growth is within the province of the zoning ordinance, which was amended in 1978.

INCENTIVE ZONING ORDINANCE

Upon completion of the Growth Management Programme in 1975, the city undertook a study of the existing zoning ordinance and noted a number of deficiencies. Chief among these zoning deficiencies was the fact that the floor area ratio (FAR) controls were far too loose to provide any kind of planning guidance. A massively overbuilt CBD could have resulted. The major zoning designation existing at that time, which covered an immense area, permitted FARs as high as 20.0. The City Council also had the power to grant higher FARs without limit under conditional use procedures. By way of comparison, even New York City's World Trade Centre has a FAR of only 18.

Under the zoning ordinance then in place in New Orleans, over 68 million square feet of floor space could have been built on sites considered susceptible to new development in the CBD-1 District alone.[18] The real dangers of these loose bulk controls had already been felt in the city, with completion of the 52-storey One Shell Square office complex on Poydras at St Charles Avenue, and the forty-storey Marriott Hotel on Canal Street next to the French Quarter in 1972. The example of One Shell Square showed that a very few developers constructing enormous buildings could quickly glut the market for office space and change the face of downtown New Orleans. Construction of the Marriott Hotel on Canal Street adjacent to the French Quarter pointed out the very real possibility of a future high-rise wall of buildings cutting off the French Quarter from the remainder of downtown. Such a scenario would ensure that the preservationists would attempt to thwart future high-rise developments downtown.

Before the city could begin to regulate growth, it had to remove some of the enormous power given to developers through the high floor area ratios in the CBD. The reduction of these FARs would not have been politically possible had not the mayor and key business and community leaders stood squarely behind the recommendations of the Growth Management Plan. These political and community leaders had participated throughout the GMP process and were therefore prepared to support the fairly drastic reduction in power to be given to developers and an increase in regulatory powers to be given to the City Planning Commission.[19]

The incentive zoning programme conceived for New Orleans in 1975 was second only to the plan developed for New York City, and was considered most innovative in its encouragement of pedestrian amenities.[20] While allowances were made for some mixed-use buildings to have FARs up to 18, most non-residential buildings had FARs of no more than 10–13. Miniparks, gallerias and arcades were strongly encouraged to lessen the density of buildings, and open space requirements were strengthened. In the ten years following its inception, several notable projects were built downtown incorporating urban amenity elements in return for additional FARs. These included the Pan American Life Insurance Building's popular minipark at Poydras and St Charles, the mid-block arcade of the Intercontinental Hotel, and the Place St Charles shopping mall and food court. Still, by 1985, it was becoming obvious that the effectiveness of zoning controls needed to be strengthened through a revised comprehensive zoning ordinance. Plans were begun to initiate a more widespread zoning revision.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Among the recommendations of the Growth Management Programme was that New Orleans should preserve and protect the historic architectural character of the many small-scale buildings within the downtown. In June 1976 the City Council created the New Orleans Historic Districts Landmarks Commission and charged it with the responsibility of regulating the historic character and visual quality of designated local historic districts throughout the city. In response to the strong development pressures within the CBD, a separate entity known as the Central Business District Historic District Landmarks Commission was created in 1978 to specifically address historic preservation issues in three downtown historic districts.

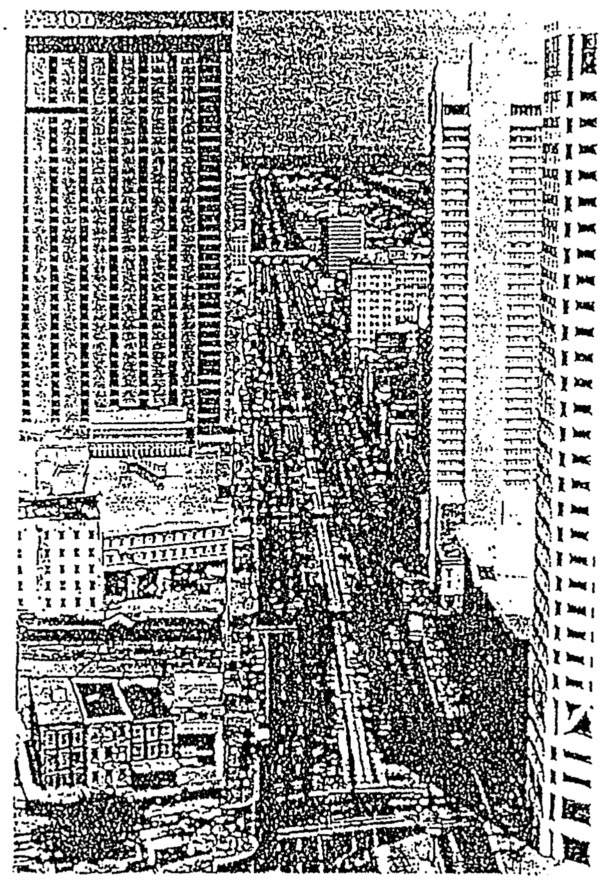


Fig. 1 (above) View along Royal Street in the Vieux Carre towards the CBD In the background, One Shell Square and Place St Charles dominate the skyline

Fig 2 (left) View of Canal Street looking from the Mississippi riverfront to Lake Pontchartrain Recent highrise hotel developments dwarf the nineteenth-century shopping hub of the city

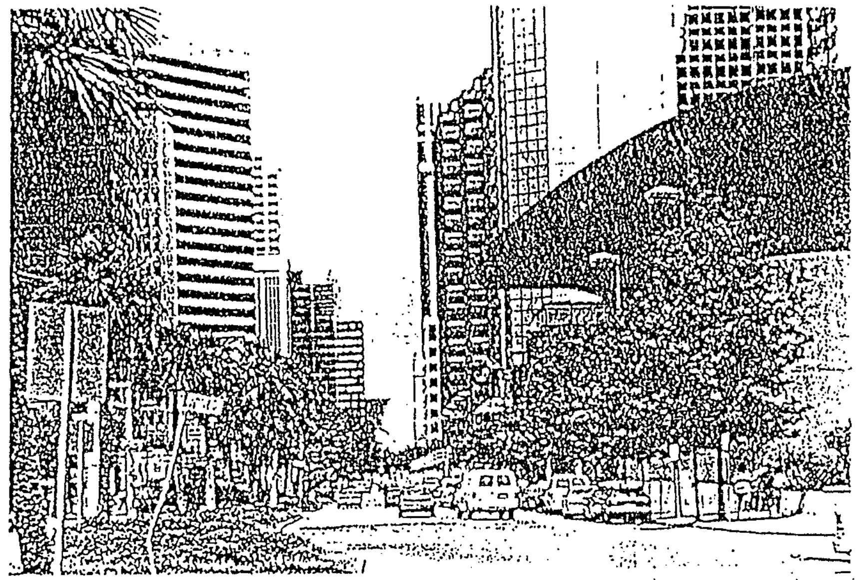


Fig. 3 View of Poydras Street office corridor with a glimpse of the angled sides of the Louisiana superdome in the background. The structure in the right foreground is the proposed site of the world's largest casino

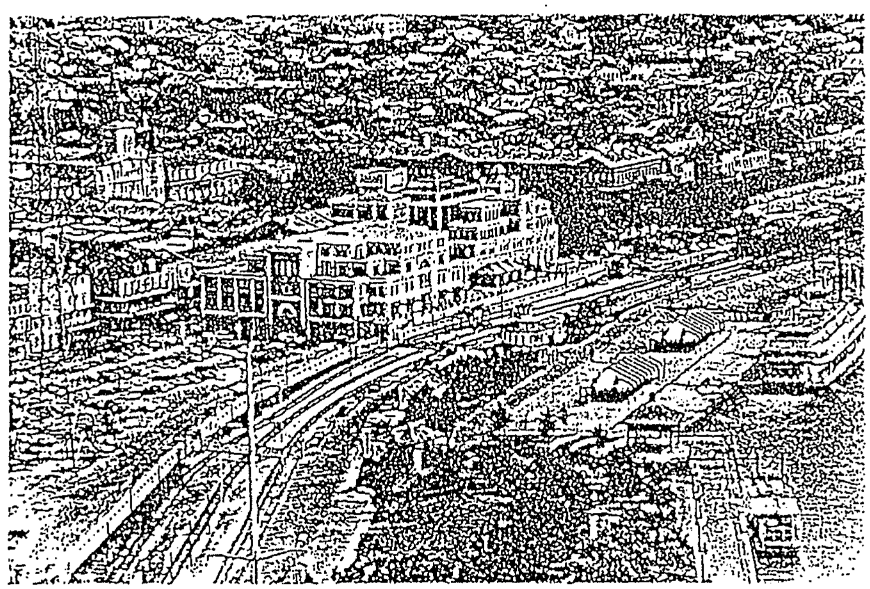


Fig 4 Mississippi riverfront development in the Vieux Carre. Woldenberg Park in the foreground was formerly a covered wharf structure and now connects the new Aquarium of the Americas (not visible, in lower foreground) with Jackson Square and Jackson Brewery, a festival market place (at upper centre)

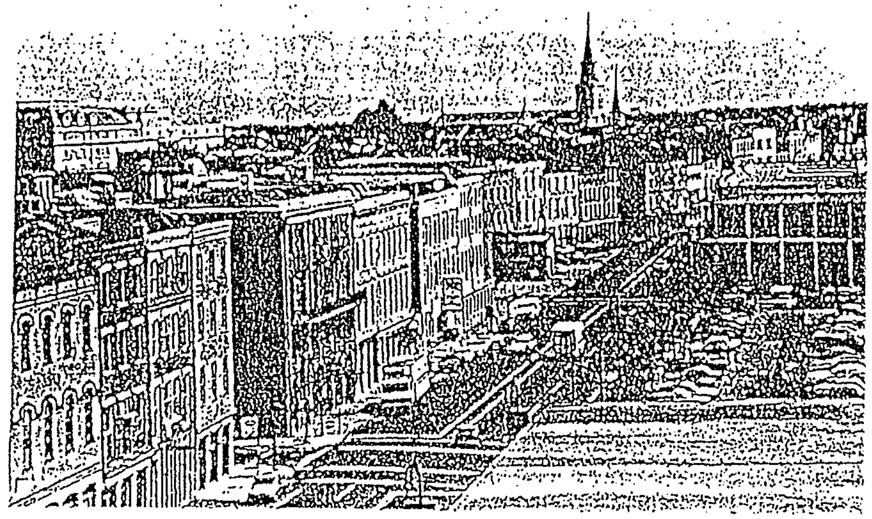


Fig. 5 Decatur Street in the Vieux Carre. The character of the street has gradually changed from heavily industrial to tourist-orientated as surrounding developments such as the Jackson Brewery have emerged

Today nine local historic districts are in place to protect the architectural heritage of the city. Four of these districts are located in the downtown area. In November 1985, a major preservation coup took place with the establishment of the nine-block-long Canal Street Historic District. Passed by the City Council over the objection of some property owners, the district along the main shopping street is a rarity among large American cities.[21]

Early application of the historic district status made possible the renovation of numerous buildings in the Lafayette Square and Warehouse Districts. Investment tax credits were widely used to convert warehouses into offices and residential buildings. Along Canal Street, construction of the Meridian Hotel was modified to conform with the historic façades adjacent to it. This was a much more successful treatment than the massive Sheraton Hotel façade on Canal Street approved prior to enactment of the historic district.

Major changes since the GMP, 1975–1985

During the decade following acceptance of the GMP, great changes occurred to the physical face of New Orleans. Between 1975 and 1985, downtown New Orleans experienced its greatest building boom since the city's commercial heyday in the 1850s.[22] Office space more than doubled, from 7.7 million square feet in 1975 to over 16 million square feet in 1985, with approximately 90000 downtown employees. A major impetus to office development was the transformation of Poydras Street, where alone more than six million square feet of office space was constructed during the decade. This office space was built to serve as regional headquarters for the petrochemical industry (which experienced a major boom in the early 1980s) and the service industries.

New Orleans also experienced a significant growth in its tourist and convention trade, and the construction of hotels kept pace with that growth. According to the New Orleans Tourist Commission (1990), the number of hotel rooms increased from 4750 in 1960 to 10686 in 1975 and 19500 rooms in 1985. The number of conventions in New Orleans increased from 764 in 1976, with 481 000 delegates, to 1092 in 1985, with 770243 delegates. By 1989, New Orleans hosted 1360 conventions with over one million delegates. According to the Louisiana Travel Profile, the number of tourists to the New Orleans area increased from approximately 6.5 million in 1975 to more than eleven million in 1989. By the mid-1980s, tourism was seen as a $2.5 billion business for the metropolitan area, with much of the industry located in downtown New Orleans.

During the decade, land use changes along the downtown riverfront area were dramatic. The 1984 World's Fair, located downtown on an 82-acre site along the Mississippi River, spurred riverfront development. The Fair took an area of railroad yards and warehouses (only some of which were abandoned) and converted it into a concentration of retail, hotel and cultural facilities. The publicly-financed New Orleans Convention Centre, originally the Fair's Louisiana Pavilion, opened in early 1985 with 350000 square feet of exhibition space. Taking advantage of the groundwork laid by the Fair, the Rouse Company opened Riverwalk in 1986, a 180000 square foot speciality marketplace adjacent to the convention centre along the river.

To see the extent to which the changes occurring downtown during this decade of growth meshed with the recommendations of the GMP, we can look at four of the major areas downtown: Poydras Street, Canal Street, the riverfront area, and the Warehouse District.

POYDRAS STREET

Poydras Street has served the purpose envisioned for it in the GMP (i.e. as a major spine for high-density growth downtown). High-density uses abound along the length of the street, including some significant multi-use developments such as the complex of buildings next to the Superdome known as Poydras Plaza. Along Poydras, more than six million square feet of office space was constructed during the decade; today office buildings along Poydras account for over 20 per cent of the total downtown office inventory. Poydras became known as the oil industry corridor, with office buildings serving the regional headquarters of Amoco, Shell, Texaco, Exxon, Gulf and Chevron. Three major chain hotels (Hilton, Hyatt and Holiday Inn) were developed along the street, as was the complex of federal buildings.

CANAL STREET

During the ten years following publication of the GMP, Canal Street retained its viability as the retail core of New Orleans. However, declining economic conditions and a greater reliance on tourism for the city's economic base caused major shifts in the market and in the pattern of retailing. By 1985 eighty per cent of all retail sales within the CBD, including Canal Street, came from the 4.5 million annual tourists, conventioneers and downtown office workers, with only 20 per cent from traditional shoppers. Canal Street was no longer a cohesive retail core serving the needs of the overall metropolitan population. Instead, three distinctly different segments of the street emerged—each with its unique retail characteristics and market.

The most prominent change was on lower Canal Street adjacent to the riverfront. Construction of the third phase of the Canal Place multi-use development, containing an upscale retail mall (with tenants including Brooks Brothers and Saks Fifth Avenue) brought higher-income shoppers and tourists to Canal Street.

The segment of the street containing the large traditional department stores suffered during this period, with the closing of the Sears downtown store and the temporary closure of the Maison Blanche department store during a corporate reorganisation. Smaller retailers relying on the draw of the larger stores were also negatively affected, and a number of lower-end discount jewellery and electronics stores moved into the area.

The upper end of Canal adjacent to Claiborne Avenue experienced the greatest deterioration in the ten-year time span. While Krauss Department Store remained, Texaco moved its headquarters from that end of Canal to Poydras Street. Many land parcels were used for surface parking and rental car lots.

Four major hotels are found along Canal: the Marriott which is pre-GMP, the Sheraton, Le Meridien, and the Clarion (which is a renovated hotel that predates the GMP). With the exception of the hotels and Canal Place, zoning has managed to push high-rise developments to Poydras and thus retain the low scale of Canal Street.

WAREHOUSE DISTRICT

By the end of 1985, smaller-scale developments and adaptive re-use of existing warehouses, spurred in large part by the 1984 World's Fair, were much in evidence in this historic area. By the early-1980s, the nature of the district was changing, from port- and service-related industries towards commercial and residential uses. New residential units added to the district through conversions of warehouses began to create a new residential neighbourhood adjacent to the CBD. The investment tax credits put in place in 1981 made possible this transformation. By 1985, Julia Place Apartments, with 101 units, were opened, and three more large projects (Federal Fibre Mills, 700 South Peters, and Magazine Place) were under way.

Other elements contributing to the growth of this new neighbourhood included the new art galleries, cafes and restaurants. The second floor of the Dixie Art Supply Building was renovated to house the new Louisiana Children's Museum. Efforts were also under way for the retention of several nightclubs remaining from the 1984 World's Fair. This emerging neighbourhood was geared to serve the market of young professionals (both single and married) working downtown.

RIVERFRONT

First the 1984 World's Fair and then the convention centre, which opened in early 1985, brought the riverfront into prominence. In late 1985 the Rouse Riverwalk opened, having been constructed above wharves used for the Fair. This Rouse project represented the first time that the Dock Board had given a long-term lease of its air rights over the wharves for non-maritime uses. Similar to other Rouse projects in Baltimore and Boston, Riverwalk incorporated an enclosed multi-level festival market place along with outdoor facilities on the refurbished Spanish Plaza at the foot of Poydras Street and the Mississippi River. By 1985, plans were under way for a riverfront streetcar to tie together the major development complexes along the river's edge.

Post-1985 *changes downtown*

New Orleans' strategy for revitalising its downtown seemed to succeed between 1975 and 1985, the first ten years of the growth management programme. Changes that have occurred downtown since 1985 have shown how short-lived such success can be, and helped to put in sharper focus the kinds of problems associated with the 'corporate-centre strategy' adopted by New Orleans. The year 1985 was an important one for downtown New Orleans for two major reasons. It of course marked the end of the first decade of the GMP. During that time many of the stated goals of the GMP were met. High-intensity development was directed to specified areas, leaving other more historic areas free for renovation and re-use. Under-utilised areas were brought into commercial activity. Public resources, in terms of federal dollars (especially UDAG and CDBG funds) and DDD/city-financed infrastructure improvements, were used to benefit downtown business interests. The physical and social face of New Orleans changed. All of this was achieved with a modicum of expressed controversy or protest from neighbourhood groups. However, groups in surrounding neighbourhoods, especially in the French Quarter and the Lower Garden District, began organising to forestall the expected negative impacts from a higher-density downtown on the integrity of their residential areas.

The year 1985 was important for another reason, too. It was the first year that the impacts of the failing local economy were acutely felt downtown. The construction boom occasioned by the World's Fair and the opening of the convention centre came to a halt. Few new developments were on line. Retail sales dropped and stores closed. Oil companies retrenched, laying off employees and leaving behind a glut of office space. By 1990, there was a 25.3 per cent vacancy rate in Class A office space on Poydras Street. Without the impressive economic growth of the late 1970s and early 1980s, it became obvious that the strategy being pursued would result in major losers, even among downtown actors.

Of the four major areas downtown, Poydras and Canal have been the hardest hit, with the riverfront and the warehouse area still maintaining a degree of vibrancy, but with a fair amount of controversy generated by neighbourhood groups. Specifically, between 1986 and 1993 we find the following changes.

POYDRAS STREET

During the latter part of the 1980s, new office buildings continued to be constructed along the Poydras Corridor, including the Louisiana Land & Exploration building and the Consolidated Natural Gas Tower. This new construction occurred at a time when the oil industry was undergoing a major consolidation of regional offices. Shell Oil and Amoco, for example, transferred over 1200 employees from their downtown offices in 1990. This contributed greatly to a downtown office 'glut'. For example, overall CBD occupancy dropped from 75.6 per cent at the end of the third quarter in 1989 to 70.7 per cent at the third quarter in 1990.[23] CBD Class A vacancy rates rose from nearly 18 per cent in the third quarter of 1989 to nearly 25 per cent for the same period in 1990. By 1992, there had been some improvement, with vacancy rates dropping slightly to 21.9 per cent.[24]

The opening of the New Orleans Centre by Edward J. DeBartelo in 1988 increased competition for the high end retail market downtown. New Orleans Centre is anchored by Macy's and Lord & Taylor. While this development decision brought new national chain stores into the region, it did so at the expense of established retailers on Canal Street. The DeBartelo decision was in direct opposition to the original GMP recommendations which stated that 'the Retail Core should remain on Canal Street and not be undermined by competition nearby'.[25]

CANAL STREET

Since 1985, Canal Street has continued to decline. A major indicator of this decline was the loss of D. H. Holmes, the oldest retail establishment on the street and the anchor for surrounding stores. D. H. Holmes was bought by the Dillard's chain out of Arkansas. A major outcry from the citizens of New Orleans did not keep Dillard's from closing the Canal Street store and opening one in the DeBartelo development, New Orleans Centre. Several other locally-owned retail establishments have closed in recent years, unable during a depressed economy to withstand the competition from the newly-arrived national chains. Most of the chains cluster at the river end of Canal, leaving large stretches of the street either boarded up or selling inexpensive goods. The upper end of Canal Street is still anchored by Krauss department store and the refurbished Saenger Theatre, which hosts live musical productions.

Recent proposals have centred on encouraging residential use of the vacant upper floors of retail buildings. Plans are under way for the D. H. Holmes building to become a mixed-use development, to include a 241-room hotel and 101 apartments. To do so will require a $5.6 million federal and city loan.[26] The DDD has established a committee to look into ways of encouraging the use of the vacant land along the upper end of Canal Street to serve the needs of the nearby medical complex anchored by the Medical Centre of Louisiana (formerly Charity Hospital) and the medical schools of Louisiana State University (LSU) and Tulane University. Expansion of existing medical facilities, construction of housing for medical personnel, and the attraction of medical-related businesses are seen by the DDD-sponsored committee as a means of tapping into the currently $1.3 billion economic base of the medical community for revitalisation of this section of the street.

Other revitalisation efforts are aimed at bringing more pedestrian traffic back to Canal Street. One proposal centres on the establishment of a downtown theatre district. This would build upon the popularity presently being enjoyed by the Saenger Theatre, which hosts live musical productions, as well as the Orpheum Theatre and the State Palace Theatre (formerly Lowe's State), which now host live entertainment. Even if these or other plans for the revitalisation of Canal Street are realised, the street would no longer be what it once was—a retail core that responded to the needs of a cross-section of the New Orleans population.

WAREHOUSE DISTRICT

Residential conversions of warehouses have continued at a rapid pace. There are currently twelve major residential conversions with over 960 units and approximately 1500 residents bringing mainly young professionals back into the downtown area. A neighbourhood association has been created to represent the interests of these new downtown residents. A significant number of art galleries and related activities have opened in the area, so much so that in 1989 the area was designated as the 'arts and cultural sector' in official city planning documents. This designation stops short of a proposal by the Arts Council of New Orleans for the downtown area to become an official Arts and Cultural District. The Arts Council proposed such a district in order to enhance the image of downtown as well as to provide mechanisms to ensure a variety of uses in the area and enhance their compatibility.[27] As it is now, commercial uses and residential use in the warehouse district are often at odds, and artists (who have lived in the area for years) are being squeezed out of the district because of escalating rents. To remedy the plight of artists in the warehouse area, the Arts Council has shepherded into the city's economic development plans a (still unfunded) Artists' Guild, which would transform an existing warehouse space into sales, studio and living facilities for artists.

RIVERFRONT

Developments along the riverfront corridor have continued. The $40 million Aquarium of the Americas and Woldenberg Park at the foot of Canal Street opened in September 1990. This project, funded through a $25 million bond issue by the city along with $15 million in private contributions, is operated by a private, non-profit organisation that also runs the zoo uptown. The aquarium has succeeded at being a major family tourist attraction. The siting of the aquarium on the riverfront at the edge of the French Quarter provoked a storm of protest by preservationists who charged that the increased density of activity spilling over from the aquarium would harm the distinctive character of the Quarter. The preservationists' protests were muted by the official response from City Hall that the aquarium would mean enhanced economic activity for New Orleans.

The aquarium backers, with support from city officials, have continued to offer plans for much of the remainder of the downtown riverfront.[28] This property is under the jurisdiction of the port authority and, while most of it is still in maritime use, it is likely to be available for other uses within the next five years. In 1990 the Dock Board adopted a policy which stated that riverfront lands would be turned over for other uses a) after suitable maritime wharves and facilities have been developed elsewhere, and b) after a credible community-based master plan has been developed for the use of the riverfront land.[29]

The City Planning Commission (CPC) has adopted a plan for the riverfront, but it has still not been officially adopted by the City Council. However, implementation of proposed developments is already overtaking the CPC's recommended uses for the riverfront. In 1991 the state passed legislation authorising the development of a single land-based casino in New Orleans. The mayor and the casino developer have already worked out a deal that would create the world's largest casino, at the foot of Canal Street. The City Council approved the deal, but in preparation for their decision, they held public meetings. The concerns of preservationists and those who preferred to have a master plan for downtown in place before a decision on a casino was reached, were drowned by those who supported a casino because of the promised 25000 jobs. Also expected to impact on Canal Street and the riverfront is the state legislature's decision in 1990 to allow gambling boats on the Mississippi River. The first boat expected to begin operation in 1994 is a 400-foot paddle-wheeler near the foot of Canal Street next to the Hilton Hotel.

A $114 million expansion to the New Orleans Convention Centre was completed in 1991. At 820000 square feet, the New Orleans Convention Centre is now the eighth largest in the country and houses major events. But to keep up with demand, a report issued by the convention centre says it will have to be expanded again by 1996 to approximately 1000000 square feet. Where cargo wharves once walled off the riverfront from the public, today the riverfront is being walled off by the mammoth convention centre. Additional riverfront developments since 1985 include the luxury condominium development One River Place, which brought residential use to the riverfront for the first time, but had to be scaled back a number of times due to the sagging economy, and the Delta Queen Steamboat Terminal, another major tourist attraction. Tying these and other riverfront projects together is the Riverfront Streetcar Line, which was opened in 1988, in time for the Republican National Convention.

In an attempt the better to understand the changes that have occurred to the downtown area since 1985, the DDD recently commissioned four studies. The first was the GMP Update, completed in June 1987.[30] The update added five new goals to the original 11 in the 1975 study. Two of these had to do with: 1) protecting and reinforcing the traditional retail functions of Canal Street; and 2) increasing the range of residential opportunities in rehabilitated, renovated and new buildings in the downtown. The update noted that 'office and hotel development have overwhelmingly dominated growth since 1975 and the downtown could be in danger of becoming a sterile 9 to 5 center if residential objectives are not soon achieved'.[31] To encourage residential growth, particularly in the warehouse area, the authors of the update recommended the use of development incentives as well as improved zoning regulations. The study also warned that retention of the residential character of the French Quarter and protection of its fragile historic character in the face of continued tourism is also essential.

The second study, completed by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in April 1989, evaluated revitalisation strategies for Canal Street.[32] One of the main recommendations of the panel was to increase the amount of new and rehabilitated housing on Canal Street (using the upper floors of a number of buildings on the street) and to add convenience-type retail on Canal. The panel also noted that the presence of the Iberville community, 3000 residents who live in public housing right off Canal Street, should be viewed positively as a steady source of consumers for Canal Street. The ULI panel echoed the recommendations of the Iberville Housing Development Task Force (1989) which recommended that the Iberville community be stabilised and not displaced.

Before the release of the third study, the Iberville Housing Study, commissioned by the DDD and the city in 1988, some DDD board members and other downtown leaders had called for the removal of the Iberville tenants so that the buildings (built in the 1940s and still in good structural condition) could be rehabilitated for upscale condominiums. Since the ULI study and the Iberville Housing Study were released, calls for the re-use of Iberville have been muted but have not disappeared completely. The DDD still has not addressed adequately the needs of its low-income residents or consumers. The DDD has pledged to get more involved in residential development in the district. To date, however, most of the housing development in the CBD has been accomplished without DDD support, and residents feel they have been short-changed in favour of business interests.

A fourth study was released in November 1992, when a Strategic Action Plan for the Warehouse District/Lafayette Square area was completed by the national consulting firm of Hammer, Siler, George Associates. The study proposed rezoning of the area to promote residential development and to limit the negative effects of the convention centre expansion and proposed land and riverboat casino.[33]

Conclusion

City officials have turned increasingly towards tourism as the source of growth for the economy. Traditionally, the city relied almost totally on oil and gas products, but the bottom had fallen out of that industry by the mid-1980s. Over 27000 jobs were lost between 1984 and 1988 in the metropolitan area. While government leaders now talk about the need to diversify the economy, promoting tourism has become their major priority. For example, in 1986 the public, at the urging of political, business and civic leaders, voted to use public funds to finance a new aquarium downtown; that same year the public voted against additional millages for police and public schools. The police were left understaffed, the schools poorly financed, and city staff were cut by 20 per cent.

Most of the major new tourist facilities are being built downtown, close to the convention centre. Public resources continue to flow to the CBD area. A recent study of Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) projects in New Orleans found that the ratio of neighbourhood to non-neighbourhood projects was 1:4. Of the non-neighbourhood projects, 88 per cent of the funds were spent in the CBD (i.e. $28.2 million).[34]

While attention has been focused on downtown development and business retention efforts, decline has continued in adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

With little public money available to assist in dealing with this neighbourhood decline, non-profit groups such as the Preservation Resource Centre (PRC) and Trinity Episcopal Church have initiated programmes to improve low- and moderate-income housing in designated target neighbourhoods. The Operation Comeback project of the PRC has as its goal the encouragement of moderate-income home ownership in a 24-block area adjacent to the warehouse district.[35] By the end of 1992, 24 properties had been renovated and placed in the hands of first-time home-owners, and an additional 140 properties were renovated for their elderly and/or disadvantaged home-owners. Trinity Church has begun a companion effort to upgrade public scattered site housing in the area. Together, these pilot programmes are helping to support the community's overall effort to upgrade the housing stock while strengthening the residential neighbourhoods of downtown New Orleans.

During the time period under discussion here, it is clear that there has been an enduring coalition between political leaders and business interests geared towards promoting growth in downtown New Orleans. In so doing, the urban space has been reshaped: high-rise office and commercial towers now house national hotel and retail chains and regional headquarters for selected industries. While attempts have been made to maintain historic areas, especially the French Quarter and the warehouse district, the increasing emphasis on tourist development downtown is presenting major challenges to historic integrity. These challenges are especially apparent along the riverfront, which has become a prime attraction for tourist facilities, including the convention centre, the aquarium, and the proposed casino and gambling boats.

The political leaders' enthusiasm to support the tourism industry downtown has led to more and more decisions about the economic future of New Orleans being made by private developers. These decisions are not always in keeping with the city's officially-sanctioned plans, as the location of the DeBartelo shopping complex attests. As the urban geography of downtown becomes more settled, the public sector's role has become less interventionist, so much so that the present mayor has said that economic development planning (for the city as well as for downtown) should be done outside City Hall.[36]

During this period when the face of downtown New Orleans was changing dramatically, the Downtown Development District served well its function of insulating policy and planning decisions for the downtown area from public scrutiny. There has been little debate on what the function and role of the CBD should be in the economic life of the city. Even as resources have become scarcer as the city copes with a major fiscal crisis, little discussion has centred on the fact that the downtown area is getting additional benefits at the expense of surrounding neighbourhoods. How tax dollars should be assessed and distributed is not a part of the political debate.

The attempts to create a vibrant downtown, relatively successful during the economic boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s and quite tenuous during the economic downturn of the mid- to late 1980s, led to a few winners and many losers. The losers included many locally-owned businesses, residents in neighbourhoods adjacent to the CBD, workers in the lower end of the tourist industries, and taxpayers. Clearly, downtown development has not resulted in benefits being distributed to a wide variety of economic groups throughout the community. Yet more and more resources continue to be provided to the CBD as the city attempts to pursue its city centre strategy of encouraging tourists and conventions to come to New Orleans and service sector businesses to locate downtown. As the competition for resources grows keener, we must wonder what this private face of politics will do to the fabric of the society.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 See Goodman, Paul, *The Last Entrepreneurs: America's Regional War for Jobs and Dollars*, Boston, South End Press, 1979.

2 See Elkin, Stephen L., 'Twentieth Century Urban Regimes', *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Spring 1985, pp. 11–28; Elkin, Stephen L., *City and Regime in the American Republic*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1989; Fainstein, Susan and Fainstein, Norman I., 'Regime Strategies, Communal Resistance, and Economic Forces' in Fainstein, Susan et al. (eds.), *Restructuring the City: The Political Economy of Urban Development*, New York and London, Longman, 1983, pp. 266–82; Peterson, Paul E., *City Limits*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1981; and Stone, Clarence, and Sanders, Heywood T. (eds.), *The Politics of Urban Development*, Lawrence, KS, University of Kansas Press, 1987.

3 See Elkin, 1985 and 1989, op. cit., N2; Mollenkopf, John H., *The Contested City*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983; Peterson, op. cit., N2; Stone, Clarence N., 'Summing Up: Urban Regimes, Development Policy, and Political Arrangements' in Stone and Sanders (eds.), op. cit., N2, pp. 291–98.

4 Hill, Richard Child, 'Crisis in the Motor City' in Fainstein, Susan et al. (eds.), op. cit., N2, pp. 80–125; Feagin, Joe R., 'Corporate Center Strategy: The State in Central Cities', *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, June 1986, pp. 617–28; and Robinson, Carla Jean, 'Municipal Approaches to Economic Development: Growth and Distribution Policy', *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Summer 1989, pp. 283–95.

5 See Robinson, op. cit., N4, pp. 285–86.

6 Ibid., p. 286.

7 See Hill, op. cit., N4, p. 105.

8 See, for example, Fainstein and Fainstein, op. cit., N2.

9 See Stoker, Robert P., 'Baltimore: The Self-Evaluating City?' in Stone and Sanders (eds.), op. cit., N2, pp. 244–66.

10 See Elkin, 1989, op. cit., N2.

11 Quoted in Tabb, William K., 'Urban Development and Regional Restructuring: An Overview' in Sawers, Larry and Tabb, William K. (eds.), *Sunbelt/Snowbelt: Urban Development and Regional Restructuring*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984, p. 4; see also Feagin, Joe R. and Smith, Michael Peter, 'Cities and the New International Division of Labor: An Overview' in Smith, Michael Peter and Feagin, Joe R. (eds.), *The Capitalist City: Global Restructuring and Community Politics*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1987, pp. 81–102; and Hill, op. cit., N4.

12 See Fainstein and Fainstein, op. cit., N2, p. 20.

13 See Whelan, Robert K., 'New Orleans: Mayoral Politics and Economic Development, 1945–1986' in Stone and Sanders (eds.), op. cit., N2, pp. 216–29; and Whelan, Robert K. and Young, Alma H., 'New Orleans: The Ambivalent City' in Savitch, H. V. and Thomas, John Clayton (eds.), *Big City Politics in Transition*, Newbury Park, CA, Sage, 1991, pp. 132–48.

14 See Katz, Allan, 'Tourism Pays Dome's Way', *Times-Picayune/States Item*, 16 January 1983.

15 See Baumbach, Richard and Borah, William, *The Second Battle of New Orleans: A History of the Vieux Carre Riverfront Expressway Controversy*, University of Alabama Press, 1981.

16 See Brown, Janet G., *Economic Revitalization of the CBD: A Case Study of New Orleans, 1965–82* (Master's Thesis), New Orleans, University of New Orleans, July 1982.

17 Personal interview with Warren Moses, Member of the Board, Downtown Development District, 20 March 1982.

18 See Hanes, Lundberg and Waehler, *Implementation Strategy, Program and Zoning Law for the City of New Orleans Central Business District*, New Orleans, HLW, 1976.

19 Personal interview with Robert Becker, Director of the New Orleans City Planning Commission, 25 April 1984.

20 Ibid

21 See National Trust for Historic Preservation, *Preservation News*, 18 January 1985, p 3.

22 See Downtown Development District, *Report on Downtown New Orleans*, New Orleans, DDD, 1987.

23 Plume, Janet, 'Vacancies Hit New High in the CBD', *Times-Picayune*, 24 November 1990, p. E-1.

24 See *Times-Picayune*, 20 January 1993, p. D-4.

25 See Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd, *The Central Area New Orleans Growth Management Program: Technical Report*, Philadelphia, PA, MRT, 1975, p. 40.

26 See Eggler, Bruce, 'Holmes Hotel Conversion Could Begin by April 1', *Times-Picayune*, 15 January 1993, p. A-1.

27 See Arts Council of New Orleans, *Plan for a New Orleans Arts and Cultural Sector*, New Orleans, Arts Council of New Orleans, 1989.

28 See Young, Alma H. and Whelan, Robert K., 'Strategic Planning for the Port of New Orleans' in Meyer, Peter B. (ed.), *Comparative Studies in Local Economic Development: Problems in Policy Implementation*, Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 1993, pp. 131–48.

29 See Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans, *New Orleans Riverfront in Transition. A 'Citizens' Mandate for Planning*, New Orleans, Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans, June 1990.

30 See Wallace, Roberts and Todd, *New Orleans: Growth Management Plan Update*, Philadelphia, PA, WRT, 1987.

31 Ibid., p. 6.

32 See Urban Land Institute, *Canal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana: An Evaluation of Revitalizing Strategies for the City of New Orleans and the Downtown Development District*, Washington DC, ULI, 1989.

33 See Eggler, Bruce, 'Warehouse District Rezoning Proposed', *Times-Picayune*, 17 November 1992, p. B-1.

34 See Spraul, Janet, 'The Use of UDAG and CDBG Funds in New Orleans' (Seminar paper in URBN 6130), New Orleans, College of Urban and Public Affairs, University of New Orleans, Spring 1989.

35 See Brooks, Jane S. and Miranne, Kristine B., 'Non-profit Leadership in Rebuilding Neighborhoods: The Case of the PRC's "Operation Comeback" Project in New Orleans' (Paper presented at the 31st Annual Meeting of ACSP), Portland, Oregon, 4–7 October 1989.

36 See Whelan and Young, op. cit., N13.

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIC DESIGN
UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

WORKING PAPERS
A Select List

P. W. J. BATEY, M. MADDEN and M. J. WEEKS (1977), Household Income and Expenditure in Extended Input-Output Models: A Comparative Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, WP32, 29pp., £3.00

P. W. J. BATEY and M. J. WEEKS (1988), The Effects of Household Disaggregation in Extended Input-Output Models, WP36, 33pp., £3.00

MATS LARSSON (1989), The History of Regional Policy in Britain and Sweden: A Comprehensive Study of the Link between Economic Theory and Political Decisions, WP37, 84pp., £6.50

PETER J. B. BROWN (1990), The Development of Liverpool Airport: Imaginative Leap or Flight of Fancy?, WP38, 27pp., £2.50

TONY SORENSON and MARK AUSTER (1990), Urban Planning as a Conservative Task, WP39, 47pp., £4.00

ASHOK KUMAR (1991), The Development of the Notion of Efficiency in Local Government of the Metropolitan Areas of England since 1974, WP40, 36pp., £3.50

OSAMA M. A. RAHMAN (1991), Design Evaluation and Design Stimulation in Visual Impact Analysis and Assessment, WP42, 37pp., £3.50

SUE KIDD and ASHOK KUMAR (1992), Development Planning in the English Metropolitan Counties: A Comparison of Performance under Two Planning Systems, WP44, 20pp., £2.50

ASHOK KUMAR (1992), Organisational Analysis of the Planning Function: A Case Study of the English Metropolitan Districts, WP45, 25pp., £2.50

SUE KIDD and PAUL FITZPATRICK (1992), Liverpool: Economy, Environment and Health, WP46, 49pp., £4.00

LEONID LIMONOV (1992), Economic Problems in St Petersburg and Problems of Urban Development, WP47, 42pp., £2.50

For a full list, write to Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool, PO Box 147, Liverpool, L69 3BX, UK

CANAL STREET...... 2000

A Revitalization Strategy
&
Tenant Mix Plan

Prepared By Economics Research Associates
For The Downtown Development District
August 1990

- The 400 block of the Vieux Carre side of the street is the old Customs House. It is our recommendation that the concept of that has already been developed. The international street bizarre in a Fanveil Hall-type of setting, be pursued as a top priority. This block is one of the key linking blocks on the street. On the other side of the street is an odd mix of users including the Sanlin Office Building, the Alright Parking Lot and some other marginal uses. A few existing activities appear to be operating reasonably viably. However, over the long term, we envision this property as a redevelopment block and recommend that no substantial effort be put into this block at the time. The site has marginal buildings and vacant land which ultimately should have a more intense use.

- 500 block -- On each side of the street are the Sheraton and Marriott Hotels. We suggest that the D.D.D. begin to work with each of these hotels and implement a sidewalk cafe concept. This does not need to be an extensive undertaking. Rather, it could be an effort in which each of the hotels picks a foreign theme (Italian, Swiss, English, German) and serve up a faire that revolves around the drinks and the quick sandwiches of the selected nationality.

- 600 block -- The Le Meridian Restaurant is on the CBD side of the street. It and the small amount of retail near it should not be changed. However, given the French management of the hotel, we would recommend a French sidewalk cafe with drinks and snacks such as croques monsieur, croissants, and salade nicoise. On the Vieux Carre side of the street, we would recommend that spaces five, six, nine and ten remain as they are, and that the space in seven and eight be targeted for a family restaurant like a Baker's Square. The spaces in 11 through 14 should be targeted for either children's merchandise or children's toys.

- 700 block -- On the central business district side of the street, we see two key types of changes. In spaces 22 and 23, a housewares type of store such as a Crate & Barrel, and in space 28, a quality women's boutique, preferably one that is owned and managed by a local business. On the Vieux Carre side, we would suggest the following -- in spaces 15 through 17, a quality women's fashion store like an Ann Taylor, and in spaces 21 through 22, some arts and crafts stores. For example, art glass has become a popular art form in recent years and would be appropriate for this location. It should be noted that the 700 block of the Vieux Carre side was dealt with in the A.I.A. Planning Charette, which

Marilyn,

I have read the documents attached to your email and provide the following response to your requested two items:

1. I do not believe that the first statement "*The historic properties will have a percentage of the elements of their façade and/or structure retained but cannot be completely restored or renovated to the Secretary of the Interior's standards (i.e. Historic Tax Credit Standards) and still satisfy developer's programmatic requirements.* " is correct. I believe it has been demonstrated and discussed in our meetings that the historic buildings can be saved and renovated to the Secretary of the Interior's standards and fit into the project parameters.

2. I do not support the project moving forward without incorporating the historic buildings. I am willing to compromise some on the amount and degree that the interiors are preserved but feel it is vital that the feel and fabric of these structures and their historic finishes both interior and exterior be part of the project.

Ashton

sent via email.

source information:

from:	**Ashton B. Avegno, Jr.** <avegno1@att.net>
to:	"Marilyn B. Wood" <mbwood@nola.gov>, ttrahan@trahanarchitects.com, cadler@adlersjewelry.com, lferguson@downtownnola.com, LaToya Cantrell <lcantrell@nola.gov>, tjames@mathesbrierre.com, shlatter@gmail.com,

	scott@cbdlofts.com, mherman@hhklawfirm.com, laboulware@gmail.com, mkimball@prcno.org, janietblackmon@yahoo.com, Scott@trinionpro.com, bruce@boulwarepartners.com
cc:	"John D. Pourciau" <jdpourciau@nola.gov>, Bryon Cornelison <bscornelison@nola.gov>, Kurt Weigle <kweigle@neworleansdowntown.com>, pwischermann@wischermannpartners.com
date:	Fri, Oct 3, 2014 at 9:50 AM
subject:	RE: 400 Canal Street Working Group Summary Meeting Tomorrow
signed-by:	att.net
:	Important mainly because of your interaction with messages in the conversation.

Councilmember Cantrell

Monday October 20, 2014

RE: 400 Canal Street

Dear Councilmember Cantrell,

The Preservation Resource Center Board would like to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to brief us on the discussions taking place regarding the development proposal for 400 Canal Street. We also recognize and appreciate the time you and your staff have invested to try to arrive at an acceptable solution for the development of the 400 block. We do agree with you that these properties that have been assembled by the owners over the last 13 years have remained an eyesore under his ownership.

At this time the Preservation Resource Center remains opposed to any development proposal that requires excessive waivers of height, density or that involve the demolition of any of the historic properties. This is not to say that we are totally opposed to any variance but as of this date no proposal has been put forward that we can consider.

As we have stated, we appreciate your working groups effort but believe that some of the initial "givens" should not be accepted, specifically that the developer's initial program must be met or exceeded.

It should be noted that the developer acquired the properties aware of the zoning in place at the time. Since that time the City has gone through extensive planning sessions that all residents and concerned parties were invited to. The purpose of this was to shape a vision for the future of the city, and to create a Master Plan to guide that vision. The citizens voted that this Master Plan have the force of Law. Over the last several years the City Planning Department has been working on a new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance that supports the Master Plan's vision. Several draft versions have been released and public meetings held. To the best of our knowledge and belief, neither the developers nor any representative attended any of these meetings or voiced any desire as to how this property should be zoned. Now they present a development plan that is completely contrary to all of the planning completed and ask for huge variances. Your working group is told that they must "meet or exceed developer's program..." The PRC cannot accept that premise.

Like you, the PRC would like to see this block developed, but in a way that preserves the historic properties and that adds and strengthens our unique character. While we appreciate the owners desire to develop a hotel we believe that given the owners control of the block that a hotel development can be economically accomplished on the existing site, with new construction and incorporating all of the historic properties including the Sanlin buildings.

There are likely many other economically viable development options ranging from a smaller hotel utilizing new construction on the parking lot and some or none of the historic properties. Retail uses should also be considered as it is our understanding that national retailers would welcome the opportunity to locate on Canal Street.

To conclude the PRC is concerned that granting a conditional use for a hotel on this site that greatly exceeds the allowable height is allowing this developer to dictate our zoning process, a process he chose not to participate in. No individual should be granted such excessive allowances simply because he wants his way. It makes a mockery of and corrupts the whole process and brings the city back to "Thursday morning zoning" which we have worked so hard since Katrina to prevent.

The Master Plan and the accompanying CZO were meant to bring a sense of predictability to our land use process for both the neighborhood and the developer. Neighbors should not be surprised by outlandish proposals and have to continually be fighting this sort of variance. It is a slippery slope and we appreciate the difficulty you have as a city representative who wants development but it cannot be development at any cost. All great cities of the world respect and preserve their past and have reasonable controls on development. We ask you to uphold the zoning and just say "no".

Sincerely and with best regards,

Stephen Kroll

From: Norm Rubenstein <rubenstein@CONSULTZG.COM>
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 3:55 PM
To: Robert D. Rivers
Cc: Stephen Kroll; Norm Rubenstein; Egan, Michelle
Subject: Proposed Hotel Development

Dear Mr. Rivers,

I know your files include a previous communication from Michelle Egan, with whom I live at 416 Common Street, and me; however, we wanted to reiterate our objection to the proposed hotel development at 400 Canal Street, the corner of Canal and Tchoupitoulas Streets, as currently designed. As we indicated in our earlier letter, we purchased our apartment at 416 Common because the building was lovingly developed with strict adherence to the City's historic preservation codes. The proposed development would destroy early nineteenth century buildings of historic significance to the CBD and New Orleans in general and violate height restrictions established to preserve the character and desirability of the neighborhood. As we understand the developer's position, he asserts that it would be too expensive for him to restore the existing structures and site a building that incorporates them appropriately into an enterprise that would foster effective economic development while achieving the City's time-honored preservation objectives.

The idea that economic development only can take place in the form of the hotel as proposed is a facile argument. A hotel could be developed, with all of the benefits that portends, including jobs creation, by redesigning the facility to respect the same regulations that the Bollingers observed when they developed 416 Common. We ask the City Commission to respect the HDLC veto of the project as proposed, and to mandate that any development on the site respect the criteria that responsible developers have made the foundation of a respectfully restored CBD.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Respectfully yours,

Norm Rubenstein and Michelle Egan
416 Common Street, #10
New Orleans, LA 70130

Stephen Kroll

From: Maury Herman <MHERMAN@hhklawfirm.com>
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 3:45 PM
To: Robert D. Rivers
Cc: Stephen Kroll; 'Liz Boulware'
Subject: FW: Zoning Docket 020/15 (103-111 Tchoupitoulas Street and 408-422 Canal Street)

Dear Mr. Rivers ,

I am one of the ten condo owners at 416 Common Street referred to in Lizabeth Boulware's email below. My letter to the HDLC on March 18, 2014 is included in the attachments. Unfortunately, almost nothing about this project of any major sort has changed which would/should allow its approval. I personally am not opposed to development of the subject property. But I am, without reservation, opposed to this development which not only seeks to bulldoze 4 historic buildings but at the same time the CZO also. The attitude of the developer and his team demonstrate complete insensitivity to the decades of hard work by our planners and thoughtful political leadership which has resulted in the unique residential and commercial character of our CBD and the adjacent historic neighborhoods. This project is unworthy of that history and represents a profound leap in wrong direction if it were approved. Please share this email and the attachments with the members and staff of the CPC.

Sincerely,

Maury A. Herman, Esq.
Herman, Herman & Katz, LLC
820 O'Keefe Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70113
Direct Dial: 504-680-0525

From: Liz Boulware [mailto:laboulware@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2015 2:45 PM
To: rdrivers@nola.gov
Cc: skroll@nola.gov
Subject: Zoning Docket 020/15 (103-111 Tchoupitoulas Street and 408-422 Canal Street)

Dear Mr. Rivers,

Michelle Kimball of the Preservation Resource Center advised that written comments concerning the captioned matter should be addressed to you with a copy to Mr. Kroll. I am President of the 416 Common Condominium Homeowners Association. Our ten homeowners occupy the building directly across Common Street from the proposed hotel at 400 Canal Street. While we would very much like to see a thoughtful development of that site (preserving the historic buildings and in compliance with zoning regulations), we are very much opposed to the project as designed.

At 250 feet, the building is more than three times the height limitation of 70 feet contained in both the current and draft CZOs. The four 1840s-era historic structures will be demolished except for the exterior facades of the three on Tchoupitoulas Street. The footprint is massive with only modest setback of the tower portion. The exterior design is generic. The entrance to the parking garage, loading dock and trash bins and the resulting noise and traffic will be directly across a very narrow Common Street from our living rooms and bedrooms.

Attached are (1) a letter to City Council members that we sent on April 8, (2) letters to Council members from each of our homeowners, (3) a transcript of the March 19 Historic District Landmarks Commission Meeting when the project as then designed was rejected and (4) an extract from the HDLC transcript with remarks from two of the commissioners prior to the vote to reject. All of this remains very relevant to the project as now proposed. The only changes have been some modification to the exterior façade, modest setback of the tower, retention of the three historic facades and elimination of a spire that was another 100 feet higher than the building. The height remains at 250 feet, and the footprint remains massive. The parking garage and service areas remain in the same location.

Continuation of the balance of residential and commercial development in the CBD and Warehouse District that has been achieved during the last 30 years is critical. This project as designed would destroy that balance for this neighborhood. New Orleans is the only southern city with a significant residential community in the center city resulting from that balance.

No evidence has been provided to support the developer's assertion that the property is "uniquely expensive", thereby requiring 350 hotel rooms to be financially viable. Many other financially viable projects have been and are being developed in the CBD and Warehouse District within the zoning and preservation rules. Despite many meetings during the past year attempting to find common ground, the size and design of the proposed hotel remain essentially the same as rejected by the HDLC with only the exterior facades of three of the four historic buildings retained.

We believe that approval of this project would set a precedent for further significant and inappropriate variances, both on Canal Street and throughout the city. The message sent would be that zoning and preservation are clearly flexible depending on financial and other demands of owners and developers.

We respectfully urge the City Planning Commission to reject this project. Please confirm receipt of this message.

Sincerely,

Lizabeth A. Boulware
President
416 Common Condominium Homeowners Association
416 Common Street, #6
New Orleans, LA 70130
Phone: 504.525.7718

Stephen Kroll

From:	Liz Boulware <laboulware@gmail.com>
Sent:	Monday, February 16, 2015 2:45 PM
To:	Robert D. Rivers
Cc:	Stephen Kroll
Subject:	Zoning Docket 020/15 (103-111 Tchoupitoulas Street and 408-422 Canal Street)
Attachments:	April City Council Letter.pdf; 416 Common Letters.pdf; CBD HDLC Hearing Transcript.pdf; HDLC Extract.pdf

Dear Mr. Rivers,

Michelle Kimball of the Preservation Resource Center advised that written comments concerning the captioned matter should be addressed to you with a copy to Mr. Kroll. I am President of the 416 Common Condominium Homeowners Association. Our ten homeowners occupy the building directly across Common Street from the proposed hotel at 400 Canal Street. While we would very much like to see a thoughtful development of that site (preserving the historic buildings and in compliance with zoning regulations), we are very much opposed to the project as designed.

At 250 feet, the building is more than three times the height limitation of 70 feet contained in both the current and draft CZOs. The four 1840s-era historic structures will be demolished except for the exterior facades of the three on Tchoupitoulas Street. The footprint is massive with only modest setback of the tower portion. The exterior design is generic. The entrance to the parking garage, loading dock and trash bins and the resulting noise and traffic will be directly across a very narrow Common Street from our living rooms and bedrooms.

Attached are (1) a letter to City Council members that we sent on April 8, (2) letters to Council members from each of our homeowners, (3) a transcript of the March 19 Historic District Landmarks Commission Meeting when the project as then designed was rejected and (4) an extract from the HDLC transcript with remarks from two of the commissioners prior to the vote to reject. All of this remains very relevant to the project as now proposed. The only changes have been some modification to the exterior façade, modest setback of the tower, retention of the three historic facades and elimination of a spire that was another 100 feet higher than the building. The height remains at 250 feet, and the footprint remains massive. The parking garage and service areas remain in the same location.

Continuation of the balance of residential and commercial development in the CBD and Warehouse District that has been achieved during the last 30 years is critical. This project as designed would destroy that balance for this neighborhood. New Orleans is the only southern city with a significant residential community in the center city resulting from that balance.

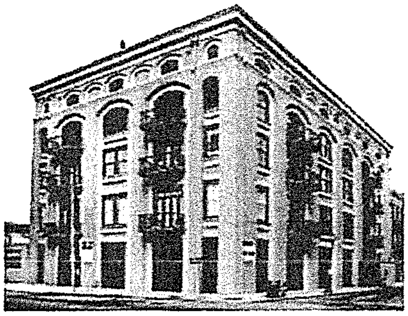
No evidence has been provided to support the developer's assertion that the property is "uniquely expensive", thereby requiring 350 hotel rooms to be financially viable. Many other financially viable projects have been and are being developed in the CBD and Warehouse District within the zoning and preservation rules. Despite many meetings during the past year attempting to find common ground, the size and design of the proposed hotel remain essentially the same as rejected by the HDLC with only the exterior facades of three of the four historic buildings retained.

We believe that approval of this project would set a precedent for further significant and inappropriate variances, both on Canal Street and throughout the city. The message sent would be that zoning and preservation are clearly flexible depending on financial and other demands of owners and developers.

We respectfully urge the City Planning Commission to reject this project. Please confirm receipt of this message.

Sincerely,

Lizabeth A. Boulware
President
416 Common Condominium Homeowners Association
416 Common Street, #6
New Orleans, LA 70130
Phone: 504.525.7718



416 Common Condominium Association
New Orleans, LA 70130

April 8, 2014

New Orleans City Council
1300 Perdido Street, Second Floor West
New Orleans, LA 70112

RE: Proposed 21-Story Hotel
400 Canal Street
Demolition – 105-111 Tchoupitoulas Street

To the Members of the New Orleans City Council:

This letter is written on behalf of the 416 Common Condominium Association. Our condo residences are directly across the street from the subject development. We respectfully request the City Council to uphold the ruling of the CBD HDLC and deny the developer's appeal to demolish the historic buildings at 105-111 Tchoupitoulas Street and 422 Canal Street and the construction of a 21-story hotel at 400 Canal Street. The proposal was unanimously rejected by the Central Business District Historic District Landmarks Commission as well as its Architectural Review Committee. The developer's appeal has been tentatively set for April 24, 2014.

We are enclosing a packet which contains the following pertinent information:

I. Transmittal Letter
II. Letters opposing project
III. HDLC
  A. HDLC Rejection Letters
  B. ARC Recommendations
IV. Photographs
V. News Articles
  A. New Orleans Advocate
  B. Citi Business

In addition, the HDLC has received 64 emails/letters opposing this project and none in favor except a couple from the developer or those associated with the developer.

We are not obstructionists and do not oppose development for the sake of opposition. We oppose this development because it is completely insensitive to the neighborhood and the regulations.

The developers of 416 Common, Joy and Boysie Bollinger invested millions of dollars assuring the city of a restored property in full accordance with the HDLC rules and zoning requirements. The Bollingers were completely responsive to architectural direction from the HDLC and the high standards of the Preservation Resource Center. In her email to Bryan Block of the HDLC, Mrs. Bollinger states, "I quite literally jumped through hoops to renovate... in accordance with guidelines of the ARC, PRC and HDLC." The building received the Historic Preservation Award in 2004.

Every condo owner at 416 Common inquired, prior to their purchase, about potential development of the subject property and was satisfied that the restrictions preventing demolition of the historic buildings on the site were adequate to protect our investments and quality of life. The proposed project would seriously impair both. Any suggestion that the historic buildings on Canal and Tchoupitoulas could be demolished and replaced by a 21-story hotel covering every square inch of the half block plus site would have precluded the development of 416 Common including the individual investments by the condo owners totaling millions and millions of dollars. The regulatory scheme zoning, permitting, and the HDLC regulations, all approved by the City Council, were an inducement to our condo owners to establish their homes in the neighborhood.

The growing residential character of the Central Business District has increased the vitality and energy of the district and greater downtown. Economic development is, of course, very important as well. Commercial developers and residents must balance financial objectives with residential property values, quality of life and the unique architecture of New Orleans. Historic building designations, height restrictions and zoning are important elements that help ensure that balance.

In contrast to the efforts of the Bollingers to preserve their historic property, the owner(s) of the historic buildings in question have allowed them to deteriorate and now use that as an excuse to demolish. Demolition of the buildings is not the right approach. Neither is a 21-story hotel in the center of the square designed in such a manner so as to require, according to the proposal, demolition of the historic buildings.

A more sensitive approach would be for the developer to flip the project to the corner of Canal and Magazine (the Sanlin building) which is owned or controlled by the same owner. This would put the hotel structure in close proximity to the mass created by the Sheraton and the Marriott. The historic buildings on Canal and Tchoupitoulas could then be restored and integrated into the project as part of a redevelopment of almost the entire square. The project could then be scaled down from the hotel side of the square at Canal and Magazine toward Canal and Tchoupitoulas. The owner/developer has chosen not to consider this. Instead, we believe the owner/developer intends to develop the Sanlin site after the 400 Canal Street development is approved.

We ask the City Council to reject this proposed development and to follow the recommendation of the HDLC in doing so.

416 Common Condominium Association

By: Lizabeth A. Boulware
Vice-President

\\Hhkc.Local\Pldocs\28018.0013\416 Common St. Condo Assn Re Motwani Hotel Development\Correspondence\821443.Doc

Liz Boulware

From:	Joy Bollinger [joy.bollinger@me.com]
Sent:	Thursday, March 13, 2014 10:21 PM
To:	bdblock@nola.gov
Cc:	lcantrell@nola.gov; Boysie Bolllinger; Cassandra Sharpe; Bill Riviere; Maury Herman; Liz Boulware; Donald Gervais; Norm Rubenstein; Michelle Egan; Alan Fiorenza; James Schlesinger; Angus Cooper; Mitch Landrieu; Stacy Head; Jacquelyn Clarkson; Peter Trapolin
Subject:	103 Tchoupitoulas Street

Dear Bryan,

As the developer of the historic property directly across Common Street from the 400 Canal-103 Tchoupitoulas Street proposed hotel development, I am vehemently opposed to the destruction of the historic buildings on the site and--for many reasons--also very much opposed to the proposed development as submitted.

When I bought the property at 416 Common Street in 2000, I was assured by the PRC and HDLC that the buildings directly across the street were historic and therefore protected from destruction and height variances (above the one-story my development was allowed) in future developments. This was a major reason for my financial commitment in downtown New Orleans, as we were assured that the penthouse views from our six-story building would be unobstructed and our property values would not be compromised. Twelve years--and millions of investment dollars later--we are faced with a reversal of previous assurances and a consequently unfair devaluation of our residences. I quite literally jumped through hoops to renovate and develop the building at 416 Common Street in accordance with guidelines of the ARC, PRC and HDLC. We were only allowed to add one story and ceilings heights on this added floor had to be reduced from 12' to 10'. Deep set-backs on this top level were required so that the top floor addition could not be seen from the street corner below, greatly reducing our living area of these units. Three different sets of wrought iron balcony railings had to be designed and manufactured before one was approved by the ARC...a four-month process. Building colors had to be approved, asbestos abatement and termite extermination completed, a building generator and interior stairwells added...and on and on. My efforts resulted in an Historic Preservation Award for a building that is historically grounded and an asset to the handprint of our city. The proposed destruction of historic buildings at the Canal/Tchoupitoulas site just because it is economically unfeasible to save these much-neglected buildings would be an insult to those of us who have worked so hard and invested so much to preserve the cultural and historic elements of New Orleans.

Besides the shameful destruction of historic properties, the site of the proposed hotel development sits at the foot of Canal Street and is surrounded by culturally significant buildings, notably the spectacular Custom House across Canal Street and the award-winning Italianate facade of 416 Common Condominiums. Even Harrah's Casino has a classy facade instead of the garishness usually associated with casinos. One Canal Place has an elegant simplicity that allows it to enhance the surrounding area. The proposed hotel is aesthetically unsuitable for this area. It would, in fact, be far better suited to a beach community like Biloxi, as the renderings lack any suggestion of the history and culture of the area. The "wavy" balcony with a metal ribbon surround has no historic significance, nor does the turquoise and orange "tower" and the multi-story "art" windows that seem designed as advertisement space. An outdoor restaurant on public sidewalks would only add to the congestion and noise of an already congested and noisy area.

I would like for the members to please be aware that Common Street at this proposed hotel site is mainly a high-end residential area. The hotel rendering submitted shows the garbage truck/service drive/loading dock area directly across from our building's entry lobby! The noise in early morning/late evening hours from garbage pick-up/laundry delivery trucks/loading dock, etc. would be our worse nightmare, as would the ensuing traffic congestion on Common Street, which is a ONE-LANE, ONE-WAY Street that is ill-suited to the traffic requirements of a 21-story hotel.

I speak for the owners of twelve residences at 416 Common Street Condominiums in actively opposing the proposed Marriott Courtyard 21-story development and --especially-- the destruction of historic properties at 400 Canal-103 Tchoupitoulas Streets. These historic properties should be brought up to code and preserved for the continuation of our city's historic relevance.

Kind regards,

Joy Bollinger

Bruce A. Boulware
Lizabeth A. Boulware
416 Common Street, Unit 6
New Orleans, LA 70130

March 16, 2014

Mr. Bryan Block
Plans Examiner
City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission
City Hall
1300 Perdido Street, Suite 7W03
New Orleans, LA 70112

Via email to bdblock@nola.gov

Re: Proposed Demolition of Buildings at 103, 105, 109, and 111 Tchoupitoulas Street and 408 and 422 Canal Street

Dear Mr. Block:

We own and occupy two of the twelve units at 416 Common Street. As suggested at the ARC meeting on February 25, 2014, we are writing to you to express our strong objection to demolition of the above-referenced historic buildings.

Our first unit at 416 Common Street was purchased in 2004 with New Orleans being a getaway place for us. That purchase evolved into New Orleans becoming a second home to our residence in Napa, California. New Orleans quickly became our favorite place to be, and we were able to acquire a second, adjacent unit at 416 Common Street in 2008. We, subsequently, sold the Napa residence and now reside here full time.

A major consideration in our decision to buy both units was what could be done with the properties across the street. We learned of the restrictions on historic buildings as well as the height restrictions and were satisfied that our quality of life as well as our investment would be reasonably protected. The proposed hotel, which would demolish the historic buildings and dramatically exceed the height restrictions, is simply not fair. 416 Common was developed following all rules and guidelines. Why should the developer of these properties not be held to the same standards? Why should this developer not have to follow established rules, restrictions, and guidelines?

The owner of the properties across the street knows, and knew when the properties were acquired, the restrictions. The buildings have not been maintained, and now their destruction is proposed. If permitted, the hotel will not only have a significant detrimental effect on our quality of life and a negative impact on the value of our property, but it will also change the entire landscape and charm of what we and others love about living in the CBD and New Orleans.

While we very much favor economic development broadly as well as renovation of the buildings across the street, we urge you to reject the currently proposed project and any other project proposed which is not in compliance with the historic district buildings and height restrictions.

Sincerely,

Bruce A. Boulware

Bruce A. Boulware

Lizabeth Boulware

Lizabeth A. Boulware

Ms. Michelle Egan
Mr. Norm Rubenstein
416 Common Street, #10
New Orleans, LA 70130
March 17, 2014

Mr. Bryan Block
Plans Examiner
City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission
City Hall
1300 Perdido Street, Suite 7W03
New Orleans, LA 70112

Via email to bdblock@nola.gov

Dear Mr. Block:

We own Unit #10 at 416 Common Street, a residential building across the street from the proposed hotel development that currently proposes demolishing historic buildings on the section of Canal Street that ends at Tchoupitoulas Street. We write to voice our strong objections to those plans.

When we decided to buy a condominium in New Orleans, where Norm grew up, we determined to purchase in the CBD to contribute to the renewal of post-Katrina New Orleans and to avail ourselves of the benefit of living in a neighborhood that exemplifies what makes New Orleans so special—its reverence for and protection of its history and culture. One of the reasons we liked 416 Common so much is that its developers went to great trouble to ensure that everything done to the building met code and respected the history and priorities of the neighborhood, from sustaining the simple elegance of the façade to accommodating height and other restrictions. For us, those concerns were a form of good citizenship and precisely what a mixed-use neighborhood in a historic city requires.

So in learning recently that the developer who would propose demolishing the historic structures at 103, 105, 109, and 111 Tchoupitoulas and at 408 and 422 Canal Streets and then building a hotel over double the allowed height for that area believes himself exempt from the requirements that have applied to everyone else, we felt compelled to register our strong objection to the project as currently planned.

We are not opposed to economic development and, in fact, would support a well-designed structure that sustains and incorporates the historic buildings (as is often done in Washington, DC, for example) and also respects the height and other restrictions to which our building adhered. But we do not believe that economic growth need dismiss the standards and regulations that have governed the way in which the CBD historically has approached its renaissance.

This is not just a concern about the extraordinary damage to our property that the project as designed and sited would cause. It is, instead, a plea that the very standards and principles on which the Commission has designed its regulations be applied equally to all developers, thus protecting irreplaceable historic properties and the commitment of the residents of the local community to a mutually beneficial mixed-use environment.

Respectfully,

Michelle Egan and Norm Rubenstein

Alan M. Fiorenza
Patricia M. Fiorenza
416 Common Street, Unit 9
New Orleans, LA 70130

March 17, 2014

Mr. Bryan Block
Plans Examiner
City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission
City Hall
1300 Perdido Street, Suite 7W03
New Orleans, LA 70112

Via email to bdblock@nola.gov

Re: Proposed Demolition of Buildings at 103, 105, 109, and 111 Tchoupitoulas Street and 408 and 422 Canal Street

Dear Mr. Block:

We own and occupy one of the units at 416 Common Street. We are writing to express our objection to the demolition of the above-referenced buildings.

We purchased our unit in 2003. The collections of buildings across the street that are being proposed for demolition have been an eyesore from the day we moved into our unit. Accordingly, we support a significant re-development that complies with historic district building and height restrictions.

In our opinion, it is a disgrace that the current owners have been allowed to let the properties deteriorate to the point that demolition is the option they are choosing. We believe it would be more appropriate to penalize the owners than to reward them with significant variances.

We encourage the Commission to reject the demolition request. We also urge the Commission to work with the various parties to re-size the development plans so that they comply with the established rules, restrictions and guidelines

Sincerely,

Alan M. Fiorenza

Patricia M. Fiorenza

Liz Boulware

From: W Gervais [wsgervais@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 23, 2014 7:53 AM
To: Lizabeth Boulware
Subject: Fwd: Proposed hotel

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** W Gervais <wsgervais@gmail.com>
> **Date:** March 17, 2014 at 9:52:47 AM CDT
> **To:** "bdblock@nola.gov" <bdblock@nola.gov>
> **Subject: Proposed hotel**
>
> Hi. My husband and I own 2 units at 416 Common. We are firmly opposed to the proposed hotel to be discussed at your next meeting. We have 2 small children and we love our location. The new hotel would include a service entrance and garbage dock immediately across from our front door. This would inevitably block traffic on Common. For example, the truck picking up the Sheraton's dumpster blocked traffic for 10 minutes this morning. There would also be a great deal of added noise, including the beeping trucks make when they reverse.
>
> There's a proposed loading zone, but as I'm sure you've seen around town, when the loading zone is used, trucks just park in the street. Common is one lane and it would be obstructed.
>
> Thank you for reading.
>
> Wendy S Gervais, MD
>
> Sent from my iPhone

HERMAN
HERMAN & KATZ
L.L.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
Est. 1942

820 O'Keefe Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana
70113-1116

p: 504.581.4892
f: 504.561.6024
e: info@hhklawfirm.com

hhklawfirm.com

Harry Herman (1914-1987)
Russ M. Herman*
Maury A. Herman*
Steven J. Lane
Leonard A. Davis*
James C. Klick
Stephen J. Herman
Brian D. Katz
Soren E. Gisleson
Joseph E. "Jed" Cain

Jennifer J. Greene
John S. Creevy
Aaron Z. Ahlquist
Craig M. Robinson
Adam H. Weintraub
Mikalia M. Kott
Donald A. Mau
Danielle Treadaway Hufft

Of Counsel:
Herbert J. Cade
Morton H. Katz*
Joseph A. Kott, MD, JD

This Firm And Its Partners Are Also Partners In Herman Gerel, LLP

* A Professional Law Corporation
Also Admitted in Texas
Also Admitted in Arkansas
Also Admitted in Tennessee
Also Admitted in New Jersey & Pennsylvania
Also Admitted in Colorado

March 18, 2014

Via Email: Bdblock@nola.gov

Mr. Brian Block
Plans Examiner
Central Business District Historic District Landmarks Commission

RE: Proposed Hotel 103-111 Tchoupitoulas 408-422 Canal St.

Dear Mr. Block:

I am writing to oppose the proposed hotel complex referenced above which is the subject of the HDLC meeting on March 19, 2014. Unfortunately, I am away on a business matter, otherwise I would be there to voice my concerns in person. I am the owner of Condo Unit 4, 416 Common Street directly across from the tower and the historic buildings which the developers seek to demolish. I have attended the meeting held by the developers in February at the Jax Brewery and the ARC meeting. I have carefully reviewed the ARC recommendations. Also, I appreciate the fact that the developer reached out to me and I met with their representatives earlier this month. I voiced these same concerns to the developers when we met so this will come as no surprise to them.

First of all, I would like the HDLC to know I do not take opposing this development lightly. I have lived in New Orleans my entire life. My law firm was established over 70 years ago and we have been involved in all manner of development in our city as principals, occasionally, and often as counsel. We have also been involved in significant zoning matters on behalf of clients.

For purposes of this letter, it is important to note that I was appointed to the CBDHDLC by Mayor Morial (Dutch) prior to the Worlds Fair, served for several years, and was its Chair for a period of time. It was during the years leading up to the Worlds Fair that the ratings system for historic buildings in the CBD were instituted. This was a time consuming exercise. The Commission staff, with the encouragement of an enlightened Mayor and City Council, had a vision for the development of the Warehouse District extending to the uptown side of Canal Street. The staff worked tirelessly. Every single building within the designated area was researched and inventoried. Members of the Commission met with staff often before the public meetings so we could understand the nature of the process and fulfill our public duty. I suspect records of the process and our meetings still exist. I do not recall the length of time I served but it was several years.

Given this background, when I decided to move downtown, I was attracted to 416 Common for several reasons:

a. The building, at great expense, had been tastefully and sensitively developed by Joy Bollinger in accordance with the regulations, some very onerous, imposed by the HDLC and zoning all in accord with the original charge required by the City to preserve such buildings;

b. My research indicated that historic buildings on Tchoupitoulas, which are the subject of this matter, would likely be restored because of the same regulations which the Bollingers were required to follow. The presentations by the developer, which I attended, emphasized the current disrepair and condition of the buildings, almost as an excuse for demolition. I view this as a classic example of a farmer "milking the cow" until it dies from malnutrition. The owner(s) of these properties have treated them just like the proverbial farmer and now seek permission from the City to completely destroy them because they have been neglected by the owners themselves;

c. I purchased my condo based on an implicit promise made by the City, reflected in the regulations, requiring restoration and rehabilitation of our historic buildings - not destruction. The owners of 416 Common have invested millions of dollars collectively based on that promise.

The answer to redevelopment of this square lies wholly within the control of the owner(s)/developers and the ARC alludes to it in its recommendations - incorporate the Sanlin buildings; mass the high rise at the corner of Canal and Magazine while scaling down the project toward Tchoupitoulas. Massing the high rise structure here surely makes more sense given the location of the Sheraton and the Marriott on the other side of Canal Street.

The developers have said, among other things, the historic buildings cannot practically be restored and incorporated into the high rise. They say it would be too expensive because they are in such a state of disrepair; the floors would not align; and numerous other architectural and engineering issues. But these design problems result from trying to incorporate those buildings into the high rise as currently proposed. Flipping the project to the other end of the square eliminates those concerns. Will it be expensive to restore the 3 historic buildings - sure. But a sensitive owner/developer would do so and utilize them as part of an overall comprehensive development.

It is obvious from the recommendations of the ARC there is sentiment for the redevelopment of the square and a high rise would not be out of the question. I do not agree entirely with the ARC recommendations but it is obvious, the proposed design puts the mass in the wrong place. This is what necessitates the demolition of the historic structures and the proposal should be rejected

I urge the Commission to vote against the proposed development.

Sincerely,

MAURY A. HERMAN

MAH/ds

William and Dina Riviere
416 Common Street, Unit 7
New Orleans, LA 70130-2433

March 17, 2014

Via email *bdblock@nola.gov*

Mr. Bryan Block
Plans Examiner
City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission
City Hall
1300 Perdido Street, Suite 7W03
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112

Re: Proposed Demolition of Buildings at 103, 105, 109 and 111 Tchoupitoulas Street and 408 and 422 Canal Street

Dear Mr. Block:

We have been property owners and residents at 416 Common Street since the condominium conversion was first completed in 2003. We chose to live in a beautifully restored building in the vibrant Central Business District that has garnered a Historic Preservation Award for a building that is historically grounded and an asset to the handprint of our city. We would only expect that future development and or renovation projects in the same zoning area would be held to the same exacting standards as required during the renovation of our building. This is necessary to preserve the historic architectural fabric that our city has become known for. We strongly feel that the proposed destruction of these historic buildings just because it is allegedly economically unfeasible to save the much-neglected buildings would be an insult to those of us who have worked so hard and invested so much to preserve the cultural and historic elements of New Orleans. It is disappointing at best that a blatant disregard for proper and safe maintenance of the buildings in question could result in the award of a number of variances allowing for their demolition when they certainly can be preserved by complying with existing regulations.

We encourage the Commission to reject the demolition applications being brought before it on Wednesday March 19, 2014.

Kind Regards,

William J Riviere

Dina Bracci Riviere

To: Bryan Block, Plans Examiner
City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission
City Hall
1300 Perdido Street, Suite 7W03
New Orleans, LA 70112

From: Preston J. Schlesinger
416 Common Street, Unit 8
New Orleans, LA 70130-2448
Ph. (504) 324-1748

Subject: HDLC March 19, 2014 Meeting Agenda Item 103-111 Tchoupitoulas St. & 408-422 Canal St.

Dear Mr. Block,

I attended the Architectural Review Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, February 25, 2014 at City Hall, and I also attended an earlier Neighborhood Participation Program Meeting held by the developer's representatives regarding the proposal to eradicate the historic buildings across the street from my building in favor of a high-rise hotel. I appreciate the process of having affected residents participate. However I have to say and I would be remiss not to, that I find word of such plans to raze historic buildings very troublesome.

Almost two years ago to this day, I moved into Unit 8 in the 416 Common Condominiums with the assurance that it was located in a historic district in which falls under the purview of the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) and that we have people on that commission that care deeply about the quality of life, the ambiance, and the character of the area. Knowing this information, I did not hesitate for one second about my decision to purchase a unit in the 416 Common Condominiums. However, now comes the most disturbing news that the owner of the buildings at 103-111 Tchoupitoulas St. and 408-422 Canal St. desires to raze the buildings in favor of a modern high-rise building that not only rips out part of the character of the area, but further adds insult to injury by requesting a building height that far exceeds what is currently allowed. Although I have a northern exposure, I do get to enjoy reflected sunlight from Canal Place during certain times of the afternoon, which would be totally obstructed by the proposed building, in effect placing me in the dark.

It is also evident to me, that the current owner places little value on the building as evidenced by patchwork repairs such as the windows that suffered some damage during Hurricane Isaac in August 2012. And it appears the owner could care less about zoning restrictions since for almost two years there was a green storage shed (garage) located in the parking ot next to the Canal St. building that was later moved to the back of one of the Tchoupitoulas St. buildings, then in "good faith to demonstrate compliance" (as mentioned at the ARC meeting) he removed the shed. That in and of itself is cause for alarm by all and makes me very suspicious of one's motives in order to gain approval for his plans.

Therefore, for the reasons I outlined above (and there are many others), I urge the HDLC to stop any and all actions to remove these historic buildings from the footprint of our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Preston J. (James) Schlesinger

3/17/2014

Richard Stone
416 Common Street, Unit 3
New Orleans, LA 70130-2433
504-908-4395

March 14, 2014

Mr. Bryan Block
Plans Examiner
City of New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission
City Hall
1300 Perdido Street, Suite 7W03
New Orleans, LA 70112

Via email to bdblock@nola.gov and USPS

Re: Application to demolish buildings in the 100 block of Tchoupitoulas Street and 422 Canal Street

Dear Mr. Block:

I am writing to express my strong objection to the applications to demolish the historic structures referenced above that have been submitted to the CBD HLDC for consideration at the next regular meeting. I am a property owner at 416 Common Street, directly across from this proposed new development.

I attended the Neighborhood Participation Program Meeting that was held on February 3rd where the developers presented their case for the demolition of the historic buildings. The representations made regarding these buildings were at best inaccurate, and in other ways disingenuous.

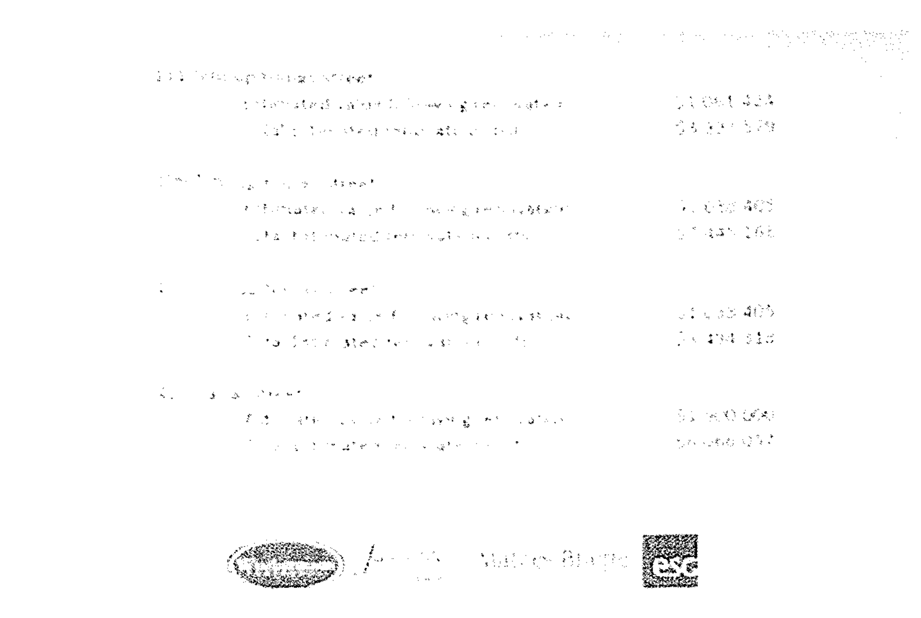
The primary reason provided was one of economic hardship - that the buildings are in very poor condition (despite that they are all currently rented to commercial tenants). The presenters showed slides of various building issues that needed to be addressed, and stated that the cost to remedy these issues would not make economic sense. They specifically pointed out that the cost to renovate would actually be in excess of the current value of the properties, as if that is something that is an unusual occurrence with historic property, which it is not. There are numerous local investors who do this on a regular basis.

In fact, as any investor in historic properties can tell you, in order to avail oneself of historic tax credits, a project's rehabilitation must be *substantial*. "Substantial rehabilitation" is defined in Treas. Reg. section 1.48-12(b)(2)(i) and includes projects that involve qualified costs in excess of the larger of: (a) the adjusted basis of all owners of the building; or (b) $5,000. The adjusted basis is generally described as the property purchase price, less the costs of the land, less any

Mr. Bryan Block
March 14, 2014
Page 2

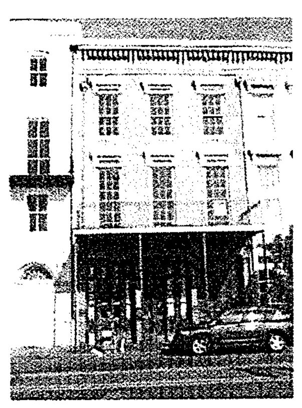
depreciation taken to date, plus the cost of any improvements made since the purchase. To paraphrase, unless the cost to renovate is greater than the existing value, the tax credits are not available.

The following slide was also shown to us at that presentation:



They claim that *after* a proposed renovation, the buildings would actually be worth only 26% to 32% of what was expended to renovate them. As a commercial Realtor, I find these numbers to be ludicrous.

For example, here's a property three blocks from the subject buildings that I sold last year to a local investor:



311 N. Peters St.

- 9,000 SF three-story shell in need of complete interior renovation
- Vacant since before Katrina
- Water intrusion from roof issues
- Sold for $1,550,000; owner now renovating into retail downstairs with apartments upstairs.
- Application has been made for Federal historic tax credits
- Owner will spend more than the purchase price on renovations, with the expectation that the project will be profitable

I should add that there are numerous investors in the market currently looking for similar projects.

At the neighborhood meeting, the developers went to great lengths to describe the care that went into the planning of the design elements of the proposed hotel so that it will fit in with the scale of the surrounding properties, and touted the economic benefit of bringing this project online. But they nonetheless want to tear down four significant historic structures located at a unique and important convergence of the Warehouse District, CBD and French Quarter neighborhoods to make this happen, for no other reason than it will make their project more economically viable.

Economic growth need not come at the cost of tearing away at the fabric of the city. The resurgence of our economy in recent years is evidence of that. I am not opposed to continued new development along Canal Street, but I do not believe this development warrants a free pass to circumvent the rules that all other developers have willingly abided by for years.

Sincerely,

Richard Stone