

VIEUX CARRÉ COMMISSION ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

Mitchell J. Landrieu
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Lary Hesdorffer
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Architectural Committee meeting of **Tuesday, August 25, 2015**

Committee Members Present: Rick Fifield, Nick Musso, Dennis Brady

Committee Members Absent: Daniel Taylor, George Hero,

Staff Present: Lary Hesdorffer, Director; Renee' Bourgogne, Architectural Historian; Nicholas G. Albrecht, Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Plans Examiner; Erika Gates, Building Inspector;

Staff Absent:

Others Present: Crystal Hinds, Kirk Fabacher

AGENDA

Old Business

403 Royal St: John C. Williams, applicant; Cloud Nine LLC Royal, owner; Proposed resolutions to mechanical, life safety, and VCC violations, per application & drawings received 11/18/14 & 08/18/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report with Mr. Williams in attendance on behalf of the application. Brian Medus, Assistant Chief Mechanical Inspector for the Department of Safety and Permits (S&P), was present to represent S&P and to answer any questions about the applicant's efforts to resolve the violations cited by S&P. Mr. Musso asked if the mechanical division is satisfied with the plans as proposed. Mr. Medus's response was in the affirmative. Answering Mr. Brady's question about the guardrails and walkway, Mr. Brady explained that the requirements follow the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) and life safety codes, specifically as follows: IMC 304.11 - *Guards shall be provided where appliances, equipment, fans or other components that require service and roof hatch openings are located within 10 feet (3048 mm) of a roof edge or open side of a walking surface...* and IMC 306.5 - *Where equipment requiring access and appliances are installed on roofs or elevated structures at a height exceeding 16 feet (4877 mm), such access shall be provided by a permanent approved means of access, the extent of which shall be from grade or floor level to the equipment and appliances' level service space. Such access shall not require climbing over obstructions greater than 30 inches (762 mm) high or walking on roofs having a slope greater than four units vertical in 12 units horizontal (33-percent slope). Where access involves climbing over parapet walls, the height shall be measured to the top of the parapet wall.*

In response, Mr. Musso stated that the VCC is required to comply but may review the aesthetic qualities of the guardrail. Mr. Fifield then moved to **approve** the items as recommended by staff (with the noted applicable caveats for the VCC to approve the work and lift the Stop Work Order and staff to issue a permit) including the guardrail, with that design to undergo further study. Mr. Musso offered an amendment to require the applicant to provide the Commission with shop drawings of mechanical and millwork for VCC's property records. With Mr. Fifield's acceptance of the amendment, Mr. Brady seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

1029 Governor Nicholls St: Crystal Hinds, applicant; John L Hinds, owner; Proposal to install additional wood panel and new ironwork on top of existing alleyway gate, per application & materials received 01/26/15 & 08/17/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Ms. Hinds present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Brady suggested doing an entire wood panel to match the adjacent.

Mr. Fifield moved to defer the application. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

622 St Peter St: Kirk Fabacher, applicant; Mendel S Rau, owner; Proposal to demolish existing brown-rated rear structure and construct new 50' tall building, per application and drawings received 03/24/15 & 08/18/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Fabacher present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Brady asked about the 3D models that had been provided and the various roof heights. Mr. Hesdorffer stated that it was very helpful to include the block rendered views.

Mr. Musso stated that he was comfortable with the overall proposal but had a question about the proposed materials. Mr. Fabacher stated that they would utilize a stick frame to be stuccoed over rather than CMU walls.

Mr. Hesdorffer asked if the project was entirely on the St. Peter property. Mr. Fabacher stated that a portion of the work would occur on the Royal St. property. Mr. Hesdorffer stated the need to include a property summary report for the portion of construction proposed on the 630 Royal parcel.

Mr. Brady asked about what specifically was involved on the 630 Royal St. property. Mr. Fabacher responded that the work at 630 Royal would be an addition on top of the existing one-story building.

Mr. Musso clarified that they can only act on the St. Peter property. Mr. Fified moved to adopt the staff recommendation of conceptual approval with the caveat that the proposal returns for review regarding the portion on the Royal St. property. Mr. Brady seconded the motion with the amendment that the building would be constructed with galvanized metal roofing and steel studs with stucco. The motion passed unanimously.

525 Madison St: Barry Fox & Associates, applicant; Walter H Cochran, owner; Proposal to make miscellaneous detail changes to previously approved plans, per application & materials received 04/28/15, 08/11/15, & 08/18/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Mr. Fox representing the application. Mr. Fox stated that the interior has been completely demoed and that there had been a bit of “sticker shock” regarding overall renovation costs. In regard to the wall now proposed to be constructed from CMU, Mr. Fox stated they will use the existing wall foundation and that the wall will be finished on both sides, covering the exterior side of the CMU in galvanized lath and then stuccoed.

Mr. Brady moved to approve the proposed change of roofing material and to approve the use of CMU where indicated. Mr. Fified seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

311 Bourbon St: John C. Williams, applicant; The City Of New Orleans, owner; Proposal to install a 3,000 sq. ft. canopy system (approximate area) above open space, per application & materials received 04/28/15 & 08/19/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Mr. Williams representing the application.

The Architectural Committee commended the applicant for revising the plans based on previous comments from staff and the Architectural Committee. With no further discussion necessary, Mr. Fified moved to adopt the staff recommendation of **conceptual approval**. Mr. Brady seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

917 Conti St: Harry Baker Smith Architects, applicant; Donna W Levin, owner; Proposal for renovation and partial demolition in conjunction with a **change of use** from *commercial* to *residential*, per application & revised materials received 05/25/15 & 08/18/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Domingue and Mr. Weber representing the application. Mr. Musso complimented the applicant on the use of diagramming in the most recent proposal, stating that it would assist in graphically articulating the ideas behind the project to the Commission. He also recommended removing general notations typical of architectural drawings and adding color and shadows to plans and elevations, thereby making the presentation clearer.

In reply to Mr. Brady’s question about the parapet guardrail of the annex building’s second floor, Mr. Domingue explained that it related to the adjacent rooftop pool deck. Mr. Fified urged the applicant to reevaluate and study the character of the guardrails, suggesting either extensions of parapet (while keeping the massing to a minimum) or a more visually subtle railing system.

Mr. Brady moved to forward the proposal to the Commission with a recommendation to grant **conceptual approval** of the proposal, including the **change of use** from *commercial* to *residential*, as well as the density variance requesting an additional three units for a total of sixteen residential

units. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

336 Decatur St/400 Conti St: Mark Thomas, applicant; Joseph C Paciera, owner; Proposal to demolish existing yellow-rated structure and construct new three story building with rooftop terrace, per application & materials received 07/04/15 & 08/18/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Messrs. Thomas and Guidry representing the application. Mr. Brady noted that the handrail is the most apparent feature of the building and that he would like to see a more minimal or simple handrail design.

Mr. Musso said it may be possible to incorporate curves, more horizontal emphasis, or a mix of glass and steel. He added that the current design is neither of the future nor the present.

Mr. Fifield asked if the applicants had done research on any of the existing underground utilities and the proposed locations of gallery posts. He added that it appears the wall to window ratio is somewhat off and could be improved. He also expressed a desire to see a rendering in a larger context of the surrounding buildings and streets. Mr. Fifield said he had concerns regarding the rooftop terrace, noting that the building design is “all over the place” with its architectural vocabulary.

Mr. Musso asked about using a green screen instead of the proposed rain screen. Mr. Brady added that he has no problem making a contemporary statement at the rooftop. Mr. Musso suggested exploration of all glass walls because he felt the hybrid designs are not working.

The applicant briefly showed a new design sketch currently under consideration.

Mr. Fifield moved to **defer** the application to allow the applicant additional time to revise the massing and to consider the comments of staff and the Architectural Committee. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

711 Bourbon St: Loretta Harmon, applicant; Seven-Eleven Bourbon, LLC, owner; Proposal to install intake & exhaust fans for kitchen hood, and furr-out wall with additional plumbing in rear loggia for temporary bar cart use, per application & materials received 07/27/15 & 08/18/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report with Ms. Harmon in attendance on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso began by stating that kitchen vents are having an awful impact on the Vieux Carré, particularly because enclosing the vents causes fire hazards and deterioration. Ms. Harmon said that disguising the vents as chimneys would appear out of proportion, and that the kitchen was currently venting through the party wall. She also stated that the fans would have to be made from galvanized metal. Mr. Fifield inquired why the kitchen was proposed to occupy the current bar space and not some other location. Ms. Harmon answered that the kitchen was currently functioning out of the temporary carts in the loggia. Mr. Hesdorffer inquired if the property was zoned as a restaurant; Ms. Harmon replied that they had a license to have a restaurant. Mr. Hesdorffer asked for clarification if it was for a restaurant or for food service and therefore, if this application should include a change of use. Mr. Musso stated that it is beyond the jurisdiction of the VCC to prohibit kitchen fans, but that the Committee is not obligated to approve any kitchen location proposed. He reiterated that this has been a chronic problem for the Vieux Carré, and that the Committee needed to be prepared to suggest alternative options. Mr. Fifield inquired about a proposal for the construction of a free-standing structure in the courtyard. Mr. Brady stated that he had a problem with vent hoods in general, and asked if there could be a louvered screen. Ms. Harmon proposed a three sided enclosure that would be open in back, towards the party wall. Mr. Brady also asked if the kitchen could be moved towards the front of the dependency, closer to the main building’s rear staircase, so the fans could “hide” in the roof valley. He also stated that he did not like the idea of furring out a wall in the loggia for plumbing use. Mr. Fifield moved to **defer**, and for staff to research current licenses attached to the property. Mr. Brady seconded, and the motion passed. Mr. Musso requested that Ms. Harmon return with multiple options to consider.

315 Decatur St: John C. Williams, applicant; Vieux Carre Ventures LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate building including installation of new windows on Conti side property line, per application & materials received 07/28/15.

Complete Minutes Needed.

1035 Royal St: Julie Ford, applicant; Rene R Joyce, owner; Proposal to renovate and modify elements of the courtyard and alleyway, per application & materials received 08/06/15 & 08/18/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Ms. Ford present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Musso stated that the VCC has approved similar work in the past. Mr. Fifield stated that the interaction between the balcony railing and the glass bridge is awkward is the remaining exposed balcony elements under the bridge. Mr. Brady suggested adding a "T" to the metal panels above and below the bridge at the point of the balcony railing. Mr. Brady also suggested continuing the bridge material to the underside of that portion of the service wing balcony.

Mr. Musso suggested building a physical model to explore more details about physical assembly and how the connections will be made.

Mr. Fifield moved to grant **conceptual approval** of the proposal. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

New Business

620 Decatur St, 1B: Clifton James, applicant; The Iff LLC, Condo Master Owner, Raymond R Morris, Charles F Post, Stephen J Schmidt, DMK Group Three LLC, 820 Decatur LLC, Ms Jane Ann's Quarter Quarters, LLC, The Spruce Pine Trust, The Penthouse At Jax LLC, William S Everitt, Tigers, L.L.C. Iberia, 416 Bourbon St LLC, The Penthouse At Jax, LLC, Bosco Enterprises LLC, Jeanette B Ogden, Rachael C Kinberger, Micheal D Krochak, L & L Investment Group, LLC, New Jax Commercial LLC, Roy Investments Properties LLC, Friday Properties New Orleans LLC, owner; Proposal to remove existing awning system and construct one story addition, per application & materials received 07/27/15.

The application was **deferred** at the applicant's request prior to the meeting.

529 Bienville St: Rachel Davis, applicant; Tomirene Co LLC, owner; Proposal to install new gallery on rear of building and glass awning at side entry, per application & materials received 08/11/15.

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

Mr. Fabacher stated that the owner was seeking a covering for the back openings because of water intrusion, but that they could pursue an awning or canopy. Mr. Musso agreed that a gallery would not be appropriate. Mr. Fifield stated that a gallery would likely exacerbate water intrusion along the rear wall.

Mr. Fifield and Mr. Musso both agreed that the glass awning could be approvable under particular circumstances. Mr. Fifield moved to **deny** the rear gallery, and grant **conceptual approval** of the side glass awning. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

516 Conti St: Joey Murray, applicant; 516 Conti LLC, owner; Proposal to partially infill courtyard & construct fire-rated stair, per application & materials received 08/12/15 & 08/18/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report, with Mr. Murray present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso noted the atypical existing conditions of the parcel, and recommended that the applicant consult the Board of Building Standards and Appeals. Staff stated that the applicant had already met with Zoning Administrator, Edward Horan, who had recommended an appeal for minimum open space requirements for the fire stairs.

Both Mr. Musso and Mr. Fifield noted that options for fire stairs on the property were extremely limited. Mr. Hesdorffer stated that the reduction of open space may be necessary for the buildings to come into active use, and that the BBSA could evaluate the viability of the egress. Mr. Murray explained that fire egress for both buildings was further complicated by varying floor-to-ceiling heights in the main and rear buildings, but that the new fire stair would have a two hour fire rating with direct egress to the street. Mr. Musso strongly suggested that the buildings be fully

sprinklered since the proposed egress would be very complex. Mr. Fifield asked if the fire marshal would approve a single stair; Mr. Murray answered yes, as long as the stairwell was two hour rated. Mr. Hesdorffer noted that a VCC easement may be required for the rear façade of 516, since an exterior wall would be enclosed.

Mr. Brady moved to **conceptually approve** the new egress stair consistent with staff recommendation. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

936 St Peter St: Corky Willhite, applicant/owner; Proposal to make changes to previously approved plans, per application & materials received 08/14/15.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation although no one was present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated he was ok with the staff recommendations. Mr. Fifield stated that there is no way the balcony railing could be wood.

Mr. Fifield moved to adopt the staff recommendation to **approve** removing stucco from the scope of work and **denial** of the proposed guardrail change. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Other Business

Various locations: Travis Martin, applicant; City of New Orleans, owner; Review and recommendation regarding proposal to add screens to select storm sewers, per materials received 07/24/15.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Martin present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Musso stated his biggest concern would be the gauge of the material used and suggested ¼" punched steel. Mr. Musso stated his concern that something lighter would be kicked in.

Mr. Fifield asked about the size of the storm water drain markers. Mr. Martin stated they would only be a few inches across and that a design contest would be held to help determine the design.

An unidentified member of the audience asked about individuals washing paint brushes in the storm sewers. Mr. Martin stated that it was never ok to wash paint or any other chemicals into the drains.

Mr. Hesdorffer noted that if the markers can be ripped off or have any kind of souvenir appeal they will be taken.

Mr. Fifield moved to recommend **approval** of the proposal. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

With no other business to consider, Mr. Fifield moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Brady seconded and the motion passed unanimously.