

VIEUX CARRÉ COMMISSION ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

Mitchell J. Landrieu  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Lary Hesdorffer  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Architectural Committee meeting of **Tuesday, September 22, 2015**

**Committee Members Present:** Rick Fifield, Dennis Brady, Daniel Taylor

**Committee Members Absent:** Nick Musso, George Hero,

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

**Staff Absent:** Erika Gates, Building Inspector;

**Others Present:** Larry Guice, Corinne Morrison, Chuck Berg, Donald Maginnis, Tommie Aysenne, Paulo Perkins, Joe Luscy, Phylis Luscy, Gunner Guidry, Mark Thomas, L. Katherine Harmon, Carol Gnaidy, Susan Guilliot, Jenna Burke, Jessica Becker, Robert Boyd, Adam Werling, Kurt Werling, John Bendernagel, Robert Pell, Ralph Long

**AGENDA**

**First Order of Business** - Ratification of Architectural Committee actions of 09/08/15

Mr. Hesdorffer explained that the information from the last meeting had been circulated and votes added for all items in line with the motions from the September 22 meeting.

Mr. Fifield moved to adopt the minutes as presented. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

403 Royal St: John C. Williams, applicant; Royal Cloud Nine LLC, owner; Proposal to install rooftop safety guardrail, per application & materials received 11/18/14 & 09/15/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Guice present on behalf of the application. Ms. Morrison, representing Ida Manheim, stated that her client disliked the current design of the guardrail, but desired a minimal design. Mr. Brady commented that a decorative design would be visually obtrusive

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816 Orleans Ave: Charles Berg, applicant; 816 Orleans LLC, owner; Proposal to demolish deteriorated courtyard infill and build new service building, per application & materials received 12/09/14 & 09/02/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Mr. Berg present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Fifield asked if the bridge had in fact been removed from the proposed work. Mr. Berg confirmed it was error in the drawings.

Mr. Fifield asked about the use of aluminum gutters. Mr. Berg stated the proposed gutters would be changed to copper. Mr. Fifield then asked about the proposed lighting. Mr. Berg responded that he would work with staff to change the proposed lighting to conform with guidelines.

Mr. Brady then asked about the bracing detail. Mr. Berg replied that the bracing would only be necessary until such time as the new building framing had been constructed.

Mr. Fifield moved to adopt the staff recommendation of **approval** provided copper gutters are utilized, the bridge element is eliminated from the proposal, and the lighting is updated to conform to guidelines. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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823 Dauphine St: Donald Maginnis, applicant; AAA Dauphine House LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate main building including addition of new dormers, per application & revised materials received 05/14/15 & 09/14/15, respectively.

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

stated that the “cave” closures contained no original millwork.

Mr. Fifield expressed his concern that this was a situation where interior plan changes were driving exterior alterations and that the Committee had previously agreed to the installation of new dormers without realizing other changes to the exterior would be necessary. Mr. Fifield stated he believes the “cave” element should be retained. Mr. Brady noted that he was more sympathetic to the proposed changes. Mr. Taylor said that he felt the elimination or alteration to the “cave” doors is not necessary but merely would be for convenience.

Mr. Hesdorffer said these elements are not this common and should be retained as a vestige of the building’s original design.

Mr. Taylor said that the “cave” doors are not required exits while Mr. Fifield added that they have already served as access for use of the attic space. Mr. Taylor said there would be nothing unusual about the floorplan if the “cave” doors were not modified into new exterior doors.

Mr. Fifield moved to adopt the staff recommendation to **deny** the modification to the “cave” doors. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion which passed with affirmative votes from Messrs. Fifield and Taylor. Mr. Brady opposed.

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831 Decatur St: Tommie Aysenne, applicant; Ingram Family Trust, owner; Proposal to alter first floor fenestration, per application & revised materials received 06/05/15, 08/28/15 & 08/30/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Messrs. Aysenne and Perkins, and Mr. & Mrs. Luscly present on behalf of the application. Mr. Brady stated that issues had been noted by the Committee in the previous meeting, but no action had been taken due to lack of quorum.

Mr. Taylor stated that the situation was unfortunate, but that it seemed like clear direction had been given as to how the doors should have been built. Mr. Hesdorffer said that staff had been expecting final millwork details before permitting, as was requested in a previous Committee meeting, but that the applicant and tenants began fabrication immediately after the Committee approved the application on 07/14/15, prior to final staff review and permitting. Mr. Perkins stated that that was incorrect.

Mr. Aysenne stated that after the 07/14 meeting, he received two voicemails from VCC staff indicating that the permit was ready to be picked up, and that milling began after receiving the voicemails, and that there were no significant changes from the drawings approved by the Committee on 07/14. Mr. Perkins interjected that the online status through OneStop also showed the permit as “approved,” as of 08/14/15. Staff then explained that the LAMA system will not generate a draft permit (as this was intended to be) unless you list the permit as “approved,” but that permits are not valid until they have been “issued,” reviewed and signed by the director, and signed and dated by the applicant. Staff also stated that there had been multiple meetings with Mr. Aysenne, in which staff specified the necessity of millwork drawings. Staff had “approved” the permit application in order to generate a draft permit, with the intention of expediting the issuance of the permit as soon as millwork drawings were submitted and approvable at staff level.

Mr. Fifield asked if the permit stated that shop drawings needed to be submitted. Mr. Perkins replied that no, it did not. Staff explained that the permit did not specify that shop drawings would be required, because the release of the permit was contingent upon having already received and approved millwork drawings. Mr. Hesdorffer reiterated that the drawings were not separate from the permit; that they were required in order to have a complete application.

Mr. Fifield remarked that the applicants were claiming a hardship based on miscommunication with staff, and explained that the charge of the Committee was to evaluate architectural merit, and that any argument for hardship would have to be heard by the Commission. Mr. Fifield agreed with the staff analysis; there were issues with the construction methods used in installing the millwork, as well as a noticeable discrepancy between the doors as-built, and the doors as previously drawn and approved by the Committee. Mr. Brady stated that the Committee would not approve the millwork as-built, so the next step was review by the Commission.

Mr. Taylor stated that revised drawings should always be submitted to staff for final review and permitting. Mr. Perkins claimed that the applicants were never made aware of further review prior

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to final approval; Mr. Taylor called their attention to the minutes from a previous meeting.

Mr. Aysenne asked if comments could be given regarding the architectural features. Mr. Hesdorffer remarked that there was discussion at the previous Committee meeting regarding the doors as a single unit that would be installed in place, as well as discussion about the atypical design of the transom. Mr. Hesdorffer also noted discrepancies between drawings as well as discrepancies with what was built; notably drawings of the transom bar conflicted, and changes were made to accommodate hardware. He continued, asking if there was any possibility of the doors being re-milled to satisfy the Committee (rather than replaced), and suggesting the applicants explore those possibilities in case they have to pursue other options.

Mr. Brady asked the applicants if they would prefer to return with revised shop drawings for the Committee to review, or if they would rather appeal to the Commission with the doors as-built.

Mr. Fifield moved to **deny** the request to maintain the millwork, as it differs significantly from the expectations of the Committee based on the previously submitted and approved drawings from 07/14/15. Mr. Brady seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The applicants then asked if the application would be reviewed by the Commission; Mr. Hesdorffer stated that they would need to submit a written request to staff, asking to appeal the Committee's ruling.

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336 Decatur St/400 Conti St: Mark Thomas, applicant; Joseph C Paciera, owner; Proposal to demolish existing structure and construct new, three story building with rooftop terrace, per application & materials received 07/04/15 & 09/15/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Messrs. Guidry and Thomas present on behalf of the application. Mr. Guidry stated the latest rendition of drawings explored the use of modern materials, with a less decorative, open air first floor. On the second and third floors the plans utilize fixed glass, a slat louvered system to provide depth, and the same proportions with different materials.

Mr. Hesdorffer asked about the nature of the building skin. Mr. Fifield asked about the possibility of extending the wall up at the roof terrace to eliminate or reduce the guardrail. Mr. Fifield stated he would like a parapet visible above the gallery roof. Mr. Fifield complimented the applicants for presenting a building that was much more realized.

Mr. Taylor stated that a new building in this location will be under a lot of scrutiny and suggested presenting more well developed and accurate renderings.

Mr. Fifield enquired about the traditional cornice/lintel above the punched openings. Mr. Fifield stated that with the modern design there needs to be a synthesis of the massing and details. Mr. Fifield also questioned what would essentially be a wood outer skin on a building this large.

Mr. Brady expressed a positive response to the proposed minimal handrail but suggested removing the wood louvers to allow the building to be stucco. Mr. Brady also suggested allowing the windows to be operable.

Mr. Fifield moved to **defer** the application to allow the proposal to become more developed based on the comments of staff and the Architectural Committee. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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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, per application & materials received 07/27/15 & 09/15/15, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Ms. Harmon present on behalf of the application. Mr. Taylor asked if this application was for work that was already completed. Ms. Harmon stated that no, this application was not in response to a violation. Ms. Vogt then gave the staff report. Mr. Fifield asked if it would be possible to move the fans to the attic instead of the roof. Ms. Harmon stated that it would be a fire hazard, and that the ventilation required would create a larger hole in the roof than the proposed location.

Ms. Gnaidy spoke on behalf of the French Quarter Citizens, asking if the application met the requirements for open space; Ms. Harmon answered that the existing conditions did not, and that no change was proposed. Ms. Gnaidy also asked what the courtyard capacity limit is, and if the public would have access to it. Ms. Harmon stated that the courtyard is currently being used as a dining area, and was unsure as to the capacity, but estimated no more than fifty occupants.

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Ms. Burke spoke on behalf of Vieux Carre Property Owners, Residents, and Associates, stating support of the staff recommendation to deny the use of the loggia as a bar, particularly considering the restoration of the loggia after the rear and carriageway walls were unlawfully demolished, and subsequently rebuilt.

Ms. Guillot spoke on behalf of the French Quarter Citizens, supporting the staff recommendation and asking if the property was on a key lot, and if the proposed changes would have detrimental effects upon neighbors of the lot. Ms. Harmon stated that the fans would be approximately 40' from the Dauphine side property line, and would also be screened.

Mr. Brady clarified that the bar and courtyard were the only places food would be served, and commented that the kitchen was extremely large for bar service. Ms. Harmon stated that it was the size of the room available, and that the intent is to remove the kitchen from the loggia. Mr. Fifield stated that, due to the visibility of the exterior fans, the issue is whether or not a kitchen is an appropriate use for the service wing. Mr. Hesdorffer remarked that both Ms. Gnaidy and the Committee were addressing the issue of occupancy due to the direct correlation between the sizing of the kitchen equipment (and therefore the roof penetrations) and the number of patrons served. Mr. Hesdorffer continued, saying that the intended function of the property was a bar/nightclub. Ms. Harmon interjected, stating that the owner had permits to operate as a bar, nightclub with live entertainment, and restaurant. Mr. Hesdorffer responded that the VCC had never reviewed the property for use as a restaurant. Staff stated that the permits provided by the applicant were for business, admission charge, beer & wine, and liquor; no city permits had been issued regarding food service, and the property's restaurant permit was issued by the state. Mr. Hesdorffer explained that the distinction between *food service for a bar* and a fully-functioning *restaurant* was important, because a change of use to restaurant would have to be reviewed by the full Commission in order to judge the appropriateness of any external changes, particularly for a blue-rated building. Ms. Harmon stated that the kitchen had a 15'-0" hood, which was standard for most restaurants. Mr. Brady disagreed, saying that it was large. Ms. Harmon noted that the size of the hood was irrelevant, in that it would still require two roof penetrations. Mr. Brady and Mr. Fifield both disagreed, stating that the Committee and/or Commission could deny the installation of a kitchen altogether. Mr. Fifield commented that, for a kitchen of this size, a change of use would be more appropriate.

Ms. Harmon requested to state for the record that the loggia had been restored, and that the roof details would be designed to avoid galvanic action.

Mr. Fifield moved to **defer** action until the extent of the property's use as a restaurant could be determined. Before the motion could be further acted upon, Ms. Harmon stated, on behalf of her client, that a denial would be preferable to deferral. Mr. Hesdorffer responded, stating that the current incarnation of the application would typically involve a change of use and review by the Commission, due to the full-service nature of the kitchen. Mr. Brady seconded the motion to defer, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Taylor clarified the Committee's questions that would need to be answered in subsequent submittals, saying more information was needed regarding: the occupancy capacity; required size of the kitchen; subsequent sizing, materials and location of exterior equipment; and possible change of use. Mr. Hesdorffer explained that answering these questions would help the staff and Committee better understand the proposal, and make informed recommendations before possibly being reviewed by the Commission.

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515 St Philip St: Jessica Becker, applicant; LAMI LLC, owner; Proposal to make detail change to previously approved plans, per application & materials received 09/01/15 & 09/16/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Ms. Becker present on behalf of the application. Ms. Becker stated the previous approval was to move all the conduit and piping below grade and the contractor came up with another solution.

Mr. Fifield stated that this proposal appears to present an economic hardship and that the proposed solution does not meet the standards.

Ms. Becker stated that some kind of electrical permit was issued in 2012 and the owners believe the permit was for the conduits in the current location.

Mr. Brady enquired about what happens to the St. Philip side of the presented plans and photographs. Ms. Becker responded that the enclosure would extend further to a point where the

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conduit and piping jumps to the top of the wall.

Mr. Fifield moved to adopt the staff recommendation of **denial**. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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## **New Business**

1001 Toulouse St: Robert Boyd, applicant; PHF New Orleans LLC, owner; Proposal to replace deteriorated service entrance doors with new solid wood doors, frames and transom, per application & materials received 08/27/15.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff presentation with Mr. Boyd present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield moved for **approval**, including the staff recommended caveat that the tongue and groove boards in the doors be widened to 6". Mr. Brady seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

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1026 Dauphine St: Peter Smith, applicant; JLJT LLC, owner; Proposal to install structural ties, steel plates, and additional structural work to detached service wing, per application & materials received 08/28/15.

### ***Complete Minutes Needed.***

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1016 St Louis St: Kurt Werling, applicant; Mercier Realty and Invst Co, owner; Proposal to renovate building in conjunction with a **change of use** from *vacant* to *residential*, per application & materials received 09/07/15.

Mr. Albrecht presented the staff report with Messrs. Kurt Werling, Adam Werling, and Bendernagel representing the application.

Mr. Fifield asked what was being proposed for above the transom bar for the carriage building archways. Mr. Bendernagel replied that the entire area would be filled with glazing. Mr. Kurt Werling stated that they are not locked into any design and would be willing to go in whatever direction the Architectural Committee deemed most appropriate.

Mr. Fifield stated that the proposed **Alternate B** could be a good direction to pursue but the area above the transom bar may need to be restudied. Mr. Fifield continued that the applicants could utilize details that convey that the millwork is contemporary. Mr. Brady said he agrees with Mr. Fifield's suggestion to modernize the details but that he also likes the proposed butt-glazed option.

Mr. Taylor stated his preference for the **Alternate B** design.

Mr. Fifield moved to adopt the staff recommendation of **conceptual approval** with the architects to return with more development for the proposed **Alternate B**. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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904 Dauphine St: Robert Pell, applicant; Guy L Williams, owner; Proposal to add night blinds to existing vitrine windows and exterior door, per application and materials received 09/08/15.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Pell present on behalf of the application. Mr. Pell explained the situation of this property formerly being a commercial space and now converting to residential use.

Mr. Hesdorffer stated that these type of issues are difficult as they potentially propose conflicting preservation philosophies as this building was originally constructed as a residential townhouse but the commercial elements of the cut corner and the show windows have been in place for likely over 100 years.

Mr. Fifield expressed his viewpoint that if the night-blind were allowed the glass will never be seen again because the blinds will always be closed. Mr. Fifield continued that the commercial nature of the property should be maintained unless there is a proposal to restore the ground floor to its original form.

Mr. Fifield moved to **deny** the application with instructions to the applicant and owner to either fully restore the building or use interior security means to protect the property. Mr. Brady seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

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1101 Decatur St: Diane Hickman, applicant; VTM Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to install millwork in the two (2) arched, masonry openings at the corner entry at Decatur & Ursulines, and proposal to install new hood vent and other mechanical intakes/venting in conjunction with a **change of use** from *vacant* to *restaurant* per applications & materials received 09/15/15.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentations with Mr. Long present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield stated that the corner proposal was restorative in nature but that he had concerns regarding the proposed venting. Mr. Brady asked if there was any space on the interior for the necessary venting.

Mr. Fifield stated the proposed venting is an afterthought to now add a chase to vent a proposed restaurant kitchen. Mr. Brady asked if there was a simpler way this could be done such as going through the condos.

Mr. Fifield moved to **approve** the proposed new millwork and to **defer** the proposal regarding the new venting. Mr. Brady seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**[Mr. Taylor left the meeting following the discussion of 1101 Decatur.]**

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525 Madison St: John Mills, applicant; Walter H Cochran, owner; Proposal to make various changes to courtyard/landscaping treatments, per application & materials received 09/15/15 & 09/04/15, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Mr. Mills representing the application. Mr. Mills stated that it appears the current brick paving dates from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century renovation. Mr. Brady suggested keeping brick in the parking and planting areas and stepping up to a change in paving material with the bluestone.

Mr. Mills stated that additional planting areas would be incorporated in the new design. Mr. Fifield stated that he likes Mr. Brady's suggestion to utilize the two materials.

Mr. Fifield moved to adopt the staff recommendation of **approval** for the pool and water feature but **defer** the matter regarding the paving. Mr. Brady seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

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With no other business to discuss, Mr. Fifield moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Brady seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at approximately 4 PM.