

VIEUX CARRÉ COMMISSION ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE

Mitchell J. Landrieu  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block  
DIRECTOR

Architectural Committee meeting of **Tuesday, August 23rd, 2016**

**Committee Members Present:** Daniel Taylor, Nick Musso, Rick Fifield,

**Committee Members Absent:** Dennis Brady, George Hero,

**Staff Present:** Bryan Block, Interim Director; Nicholas G. Albrecht, Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Plans Examiner; Erika Gates, Building Inspector; Reneé Bourgogne, Architectural Historian

**Staff Absent:**

**Others Present:** Henry Hanisee, Mark Thomas, Logan Trotter, John Williams, Landon Anderson, Jennifer Rowe, Ned and Becky Newsham, Roger McCallal, Danny Taylor, Steve Finegan, David McMurphy, Betty Norris, Ashraf Awadalla, Tony Lamartz, Patrick Capella, Corbett Scott, Loretta Harmon

## AGENDA

### Old Business

336-340 Decatur St: Mark Thomas, applicant; Joseph C Paciera, owner; Proposal to demolish existing yellow-rated structure and construct new four story building, per application and materials received 07/04/15 & 08/16/16.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Messrs. Hanisee and Thomas present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso noted that the applicants did what the Committee asked them to do. Mr. Musso continued that options J & K have denser openings and that both address what was asked by the Architectural Committee. Mr. Musso continued that he was leaning towards a less dense fenestration.

Mr. Fifield stated that he found scheme F successful but noted that the still found the stepped up cornice element superficial. Mr. Fifield noted that the stepped up cornice doesn't do much to accentuate the building entrance.

Mr. Taylor stated that he would like to see more fenestration and more transparency. Mr. Block noted that staff suggested adding more fenestration. Mr. Taylor noted that there needs to be more glass on the second and third floors, noting that the current plans features so much mass that it seems unfriendly.

Mr. Block inquired if the Committee believed there needs to be a different language on the Conti elevation. Mr. Musso responded that there should be a different language on the Conti elevation because of the long vista. Mr. Taylor stated that there should be a sense of openness turning the corner.

Mr. Williams, in the audience, inquired if the Committee would be moving forward with the demolition application and asked if the applicants have spoken to or made arrangement with the immediate neighbor. Mr. Thomas stated that they have not reached out. Mr. Hanisee stated that they should have received a letter and that he has been talking to the staff of the shop in the neighboring building.

Mr. Musso stated that he recommend the proposed options E & F being developed and that he prefers option E. Mr. Taylor stated that he prefers option F with more glass. Mr. Musso stated that the applicants should continue to develop options E & F and study more transparency on the Conti St. elevation.

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Mr. Musso moved to encourage the designers to follow up on options E & F with more transparency. Mr. Fifield stated that he likes the aligned balcony and overhang of scheme F and seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote, Mr. Thomas inquired about the permit for demolition. Mr. Musso noted that there is a tenant for the building and the building is nearing a design development approval. Mr. Musso stated that the demolition could be considered at the next Commission meeting.

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411 Bourbon St: John C. Williams, applicant; Cajun 411 LLC, owner; Proposal to install rooftop mechanical equipment with screening to rear building and add exterior lighting, per application & materials received 01/11/16 & 08/15/16, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Messrs. Williams and Anderson present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Musso stated that he agrees about the light fixtures noted in the staff report and asked that the lighting guidelines be followed. Mr. Musso continued that he was concerned about the locking gate and the placement of barriers to exits.

Regarding the mechanical equipment, Mr. Fifield suggested exploring ground mounted locations. Mr. Williams stated that it was hard to get the compressors to fit into the courtyard. Mr. Fifield stated that placing condensers on a roof is a more commercial application and that he believes the equipment should be at grade. Mr. Fifield noted that the approved built-out roof addition looks directly onto the proposed equipment. Mr. Musso stated that he agrees the equipment shouldn't go on the roof.

Mr. Fifield moved for **deferral** regarding the mechanical equipment and **conceptual approval** of the lighting to be worked out with the staff as per the guidelines. Mr. Musso seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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111 Iberville St: John C. Williams, applicant; Badine Land Ltd, owner; Proposal to modify previously approved plans for rooftop mechanical equipment, per application & materials received 06/07/16 & 08/16/16, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Messrs. Williams and Anderson present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated that he was of the opinion that the equipment could do without the screen.

Mr. Anderson stated that the stucco would actually extend down to approximately 2'10" above the roof surface. Mr. Fifield noted that the screen would help with sound abatement and inquired if the generator would be run for testing regularly. Mr. Anderson replied that the generator would be tested once a week for about an hour. Mr. Fifield noted that the proposed screen does address the concerns he had regarding the equipment. Mr. Anderson noted that the stair access could be moved as suggested in the staff report.

Mr. Musso agreed with the recommendations of the staff and moved to **approve** the screen. The motion, seconded by Mr. Fifield, passed unanimously.

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511 Toulouse St: Jennifer Rowe, applicant; Apasra Properties, LLC, owner; Proposal to remove courtyard infill, install new courtyard balconies, relocate mechanical equipment, alter door and window openings, and renovate altered front elevation, per application & materials received 01/26/16 & 08/16/16, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Ms. Rowe present on behalf of the application. With no discussion necessary, Mr. Musso moved to **defer** the application, consistent with staff

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recommendations. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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1220 Dauphine St: Sarah Busch, applicant; Barda Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to modify previously approved plans with the installation of a raised mechanical rack, per application & materials received 06/21/16 & 08/16/16, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. McMurphy present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso questioned the stability of the wall. Mr. McMurphy noted that it would have to be rebuilt. Mr. Musso requested that the drawings be revised to reflect the rebuilding of the wall. Mr. Musso also noted that the proposal may run into trouble with Safety & Permits with regards to inspection and maintenance and he was concerned that the proposal does not meet mechanical code.

Mr. Fifield moved to **defer** the application. Mr. Musso seconded the motion, noting that finalizing the proposal at the staff level would be ok, and the motion passed unanimously.

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1036 N Rampart St: Corbett Scott, applicant; Wwl-Tv Inc, Itamar Levy, owner; Proposal to renovate building, including providing new accessibility and installing rooftop mechanical equipment, in conjunction with a **change of use** from *vacant* to *restaurant*, per application & materials received 07/06/16 & 08/18/16, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Scott present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield expressed concern for the placement of mechanical equipment on the roof. Mr. Scott stated that he had additional information regarding the mechanical units, which he shared with the Committee members. Mr. Fifield noted that it looks like the mechanical equipment projects above the roof line. Mr. Musso noted that the mechanical code was requiring things that the Commission would rather not see, the fixed mechanical ladder being an example.

Mr. Fifield inquired about the material for the ramp. Mr. Scott said they were considering either wood or metal. Mr. Musso noted a desire to protect the edge of the building no longer accessible because of the installation of the ramp.

Mr. Fifield inquired about the height of the guardrail on the rear gallery. Mr. Scott noted that the landing was not above 30" above grade and therefore did not require a code compliant guard. Mr. Scott also noted that the French doors need to be joined together to provide the necessary width for wheelchairs and that the kitchen doors were already joined together.

Mr. Taylor inquired about the tonnage size of the units. Mr. Scott replied that they were 5, 5, and 4 respectively. Mr. Fifield inquired if there were two areas of mechanical equipment. Mr. Scott replied that the other area indicated in the plans was only for small roof penetrations.

Mr. Fifield moved for **conceptual approval** consistent with the staff recommendation with the mechanical equipment to be studied further to be more in conformance with the guidelines. Mr. Musso seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Following the vote, Mr. Fifield recommended that the applicant provide information showing the non-visibility of the proposed mechanical area.

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620 Decatur St: Robert Cangelosi, Jr., applicant; Josephine Paciera Prop Inc, owner; Proposal to demolish clock/sign pylon and construct new ticket kiosk, per application & materials received 07/22/16.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Taylor present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield stated that the drawings showed a beautifully detailed kiosk but he agreed with the staff that another structure on the site raises concerns. Mr. Musso stated that he prefers the drawings

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to the existing structure.

Ms. Lousteau, in the audience representing VCPORA, stated that the kiosk was well designed and located on private property but expressed concerns that it was a very busy corner and drop off location for bus services.

Mr. Musso stated he was leaning towards deferral of the application because of the numerous other conditions besides the architecture. Mr. Musso suggested the applicant provide a more comprehensive site plan to better understand the dynamics of the site.

Mr. Musso moved to **defer** the application to allow better understanding of the scope and the larger site plan and requested that staff supply additional photographs of the area. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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200 N Rampart: Rampart Garage LLC, applicant/owner; Proposal to install custom, panelized metal guardrail, per application & materials received 03/14/16 & 08/16/16, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Stewart present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso commented that there are multiple manufacturers that make custom grid panels. Mr. Fifield stated that the Committee had previously requested a comprehensive renovation plan for the property, and that the current proposal was limited to code compliance. Mr. Stewart explained that the owner planned to implement a renovation in stages.

Mr. Fifield stated that the provided photo of the mockup was insufficient for Committee review. Mr. Musso added that any modifications to the railings would only be approvable as part of a proposal for the entire building, and that complete drawings should be provided.

Mr. Fifield asked the applicant to keep the mockup in place for Committee members to review in person, and moved to **defer** the application until a complete renovation proposal is submitted for Committee review. Mr. Musso seconded the motion, asking for elevations and details to be included in the next submittal. The motion passed unanimously.

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## **New Business**

717 Ursulines Ave: Steve Finegan, applicant; Louisiana Historic Holdings, LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate main building and dependency, and to construct a new pool house in rear courtyard, per application & materials received 07/18/16.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Finegan, Mr. & Mrs. Newsham & Mr. McCallal present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield asked why the alterations to the pool house were being proposed. Mr. Newsham stated that the owner would prefer to have an open lounge area. Mr. Fifield asked staff why there were concerns about eliminating the doors and opening up the pool house. Staff stated that the lack of doors was a more contemporary approach that did not match the proposed traditional style of the overall building. Mr. Musso agreed that the building should be opened up more than currently proposed, or not at all. Mr. Fifield agreed that the design should develop in a more contemporary manner so as not to be confused with a historic building. Mr. Fifield moved to **defer** the application. Mr. Musso seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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500-504 Bourbon St: Ashraf Awadalla, applicant; Sol Owens, Chris S Owens, owner; Proposal to convert existing folding door system to new storefront system with exterior counter, per application & materials received 08/11/16 & 08/15/16, respectively.

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Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Awadalla present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso noted that an exterior counter becomes a place for people to loiter and noted that this corner suffers from some of the most frequent crime in the French Quarter.

Mr. Fifield noted that it was appropriate to consider more of a restoration for this portion of the building, noting that setting windows and doors back within the opening moves the focus farther away from the street.

Mr. Awadalla inquired if the major problem was the proposed counter. Mr. Fifield replied that the counter along with the proposed storefront. Mr. Awadalla inquired if retaining the accordion doors would be acceptable. Mr. Fifield stated that those elements could be maintained but encouraged the applicant to consider more of a restoration. Mr. Taylor noted that the elevation was in need of some restoration and cleaning up.

Mr. Fifield moved to **defer** the application to allow the applicant to respond to staff and Committee comments. Mr. Musso seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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## Appeals & Violations

733 Bourbon St: Vasileios Zarganis, applicant; Louis J Arbizzani, owner; Proposal to relocate unpermitted HVAC compressors and satellite dish, and to install VCC approvable lighting, per application & materials received 05/17/16 & 08/19/16, respectively. **[Notice of Violation sent 04/05/16]**

[Mr. Musso recused himself and temporarily left the meeting prior to the presentation of the staff report.]

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Capella present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield commended the applicant on the clear documentation of existing violations. With no further discussion necessary, Mr. Fifield moved to **approve** the retention of the relocated satellite dish and **conceptually approve** the retention of the HVAC units, consistent with staff recommendation. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

[Mr. Musso returned to the meeting after the motion passed.]

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234-40 Bourbon St, 736-40 Bienville St: Bourbon Saloon, Inc, applicant; Richard J Esteve, owner; Proposal to address outstanding violations by removing existing unpermitted lighting and installing VCC approvable fixtures below first floor balcony, per application & materials received 07/14/16 & 08/11/16, respectively. **[Notice of Violation sent 07/01/16]**

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Lamartz present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated that, on this particular building, he felt it would be more appropriate to locate the light between openings, rather than over architectural features. Mr. Fifield suggested that the applicant consult with an LED professional, and Mr. Musso suggested the use of an LED can light with adjustable beam spread and intensity.

Mr. Musso moved to **defer** the application, with final review and permitting by staff. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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435 Bourbon St: Ed Kimball/ Work Construction Company, Inc, applicant; Copping Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to address outstanding violations by installing new eyebrow windows on front elevation and replacing unpermitted balcony railing extension with VCC approved railing extension, per application & materials received 08/04/16. **[Notice of Violation sent 05/06/16]**

*The item was deferred due to a lack of representation on behalf of the application.*

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235-37 Bourbon St: Loretta Harmon, applicant; 235 Holdings, LLC, owner; Appeal to retain unpermitted balcony railing extension and security cameras, per application & materials received 08/09/16.

[Prior to reading the staff report, Mr. Musso requested that staff present the reports for 235-37 Bourbon and 239-41 Bourbon together. The Committee made a single motion for both properties.]

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Ms. Harmon present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso noted that the extraneous exterior vents and piping should be removed. Mr. Fifield agreed with staff recommendation to raise the guardrail and remove the unpermitted extension. Ms. Harmon agreed to modify the rail as asked. Mr. Musso moved to **deny** items 1 and 11, **approve** items 2.1, 6.3, 10 and 12.2, and **defer** items 7 and 15 with drawings to be submitted for further staff review. All motions were consistent with staff recommendations, to be reviewed and permitted by staff in a phased manner, with additional recommendations to be made by staff as appropriate. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

*[See report for 235-37 Bourbon, above. The motion for 235-37 Bourbon also applied to 239-41 Bourbon.]*

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239-41 Bourbon St: Loretta Harmon, applicant; 241 Holdings, LLC, Nicole M Touzet, owner; Appeal to retain unpermitted balcony railing extension, signage, security cameras and HVAC units, and to install new French doors and shutters, per application & materials received 08/09/16. **[Notice of Violation sent 07/01/16]**

*[See report for 235-37 Bourbon, above. The motion for 235-37 Bourbon also applied to 239-41 Bourbon.]*

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227-229 Bourbon St: Loretta Harmon, applicant; 227 Bourbon Street, Inc., owner; Proposal to address outstanding violations including retention of commercial hood vent, installation of millwork in existing openings, retention of retractable awnings, retention of building mounted fans, and various other proposed work, per application & materials received 08/09/16. **[Notice of Violation sent 06/23/16]**

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

Mr. Fifield inquired if the awnings were initially installed without approval. Staff replied that they were. Ms. Harmon noted that the owner would like to replace the awnings with new ones. Mr. Fifield noted that the awnings change the shape of the courtyard and stated that he appreciated the retractable function of the awnings but that he suspects the awnings are rarely retracted. Mr. Musso noted that the awnings may affect the open space requirements.

Regarding the lighting, Mr. Musso noted that the light fixtures should provide adequate lighting. Mr. Taylor noted that the security footage may be improved because there will be less contrast between light and dark.

Mr. Fifield moved to defer the application to allow the applicant to consider comments of the staff and Committee members and return with a revised proposal to be reviewed by the Architectural Committee. Mr. Musso noted that he is relatively in agreeance with the staff report and seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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730 Esplanade Ave, 729-33 Barracks: Loretta Harmon, applicant; 730 Esplanade LLC, owner; Proposal to correct or retain numerous violations of work without permits including rooftop mechanical equipment and skylights, modification of window and door openings, and constructing a new courtyard enclosure wall, per application & materials received 08/16/16 & 08/17/16, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Ms. Harmon and Mr. Carimi present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso noted that the vast number of the conditions are in need of modifications.

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Mr. Musso noted that he would need to physically see the conditions. He continued that the roof plan looks so cluttered, though he relates to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Mr. Musso stated that replacing the arched transom is important, that the additional new window should be reconsidered, and that the reduction in roof hatches was appropriate. Mr. Musso stated that the work was done without permits from the VCC and that he wants to be selective in his consideration of the proposal.

Mr. Musso noted that he would be proposing deferral but that he would like to meet on site to see everything in person. Mr. Fifield agreed noting that given the vast amount of unpermitted work there needs to be a site visit.

Mr. Fifield continued that these buildings are of architectural merit and that buildings become less important with incremental changes and that this was an example of a lot of incremental changes at once. Mr. Fifield continued that the previous architect made a convincing argument for the proposed work. Mr. Fifield noted that the building has lost a significant amount through willful modifications.

Mr. Carimi noted that they had sketches showing interior furniture layouts and electrical plans but no full building plans.

Mr. Fifield stated that he agonized over the pool application and that he thinks he made a mistake approving that application. Mr. Musso noted the need for an overall comprehensive approach.

Susan Guillot, in the audience, stated that she spoke with the owner and that he is fully committed to correcting the violations. Mr. Musso responded stating that he always appreciates that attitude but noted that he has seen many owners not live up to that claim.

Mr. Fifield noted that his decisions would be based on the architectural merit and historic fabric. Mr. Musso noted that the City has a responsibility to uphold the law. Ms. Lousteau, in the audience, stated that she would like to believe that everything will be made right. Ms. Lousteau inquired if the site visit would be open to the public. Mr. Musso responded that he could not ask that of the owner.

Ms. Lousteau noted that the VCC has credibility to enforcing standards.

Mr. Carimi noted that he has done work with the owner for many years and that they have been working on this project over two years. Mr. Carimi noted that a lot of decisions were made based off of sketches that didn't get permitted. Mr. Carimi stated that he dropped the ball but had no malice or ill intent.

Mr. Musso stated that they try to avoid incremental plans and that a comprehensive plan of corrective work was needed. Mr. Musso stated that an architect should have been consulted and plans submitted for review.

Mr. Fifield moved to **defer** the application to allow the Committee to visit the site and the applicant to return to the Architectural Committee. Mr. Musso seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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## **Other Business**

841 Iberville St: Canal Street Development Corp, Mercier Realty And Invst Co, owner; Discussion of current status of permitted stucco and waterproofing work, VCC permit [15-14695-VCPNT] issued 08/18/15.

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

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With no additional business to discuss Mr. Fifield moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion, seconded by Mr. Musso, passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:47 PM.