

VIEUX CARRE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

LaToya Cantrell
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block
DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday, April 12, 2022,

Homeland Security Conference Room, 8th Floor, City Hall, 1300 Perdido Street at 1:00 PM.

NOTE: The below minutes are in draft form and are a summary of actions taken. They are not a verbatim transcription of the meeting.

Minutes of the VCC Architectural Committee meeting of Tuesday, April 12, 2022– 1:00 pm.

Committee Members Present: Rick Fifield, Stephen Bergeron, Toni DiMaggio

Staff Present: Renée Bourgogne, Deputy Director; Nick Albrecht, Senior Building Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Senior Building Plans Examiner

Staff Absent: Bryan Block, Director; Marguerite Roberts, Inspector; Tony Whitfield, Inspector

Others Present: Gabriel Virdure, Jamie Saxon, Amy Garrett, Erika Gates, Rose Lemarie, Hank Smith, Marc Savoie, Dawn Klepfer, Steve Thompson, Steve Olson, Michael Pousson, Steve Finegan, Patrick Tucker, Kurt Werling

AGENDA

Old Business

619 Royal St: 20-30797-VCGEN; Trapolin Peer Architects, applicant; 619 Royal Street LLC, owner; Proposal to modify structure of 2nd and 3rd floor balconies on Royal elevation, per application & materials received 06/09/2020 & 04/05/2022, respectively.
<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=846242>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Virdure and Mr. Saxon present on behalf of the application. Ms. Virdure stated the following: they were in the process of removing the second-floor door frames when they found that the arch was collapsing, so they decided it needed to be rebuilt immediately. To do this, they needed to remove the outriggers, which she stated they had always planned to remove since it was not sufficient for use. They had proposed to do Option 2 first, but then came up with Option 1.

Mr. Fifield noted that there had been other issues with notifying the VCC regarding structural concerns and asked why they called the owner but did not find it prudent to inform staff. Ms. Virdure stated that it was a “quick” decision made and they just “let them do it,” but that they probably should have in hindsight. Ms. Bourgogne addressed the Committee and stated that, in light of what they had just heard, next time there would be a SWO posted, but that staff had given them the courtesy of contacting the architect immediately. Mr. Fifield agreed and asked the Committee if there were any other questions.

Mr. Bergeron asked if the outriggers were cast iron. Mr. Saxon stated that the originals were barely 2” deep and only held by a washer and pin, all wrought iron, and that they were totally unsafe for use. He added that they were trying to get 100lbs per square foot and they would limit the balcony use. Mr. Bergeron asked if they could replicate the detail at the end where the guardrail would enter as recommended by staff. Mr. Saxon responded no, they did not have craftsmen able to do that job. Ms. Bourgogne reminded the Committee that they had in fact required this at other properties. Ms. Vogt added that at those two properties the work had not yet begun due to the pandemic. Mr. Fifield asked if they could leave the balconies alone and not occupy them; Mr. Saxon responded that they would have no other option as the iron was rusted out.

Mr. Fifield asked if they were modifying the height as well. Ms. Virdure stated yes. Mr. Bergeron asked if the existing purlins could be salvaged. Mr. Saxon stated no, they would be treated lumber as proposed. Ms. Virdure asked about the staff recommendation for the third floor. Ms. Vogt stated that staff does not make recommendations on structural matters. Ms. Virdure stated that they wished to maintain the outriggers with brackets on every other outrigger and vertical posts for stability, everywhere there is a vertical post it would tie into an outrigger. Ms. DiMaggio asked if Mr. Saxon had investigated the 3rd floor. Mr. Saxon stated yes, but for

limited use only at 40-50 per square foot.

Mr. Fifield moved on to the masonry wall. Ms. Viridure stated that they wished to rebuild with a spread footing. She went on to say that there was also an opening between 619 and the neighboring property at 623 that was filled in they wished to restore. Mr. Bergeron brought everyone's attention to slide 32, stating that the wall in the photo didn't look like the drawing. He went on to ask if it had been documented. Ms. Viridure stated that the contractor had but that they would take better dimensions. Mr. Bergeron stated that an architect needed to go on site and document.

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio stated that she was having trouble with replacement versus loss of detail. Mr. Bergeron asked staff if outriggers were usually added or if they were replaced in situations like this. Both Ms. Vogt and Ms. Bourgoigne stated that it was not common, but replacement was typically the route taken. Before the motion Mr. Fifield stated that the degree of change for this important detail was crucial and that now it was simply gone and that was not anticipated. He went on to say that they were losing these details at an alarming rate.

Ms. DiMaggio moved to **defer** the proposal to allow the applicant time to study the 2nd and 3rd floor balconies in light of today's conversation, to make a good faith effort on finding craftsmen who could replicate the outriggers, and to revise any other elements requested by staff or the Committee. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

420 Bourbon St: 21-11809-VCGEN; David Merlin, applicant; Quarter Holdings LLC, owner;

Proposal to reinforce existing balcony joists on dependency, per application & materials received 04/27/2021 & 03/29/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=882784>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Garrett present on behalf of the application. Ms. Garrett stated that one joist would be totally replaced due to termite damage, but that the majority were in good shape and they were proposing to reinforce them all to meet 50 lbs. per sq. ft. load since it was not assembly use. Ms. DiMaggio asked what methods staff was referring to; Ms. Vogt responded either countersinking or removing the joists, replacing them with metal, and then installing routed wood "joists" around them; she added that this was obviously much more extensive but would provide a cleaner look if the Committee was concerned about visibility. Ms. Garrett stated that they intended to countersink the bolts.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **conceptual approval** of the proposal with the details to be handled at the staff level. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1014 N Rampart St: 21-29855-VCPNT; David Fuselier, applicant; 1014 N Rampart LLC, owner;

Proposal to install exterior string lights at side alley on a permanent basis, per application & materials received 10/25/2021 & 02/03/2022.

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Starring present on behalf of the application. Ms. Vogt stated that the lights were not as bright in person as they appeared. Mr. Starring stated that he agreed with Ms. Vogt and that they were spread out further than the previous bulbs. Ms. DiMaggio asked about spillage into neighboring properties; Ms. Vogt stated that there would be less than existing, comparing it again to the property with unpermitted string lights next door.

Ms. Szalwinski addressed the Committee stating that she was against approval and a more permanent solution should be proposed.

Mr. Starring stated that he had climbed above the lights and it was darker with the shades, noticeably so compared to next door. Mr. Fifield asked if the Design Guidelines considered string lights to be a permanent solution; Ms. Vogt responded that the Guidelines currently were referring primarily to "Christmas lights" but that staff was trying to find an approvable solution for the fact that they are in very strong demand. Ms. DiMaggio commented that this was working to bring the lighting into compliance with the Guidelines. Mr. Fifield added that there would always be some light spillage, but that we needed to make sure it was not excessive. Ms. DiMaggio

noted that string lights could be very easily reversible.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **approve** the string lights inspected by staff. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

1201-03 Bourbon: 22-03965-VCGEN; Erika Gates, applicant; Rose J Lemarie owner;

Proposal to replace decking with Aeratis synthetic decking, per application & materials received 03/07/2022.

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Gates and the owner, Ms. Lemarie, present on behalf of the application. Ms. Gates stated that given that the stringers were not original, she believed that would make this decision easier. Ms. Lemarie stated that the decking had been a problem since they purchased the property ten years ago and that they had had issues with it from the beginning. She added that every time they fixed it, within a matter of weeks they would have issues. Ms. Lemarie stated that it was in the constant, direct sun and that the elements were always beating down.

Mr. Fifield asked if the staff recommendation was unchanged; Ms. Vogt responded that it did not meet the unofficial criteria for approval. Mr. Bergeron asked if it could be allowed on green buildings if they were uncovered. Ms. Vogt stated that she was unsure how many of the unofficial criteria needed to be met for the Committee to consider it approvable, but that it was their decision. Ms. DiMaggio noted that the higher number and tighter spacing of purlins was a visual difference.

Public Comment:

Mr. Smith asked if the owner had considered Spanish cedar. Mr. Fifield stated that the Committee had suggested other treated woods, or possibly thicker boards. Ms. Vogt stated that there was a project on Chartres that had used thicker boards and it was not successful based on visual difference.

Ms. Lemarie stated that the gallery was not as old as the building. Mr. Fifield stated that it was still 19th century and historic. He did not find any substantial difference between this property and others that had been approved by the Committee.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **approve** the use of Aeratis decking. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

532 N Rampart St: 21-01164-VCGEN; Werling Kurt, applicant; Mercier Realty Co Inc, owner;

Proposal to renovate building including installation of a new standing seam metal roof and reconstruction of portion of masonry wall, per application & materials received 03/24/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=920307>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Werling present on behalf of the application. Mr. Werling noted that the proposed TPO would be a light gray. Regarding the rear wall, Mr. Werling noted that the existing tongue and groove wall was standalone without additional framing. He continued that the window proposed to access the lower roof would be to allow ladders to be brought out to access the upper roof. Mr. Fifield asked if the roof of the rear building had been altered. Mr. Albrecht responded that it was very likely that both the roof of the service ell and the main building had been altered.

Mr. Bergeron asked what was behind the tongue and groove wall. Mr. Werling stated that there was nothing, just the tongue and groove. Mr. Werling noted the proposal to install a new wall with a stucco finish and that the neighboring matching building had gone to this condition. Ms. DiMaggio asked if there was a way to minimize the awkwardness of the proposed window, such as a door with glazing to match the adjacent eyebrow windows.

Public Comment: Hank Smith noted that he did the matching building next door and the rear was once a gallery, likely enclosed around the turn of the century.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion for **approval** with the exception of the siding material being stucco in light of the information discussed and a preference for an infill type material such as the existing wood cladding with details at staff including a new roof access. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

301 Decatur St: 21-31497-VCGEN; John C Williams, applicant; Royal Street Investments LLC, owner;

Proposal to modify existing storefront doors including reversing the doors to out swinging, per application & materials received 11/11/2021 & 03/21/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=906832>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Williams present on behalf of the application. Mr. Williams noted that they would not be asking for the proposed change if the fire marshal had not requested it. Mr. Fifield asked if they had made a formal appeal to the fire marshal. Mr. Williams responded that they were told the door needed to swing out but did not appeal that decision.

Mr. Bergeron noted that it appeared from photographs that when the building was operating all the doors were typically wide open. Mr. Williams replied that those photographs were from a previous occupant and it was not the intention of this occupant to operate in that manner. Ms. DiMaggio asked if the door hardware would conflict with the existing lites. Mr. Williams stated that he was sure the hardware would be acceptable but he did not know the details. Mr. Williams stated that the hardware would not be visible and would be installed below the glass.

Justin Schmidt, representing various neighbors, noted their opposition to this proposal.

Mr. Fifield noted that without the proposed hardware there were some unanswered questions. Ms. DiMaggio noted that if the hardware has to be added in a certain way it starts to visually add to this door. Mr. Bergeron noted that if there was a precedent of working with the fire marshal and buildings to not modify the building for exiting and that some kind of documentation noting a denial of an appeal.

Nikki Szalwinski, representing French Quarter Citizens, asked for a deferral of the application until the details on hardware have been submitted. Ms. Szalwinski suggested that the applicant could approach the fire marshal noting they would like to keep the doors in-swinging and might they need to do in order to accomplish that. She concluded that there were many business in New Orleans and in other historic districts that operate with in-swinging doors and changing to out-swinging is negatively modernizing the buildings.

Mr. Schmidt asked if the doors would swing out over the public right of way. Mr. Albrecht noted that the plan detail drawing showed them swing out past the pilasters of the building.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion to **defer** in order to allow the applicant time to submit documentation from the Fire Marshal and if required to submit a complete proposal for hardware. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

1122 Decatur St: 21-00781-VCGEN; Christione Turner, applicant; El-Jaouhari LLC, owner;

Proposal to install new mechanical keyless lock, per application & materials received 03/11/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=869802>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Savoie present on behalf of the application. Mr. Savoie stated that they just wanted to see if this hardware might be approvable. Mr. Fifield asked if there was actually any historic hardware left on the door. Ms. DiMaggio laughed and stated from which era. Mr. Bergeron asked why they needed this type of lock. Mr. Savoie stated that the owner just didn't like keys. Mr. Fifield stated "well it is not illuminated, so I guess it is less intrusive."

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion for the **approval** of the proposal with the details to be worked out at the staff level. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

927 Toulouse St: 22-08037-VCGEN; Witten Roofing, applicant; Touns Family Investment Company LLC, owner;
Proposal to repair and patch existing slate roof with slate shingles that do not match existing, per application &

materials received 03/17/2022 & 03/02/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=919404>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Ms. Klepfer and Mr. Thompson present on behalf of the application and the roofing company. Mr. Fifield asked how many slates needed to be replaced. Mr. Thompson stated 30-40. Mr. Fifield asked how this would affect the coursing. Mr. Thompson stated that it might but that it shouldn't be too big of a problem. Mr. Fifield suggested cutting off the extra slate. Mr. Thompson stated yes, that they could do that.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron recommended **approval** of the submitted slate tiles with them possibly being modified to course out with the exiting tiles. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

After the motion Mr. Thompson stated that they wanted to do a full roof replacement. Ms. Bourgogne apologized for the confusion. She stated that staff was under the impression that this was for a patch. She went on to say that staff could take care of this.

1114 Royal St: 22-08064-VCGEN; Witten Roofing, applicant; Toups Family Investment Company LLC, owner; Proposal to repair and patch existing slate roof with slate shingles that do not match existing, per application & materials received 03/17/2022 & 03/02/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=919402>

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion for the **deferral** of the application in order for the applicant to work with staff. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

518 Conti St: 22-08224-VCGEN; Steven J Finegan Architects, applicant; Llmv Properties LLC, owner; Proposal to replace double hung windows with casements, per application & materials received 03/18/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=919518>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Finegan present on behalf of the application. Mr. Finegan stated that the owner had just purchased the property and he had not seen the rear of the building or the roof yet. He added that the owner preferred the look of the building with no shutters, and commented that the openings were not totally square.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Bergeron moved for **conceptual approval** of the proposal to replace the front windows, **denial** of the shutter removal and the **approval** of the Juliet balconies, with the proviso that all violations must be addressed. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

601 Decatur St: 22-09008-VCGEN; Patrick Tucker, applicant; Helen Manitzas Malachias, owner;

Proposal to add 9" railing extension above existing gallery railing and to install new synthetic decking, per application & materials received 03/25/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=920407>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Tucker present on behalf of the application. The applicant stated that they agreed with scheme A. Mr. Bergeron stated that staff needed more information. The applicant agreed to provide the additional materials. Mr. Bergeron asked the Committee how they felt about respacing the purlins. Mr. Fifield stated "well we just approved it on Bourbon."

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion for the **approval** of scheme A and the **deferral** of the decking until the applicant could give staff the requested details. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

936 St Peter St: 22-09075-VCGEN; Corky Willhite, applicant/owner;

Proposal to install Aeratis synthetic decking at existing second floor side balcony, per application & materials received 03/28/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=920622>

There was no one present on behalf of the application.

Mr. Bergeron made the motion for the **deferral** of the application. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

600 Decatur St: 22-09434-VCGEN; Steve Olson, applicant; Jackson Brewery Millhouse LLC, owner;

Review of concept to replace existing wood windows with new aluminum windows and insulating glass, per application & materials received 03/29/2022.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=920795>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Pousson and Mr. Olson present on behalf of the application. Mr. Olson stated that they were seeking preliminary feedback. He went on to say that they needed to strengthen the glass as well as do something ecofriendly. Mr. Fifield asked if they planned to do this on all frontages. The applicant stated yes, they wanted to address holistically. Mr. Fifield stated that they needed to see a full proposal and their full assessment. Ms. DiMaggio stated that for a scope of work this size she believed they needed to at least say if this was a possibility. Mr. Fifield agrees.

There was no public comment.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion to **defer** the application in order for the applicant to research VCC records and to undertake a more thorough survey. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Appeals and Violations

624 Dumaine St: 19-02566-VCGEN; Hank Smith, applicant; Bienville Street Outback LLC, owner;

Proposal to stucco over improperly repaired masonry wall, per application & materials received 01/31/2019 & 04/06/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=791830>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Smith present on behalf of the application. Mr. Smith stated that he agree with staff that something should be done in the stucco to indicate the old roof line. Mr. Fifield asked if any details had been drawn for the stucco returns to windows. Mr. Smith stated not yet, but it would be a traditional stucco. Mr. Fifield noted the importance of this viewshed.

Nikki Szalwinski, representing French Quarter Citizens, stated that what has happened at this property is a travesty and if it may be possible moving forward to figure out a way to inspect work before it gets to that point. Ms. Szalwinski stated that she would like to see the work corrected rather than stuccoed over.

Mr. Bergeron asked if the damage was limited to only a portion of the wall. Mr. Smith stated correct. Mr. Bergeron continued that they would be stuccoing the whole wall as it did not make sense to only stucco a portion of the wall. Mr. Fifield asked if the gable was tied to the internal wood framing and suggested that as part of this work we might want to investigate that condition. Mr. Smith stated that he would be glad to get into the attic and see what the conditions are for the gable wall.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **conceptually approve** the proposed stucco work with final details to be worked out at the staff level and with the applicant to investigate the structural condition of the existing masonry gable wall and advise if any additional structural remediation is necessary, presented in a written report. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

623 Bourbon St: 21-32162-VCPNT; Smoke Shop, applicant; Peri Luscent Ltd, owner;

Proposal to renovate carriageway including the installation of new decorative light fixtures and painting, in conjunction with a proposed change of use from *vacant* to *art gallery*, per application & materials received

11/16/2021 & 01/10/2022, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=907347>

There was no one present on behalf of the application.

Ms. DiMaggio made the motion to **defer** the application to the next ARC where the application would be heard with or without an applicant. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

1015 Burgundy St: 22-06004-VCNT; 1015 Burgundy St: Mallernee Debra, applicant; Alan M Claghorn, Bryan J Watson, Lia C Tealdi, Stephen V Mallernee, Walter Blake Costello, Nancy G Moragas, Stephen V Mallernee, Wendy S Schwartz, owner; Appeal to retain vinyl window and string lights installed on gallery, per application & materials received 02/24/2022. **[Notice of Violation sent 02/8/2022]**

Following multiple deferrals due to the absence of representation on behalf of the application, the Committee requested to hear the staff report. Ms. Vogt presented the property report.

Ms. Szalwinski addressed the Committee stating that inappropriate string lights were being installed all over the Quarter, and that the window was likely installed when it was converted to a condo. She stated that it had been poorly maintained.

Mr. Bergeron moved to **deny** the appeal as recommended by staff. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

439 Royal St: 22-07151-VCGEN; Gates Erika, applicant; The Tortorici Building LLC, owner; Appeal to retain added rail extension installed without benefit of VCC review and approval, per application & materials received 03/09/2022. **[Notice of Violation sent 10/24/2018]**

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Redirect.aspx?SearchString=22-07151-VCGEN>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Gates present on behalf of the application. Ms. Gates stated that the rail was existing and minimally impacted the historic rail. She added that they wanted to apply for retention in case it could be approved, but given the fact that it was not code compliant they would likely have to come back with an alternate proposal

Ms. Szalwinski addressed the Committee, stating she would like to see a standard design replicated at various properties. Several members of staff and the Committee stated that it could not be standardized as every rail in the district different in some way, therefore a "standard" wouldn't always apply.

Mr. Fifield noted that the rail was not modifying the historic rail and was clearly additive, but asked why they even built a 3'-10" rail. Ms. Gates responded that the current owner had no idea as the work had been completed by a previous owner. She went on to say that she believed the intention was to make it feel safer. Ms. Vogt stated that the pipe was also quite thick and that we had approved other options that were less weighty and more minimal. Mr. Bergeron agreed that it was too heavy and too tall, stating that was why he was "hung up" on whether to approve.

Ms. DiMaggio moved to **deny** the application to retain with the applicant to propose an alternative rail extension. Mr. Bergeron seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Next AC Date: Tuesday, April 26, 2022

At approximately 3:40 Mr. Bergeron moved to **adjourn** the meeting. Ms. DiMaggio seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.