

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Lary P. Hesdorffer
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, March 4, 2015.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman
Daniel C. Taylor, Vice-Chairman
Leslie S. Stokes, Secretary
C.J. Blanda
Jorge A. Henriquez
Michael A. Skinner

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Patricia C. Denechaud

STAFF PRESENT: Lary P. Hesdorffer, Director; Nicholas G. Albrecht, Building Plans Examiners; Sarah Ripple, Architectural Historian; Erin Vogt, Building Plans Examiner; Erika Gates, Inspector; Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney.

OTHERS PRESENT: Thomas Harrell, Kathleen Manning, Zella May, James Monaghan, Joey Murray, Matthew Tranchina

AGENDA

I. ROLL CALL

Chairman Musso called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM. The Director called the roll, noting the presence of a quorum with five (5) of the seven (7) seated Commissioners in attendance. He added that four (4) positive votes are needed in order to pass any action.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES - Vieux Carre Commission meeting of February 4, 2015

Mr. Blanda moved, Mr. Taylor seconded, to accept the minutes of the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of February 4, 2015, as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Musso noted the advent of the annual French Quarter Festival. He explained that he has heard comments, both positive and negative, about the influence the festival has on the French Quarter as a whole and on individual properties. In an attempt to better understand the overall, cumulative effect, Mr. Musso asked that anyone wishing to make their concerns known to the VCC should submit any comments or recommendations to him or to the Director through the VCC office. After reviewing, it may be possible for the Commission to revisit this topic and any serious concerns.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Hesdorffer began the Director's Report as a continuation of the Chairman's comments. He acknowledged the beginning of what is commonly called "festival season" since so many public festivals begin with the better springtime weather. Mr. Hesdorffer explained that they City takes steps to coordinate all of the related activities that help to make the many festivals manageable, both those in the French Quarter and out. So much planning is really unseen by most of the public but there is planning that includes all aspects of public safety (Police, Fire & EMS) as well as Public Works and Sanitation in order to keep each neighborhood protected and operating as close to normal as possible.

Secondly, he noted that the 2014 VCC attendance report had been circulated among the members, and if there were no questions or corrections, the report would be forwarded to the Council as is the normal, annual practice.

Thirdly, Mr. Hesdorffer introduced two new staff members: Erika Gates, Building Inspector, and Erin Vogt, Building Plans Examiner, both of whom had begun their employment with the VCC since the last regular monthly meeting.

V. CHANGE OF USE HEARINGS

1032 Chartres St: Thomas Alexander Harrell, applicant; Bryan V Dupepe, owner; Installation of a 28" x 20" carved wood sign to hang from existing balcony in conjunction with a change of use from vacant (formerly restaurant) to restaurant, per application and materials received 02/23/15.

[Mr. Henriquez arrived during the reading of the staff report.]

Ms. Ripple gave the staff presentation with Mr. Harrell representing the application. Following the report, the Commission found no need for questions or discussion about the proposal. Mr. Taylor then moved, Mr. Skinner seconded, to **approve** the proposal, consistent with the staff's analysis and recommendations of March 4, 2015, to allow the installation of the signage and to recommend approval of the change of use to the Department of Safety & Permits. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

1000 Toulouse St: R. Volker Waterproofing, LLC, applicant; Hudson S Rogers, owner; Proposal to drill through hard plaster to facilitate removal by hand, per application received 12/11/14. [STOP WORK ORDER issued 11/21/14]

With no one present to represent the application, the matter was **deferred** to the next monthly Vieux Carré Commission meeting.

516 Conti St: Michael Tabb, applicant; 516 Conti LLC, owner; Proposal to stabilize riverside wall of rear building, per application & materials received 12/31/14 & 02/03/15, respectively. [Notice of Violation sent 11/3/2014]

Ms. Ripple gave the staff report with Mr. Murray present on behalf of the application. Chairman Musso reiterated from the staff report the high level of diligence with which the applicant has been working with the staff and Architectural Committee. With no further questions, Mr. Taylor moved, and Mr. Blanda seconded, to grant **conceptual approval** for the proposal consistent with the staff recommendation of March 4 2015, and to allow all final details and construction documents to be completed with the Architectural Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

727 Iberville St: American Restaurant, Inc., applicant; 730 Bienville Partners Ltd, owner; Appeal of Architectural Committee denial of proposal to retain hanging neon sign installed without benefit of VCC review or approval, per application received 12/31/14 and appeal letter received 02/20/2015. [Notice of Violation received 10/8/2014]

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Ms. Manning in attendance on behalf of the application. Ms. Manning requested a 30-day deferral to allow additional time for more research to be conducted in search of a sign permit that addressed the currently installed sign. Mr. Musso asked if any of the Commissioners had comments or any objections the applicant's request. Mr. Taylor then moved to **defer** the application for 30 days as requested. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

727 Toulouse St: Matthew Tranchina, applicant; 727 Toulouse, LLC, owner; Proposal to install seven-board fence along Bourbon side property line, per application & plans received 02/12/15. [STOP WORK ORDERS placed 06/15/12 and 07/30/12]

Ms. Ripple gave the staff presentation with Ms. May attending to represent the application. Following the staff presentation, the Chairman opened discussion for comment to the public and welcomed the only speaker request. Mr. Monaghan, one of the owners of 733 Toulouse, provided a personal history of the relationship between the 733 and 727 Toulouse properties, noting that during his family's ownership and while leasing the property to the hotel at 727 Toulouse, there has never been a fence dividing the alley. Furthermore, he requested there be a hold on this application.

The Commission then discussed with Ms. May the remaining, existing violations at 727 Toulouse, the STOP WORK ORDER placed on the property (for a duration of almost three years), and the complications raised by the proposal to install a new seven-board fence on the property line which will divide the narrow alleyway. The Director made clear that the VCC still awaits the submission of satisfactory details to resolve violations, which is why it has been impossible to issue permits to rectify the problems. Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Taylor moved, Ms. Stokes seconded, to **defer** the application consistent with the staff recommendations of March 4, 2015 and including the instruction that the applicant to submit the necessary applications to be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Committee to resolve all violations. The motion passed unanimously.

303 N Peters St: Carriere-Stumm, LLC, applicant; Bfst, LLC, owner; Proposal to remove existing Eternit composite roof shingles and install new 12" x 18" natural slate shingles and reinstall existing terra-cotta ridge tiles; for work begun without benefit of VCC review or approval, per application received 02/27/15. [STOP WORK ORDER placed 02/20/15]

Without the presence of the applicant, the Chairman asked staff if the project could be heard and considered by the Commission. Mr. Albrecht explained that even in the absence of the applicant, he believed that the staff report could make resolution possible. With that said, Mr. Albrecht presented the

Property Summary Report. With no further discussion necessary, Mr. Taylor moved to **approve** the application and lift the Stop Work Order for the issuance of a permit, consistent with the staff analysis and recommendation of March 4, 2015. Mr. Henriquez seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

VII. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, February 04, 2015 VCC meeting.

Mr. Taylor moved, Ms. Stokes seconded, to ratify the actions taken by the Architectural Committee and Staff since the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of February 4, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business to be considered, Mr. Taylor moved for adjournment. The motion, seconded by Ms. Stokes, passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

APPROVED: _____
Leslie Stokes, Secretary

NOTE: These minutes are a summary of actions taken and are not a verbatim transcription of the meeting.