

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, September 2nd, 2015.

DRAFT

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; Renée Bourgogne, Architectural Historian,
Nicholas G. Albrecht, Building Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Building Plans
Examiner; Erika Gates, Inspector; Melissa Quigley, Assistant City Attorney;

OTHERS PRESENT: Wendy Adams, Michel Antoine, Elaine Bean, Nolan Boutte, C.C Campbell-
Roch, R. Fortier-Benson, Kirk Fabacher, Pierre MCGraw, Oscar Gwin, Daniel
Hammer, Scott Hutcheson, Priscilla Lawrence, James Logan, Harry T.
Morgan, Michel Antoine Nicolas, Betty Norris, K. Brad Ott, Jimmie Pierre,
Ann Plicque, Michael Reaves, Doug Roune, Hank Smith, Rev. Jim
VanderWeele, Elaine Vigne, Andre Villere, Steve Willey, John Williams.

I. ROLL CALL

The Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 1:35 PM and requested a roll call. Mr. Hesdorffer called roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum with six (6) of seven (7) seated Commissioners in attendance. He further noted that with six (6) members present, four (4) affirmative votes are needed for any action to pass.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Mr. Blanda moved to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2015 Vieux Carre Commission meeting as circulated. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Noting the Special Order of Business and the potential length of the extended agenda, the Chairman deferred giving a report.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Similar to the Chairman's action, the Director waived giving a report in deference to the length of the agenda.

V. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS [to be held between 1:30 and 3:00 PM]

Code Section 146-611- Removal from public property by request from New Orleans City Council, evaluation and recommendation - Battle of Liberty Place monument.

The Staff report was given by Architectural Historian, Rene Bourgogne, giving historic background on the Battle of Liberty Place Monument, currently located at the intersection of Iberville Street and Badine.

Following the staff report, comments were heard from Scott Hutcheson with the Mayor's Office, as well as sixteen public speakers. The Commission addressed Article VII, Section 146-611 of the City Code - Public Monuments - Removal from Public Property.

Mr. Musso asked the Commissioners to make a motion that would advise the City Council. Mr. Taylor moved that the Vieux Carre Commission finds that the Battle of Liberty Place Monument fits the definition of nuisance in accordance with Article VII, Section 146-611 of the City Code-Public Monuments - Removal from Public Property and may be removed from public display. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion which passed unanimously with Mr. Taylor, Ms. Stokes, Mr. Blanda, Mr. Henriquez and Mr. Skinner, all voting in favor. As chairman, Mr. Musso did not vote.

Following the vote, the Chairman called for a 15 minute recess at 2:30 PM. He called the meeting back to order at 2:45 PM adding that if any application is taken up prior to the arrival of an applicant and prior to 3 PM, the Commission will defer it until later in the meeting.

VI. OLD BUSINESS [to begin at 3:00PM]

520 Royal St: Barry Siegel, applicant; Kemper & Leila Williams Foundation, owner; Proposal to demolish rear building in preparation for new construction, per application & materials received 08/18/15 & 08/26/15, respectively. [NOTE: this meeting marks the beginning of the 30-day layover period.]

616 Toulouse St: Barry Siegel, applicant; Kemper & Leila Williams Foundation, owner; Proposal to demolish portion of brown-rated structure in preparation for new construction, per application & materials received 08/18/15 & 08/26/15, respectively. [NOTE: this meeting marks the beginning of the 30-day layover period.]

Because the proposed demolitions at both 520 Royal and 616 Toulouse are part of a joint application, the reports were presented together by Mr. Albrecht with Ms. Lawrence representing the applications. Mr. Musso clarified that since there is no other work to be considered at this time, the Commission could allow the 30-day layover period to commence.

With no further discussion necessary, Mr. Taylor moved to authorize the beginning the 30-day layover period. Mr. Blanda seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

622 St Peter St: Kirk Fabacher, applicant; Mendel S Rau, owner; Proposal to demolish existing brown-rated rear structure and construct new building, per application & drawings received 03/24/15 & 08/18/15, respectively. [NOTE: this meeting marks the beginning of the 30-day layover period.]

[Mr. Taylor left the meeting during the staff presentation of the property summary report for this item.]

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Fabacher present representing the application. Mr. Musso stated that this is a complex project and the applicant has done a good job presenting the proposed building in the context of the block.

Mr. Skinner inquired about the street view and current conditions of the building. After viewing photographs of the current conditions, Mr. Skinner moved to grant **conceptual approval** of the proposed demolition and the proposed new construction consistent with the recommendation of the staff and Architectural Committee. Mr. Henriquez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

311 Bourbon St: John C. Williams, applicant; 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 read the staff report with Mr. Williams representing the application. Mr. Musso stated that this application had been reviewed by the Architectural Committee and found approvable.

Mr. Blanda asked what would guarantee the proposed canopy not being in use all the time. Mr. Williams responded saying that the business proprietors do not desire to keep the courtyard covered except for inclement weather conditions. Mr. Blanda expressed his concern that the canopy would be utilized for shade on sunny days as well.

Mr. Musso asked if the Commission can request some kind of covenant to limit the times when the canopy would be closed. Mr. Hesdorffer stated that could be possible and that even the lease could include such limitations. Mr. Williams further said that the French Market Corporation has approved the plans. Mr. Blanda stated that there would be no limitations in the current lease regarding use of the canopy. Mr. Musso responded stating that the Commission could ask the French Market Corporation to add such restrictions.

Mr. Henriquez asked how the proposed canopy system worked. Mr. Williams provided a brief explanation of the canopy operations.

Mr. Blanda moved for **conceptual approval** of the application to install the proposed canopy system and other minor associated work. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion, which 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 read the staff report with Mr. Smith representing the application. Mr. Musso spoke on

behalf of the Architectural Committee, stating that the Committee had met with the applicant numerous times to address the Committee's concerns regarding density and massing and was now recommending that the VCC grant **conceptual approval** based on both the size of the units and provisions for adequate parking. Mr. Musso added that the Committee was comfortable with the proposed **change of use** to accommodate this project.

Mr. Blanda then moved to adopt the Committee's recommendation to grant **conceptual approval**. Mr. Skinner asked for clarification of the VCC guidelines regarding conceptual approval of additional floors added to a yellow-rated structure and if the project would need to return to the Architectural Committee. Mr. Musso stated that if the Commission approved a general design direction through **conceptual approval**, it does not give the architect carte blanche. Rather the final design still must be reviewed and approved. Mr. Skinner then seconded Mr. Blanda's motion to grant **conceptual approval**, which passed unanimously.

715 Chartres St: Andre Villere, applicant; Roman Catholic Church Archdiocese of New Orleans, owner; Proposal to perform various masonry repairs including new structural anchors and helical ties, per application & materials received 07/15/15.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff report with Mr. Villere representing the application. Mr. Musso summarized the position of the Architectural Committee in support of the proposed repairs.

Mr. Skinner asked how long the proposed work was expected to take to complete. Mr. Villere responded that it would likely take four months. Replying to Mr. Musso's question about the Cathedral's normal activities, Mr. Villere responded that Cathedral operations would absolutely be uninterrupted.

Mr. Blanda moved to **approve** the proposal as submitted. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

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 property report with Ms. Ford representing the application.

Mr. Musso explained that the Architectural Committee was very pleased with the development of the design and the clean-cut distinction between the old and new elements.

With no further discussion, Mr. Henriquez moved to grant **conceptual approval** of the proposal as submitted. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VIII. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

403 Royal St: John C. Williams, applicant; Royal Cloud Nine LLC, owner; Proposed resolutions to mechanical, life safety, and VCC violations, per application & drawings received 11/18/14 & 08/18/15, respectively. **[STOP WORK ORDER issued 07/12/11]**

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Williams representing the application. Mr. Musso stated that the necessary repairs are years overdue and that the revised proposal for repair work shows great cooperation between the applicant, VCC staff, and the Department of Safety and Permits. He continued, stating that extensive inspections will need to occur while the work is being done and that the Commission should lift the Stop Work Order. Mr. Blanda commended the owner and the architects for their work. Mr. Williams stated that it was a team effort, and thanked the VCC staff, Brian Medus of the Mechanical Division of S&P, and Zachary Smith, Chief Building Official for their assistance. Following this, Mr. Blanda moved to **lift the Stop Work Order** and to grant **approval** for the proposed work to resolve problems/violations as well as to grant **conceptual approval** of the guardrail design, as recommended. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

635 St Ann St: Sahiad Naghi, applicant; Meir Chee Shawl Ltd, owner; Proposal to install new siding and reinstall existing windows on rear building, per application & materials received 08/10/15. **[STOP WORK ORDER issued 08/10/15]**

At the Commission's request, Ms. Vogt gave the staff report despite applicant's absence, but while anticipating Mr. Naghi's arrival. Mr. Musso commented that though he wished to see the work completed, he also wanted to strongly discourage any work done without VCC review and approval. Mr. Hesdorffer emphasized the same concerns, but ultimately concurred with the staff recommendation so that work could resume with the benefit of VCC guidance and approval.

Mr. Musso asked staff if any drawings had been submitted with the application. The staff responded that none had been submitted and that furthermore, staff would require a site visit to verify all conditions before issuing a permit. Mr. Musso added that records of the completed work should be provided to staff after repairs are done.

Mr. Skinner moved to **lift the Stop Work Order**, with the caveat that all necessary details be submitted for review by the Architectural Committee before permit issuance. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion. Mr. Hesdorffer then requested that the lifting of the Stop Work Order be tied to the date of the permit, rather than lifted as of the date of the meeting. Mr. Musso added Mr. Hesdorffer's comments as a caveat. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the VCC meeting of Wednesday, August 05, 2015.

Ms. Stokes moved, Mr. Skinner seconded, to ratify the actions taken by the Architectural Committee and Staff since the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of August 5, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business to be considered, Mr. Skinner moved for adjournment. The motion, seconded by Ms. Stokes, passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:40 PM.

APPROVED: _____
Leslie Stokes, Secretary

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