

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block
DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, September 7, 2016 - 1:30 P.M.**

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Jorge A. Henriquez
Patricia C. Denechaud

STAFF PRESENT: Bryan D. Block, Director; Renée Bourgogne, Architectural Historian;
Nicholas G. Albrecht, Building Plans Examiner; Erin Vogt, Building Plans
Examiner; Erika Gates, Inspector; Melissa Quigley, Assistant City
Attorney

STAFF ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Thomas, Henry Hanisee, Deborah Harkins, Loretta Katherine
Harmon, Bev Falk, Debra Hom

I. ROLL CALL

Chairman Musso called the meeting to order at approximately 1:33 PM. Mr. Block called the roll, noting the presence of a quorum with five (5) of the eight (8) seated Commissioners present.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Mr. Blanda moved, Mr. Taylor seconded, that the minutes of the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of August 3, 2016 be approved as previously circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

[Ms. Stokes arrived during the Director's Report]

Mr. Block gave his report as follows:

- We are excited to report that we have filled the open building inspector position. This will be the first time since before Katrina that there has been more than one inspector. We are looking forward to the improved presence this gives us within the District, as well as the potential for greater enforcement of the Design Guidelines. We anticipate him starting within the next two weeks and hope to be able to introduce him at the next Commission hearing.
- The Rooftop Construction Subcommittee has met twice within the past month to discuss existing conditions and recent proposals in order to determine if the current Design Guidelines should be amended. Our goal is to ensure that guidelines are in place that are clear and concise so that all proposed new construction, modifications or additions to rooftops of existing buildings within the Vieux Carré are appropriate to the *tout ensemble*. Another meeting has been tentatively scheduled for next week. A public notice will be issued as soon as the meeting date and location have been finalized.

- There is a current proliferation of unpermitted, keyless entry door hardware being observed throughout the French Quarter. This type of contemporary hardware is inappropriate to our historic architecture. The Guidelines state that traditionally, a door's hardware complimented the overall building style. There is also concern that this type of hardware is indicative of the presence of illegal short term rentals. We are in the process of notifying property owners and tenants that this type of hardware must be replaced.
- Mr. Block also introduced Natalie Ducote as one of the VCC's interns.

V. OLD BUSINESS

336-340 Decatur St: Henry Hanisee, applicant; Joseph C Paciera, owner; Proposal to demolish existing yellow-rated structure in preparation for construction of new four story building, per application and materials received 08/06/16.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Ms. Harkins and Messrs. Thomas and Hanisee present on behalf of the application. Mr. Fifield inquired if a demolition would include the demolition of the billboard. Ms. Harkins replied that it would. Mr. Fifield stated that any demolition should be contingent on the billboard removal.

Mr. Fifield moved to **approve** beginning the 30 day layover period for demolition. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Following the vote, Ms. Hom, in the audience, stated that she was the owner of the immediately adjacent building and that she was concerned about a demolition prior to the approval for the new construction. Mr. Musso noted that the existing building was diminutive and the demolition should have little effect on the neighboring property.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1014 Royal St: Donna F Steg, applicant/owner; 1014 Royal St: Donna F Steg, applicant/owner; Proposal to rebuild portion of failing façade wall, install new structural ties, and repair roof drainage, per application & materials received 12/22/15 & 08/26/16, respectively.

Ms. Vogt gave the staff presentation with Ms. Harmon and Ms. Swigart present on behalf of the application. With no further discussion necessary, Mr. Taylor moved for **conceptual approval** consistent with staff recommendations. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

616-624 Royal St, 630 Royal St, 622-624 St. Peter St: Barry Fox, applicant; Mendel S Rau, owner; Proposal to construct rooftop addition to link 630 Royal St. to 616-624 Royal St. via 622-624 St. Peter, per application & materials received 07/18/16 & 08/04/16.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation although no one was present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated that this project has been reviewed by the Architectural Committee and noted that a similar proposal was made about two years ago. Mr. Musso also noted that there is very little visibility into the area.

Mr. Blanda inquired about the occupancy of the upper floors of the Royal St. properties. Mr. Musso noted that those uses could be included as a condition of approval. Mr. Blanda inquired if the proposed roof monitor would cover adjacent windows. Mr. Musso responded that it would not cover the windows but rather located several feet away and that there had been no opposition from neighbors. Mr. Musso noted that it may be wise to defer the application at this time.

Mr. Blanda moved to **defer** the application to allow a representative to be present. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VII. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

922 St Philip St: Donald Maginnis, applicant; Pond Koi, owner; Proposal to lift **STOP WORK ORDER** in order to resolve existing violations and to correct work begun without benefit of VCC review or approval, per application & materials received 04/26/16 & 07/26/16, respectively. **[Stop Work Orders posted 03/11/16, 03/14/16 & 03/23/16]**

Ms. Vogt gave the staff report with Mr. Maginnis present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso asked if all the proposed changes requested by staff were agreeable to Mr. Maginnis. He replied that they were. Mr. Taylor moved for **conceptual approval** of the proposed renovations and **approval** for the change of use, consistent with staff recommendations. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion, which was not immediately voted upon. Mr. Fifield suggested that the STOP WORK ORDER be left in place until staff gave final approval of the drawings.

Meg Lousteau, Director of Vieux Carre Property Owners, Residents and Associates

730 Esplanade: 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. **[STOP WORK ORDER posted 07/27/16]**

The application was **deferred** prior to the meeting.

VIII. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, August 03, 2016 VCC meeting.

Mr. Taylor moved to ratify the actions of the Architectural Committee and staff since the August 03, 2016 VCC meeting. The motion, seconded by Mr. Skinner, passed unanimously.

With no additional business to discuss, Mr. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:10 PM.