

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

Mitchell J. Landrieu  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block  
DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, April 5th, 2017 - 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  
Jorge A. Henriquez

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Patricia C. Denechaud

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

**STAFF ABSENT:** Erika Gates, Inspector; Tony Whitfield, Inspector;

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Susan Guillot, Andrew Stephens, John Williams, Mike Murphy, Meg  
Lousteau, Greg Smith, Jeff Cantin

**I. ROLL CALL**

Chairman Musso called the meeting to order at approximately 1:35 PM. A quorum was established with the presence of seven (7) of the eight (8) seated Commissioners present.

**II. REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Mr. Skinner moved, Mr. Blanda seconded, that the minutes of the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of March 8th, 2017 be approved as previously circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr. Musso began his report noting the recent appeal item heard by the City Council and noting that the appeal was not on a decision but rather on a deferral. Mr. Musso stated that the Commission holds that a deferral is not a decision and that deferrals allow applicants to respond to the comments of the Committee or Commission.

Mr. Musso also requested that a package be put together that summarized the findings of the rooftop subcommittee.

**IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Block gave the following Director's report:

- As part of the Administration's ongoing French Quarter Public Safety & Improvement Strategy, the Staff has created the "Security Cameras in the Vieux Carré" handout which is in your packet. This is taken directly from the VCC design guidelines, boiled down to the very basics, to make it easier for applicants to quickly and more readily understand precisely what types of cameras are recommended and how to properly mount them on their buildings. A short list of recommended cameras is currently being vetted with the City's Homeland Security staff. Our goal is to encourage the installation of high quality security cameras which comply with our guidelines in type and location. We have also streamlined the application process so that these cameras can be easily and quickly permitted. We will also be issuing an easy-to use guide on how private property owners can improve their exterior lighting through implementation of VCC lighting guidelines.

- The Department of Public Works is currently refurbishing all existing French Quarter street lamps and retrofitting them with LED bulbs. Currently the 200-300 blocks of Bourbon Street have been completed as a pilot program. I have requested detailed information on the entire program but I have not received the information as of yet. New lamps will be installed in certain locations where they are missing including along the pedestrian mall of St. Peters Street and St. Ann Street at Jackson Square. All existing lamps around the historic fence of the square are currently being refurbished and upgraded with the new lamps, as well. I will forward a full report as soon as I receive it.
- As previously discussed, the bike share program will be conducting a temporary demonstration of the program in February. Here are the details of that event:
  - 35 bicycles, all white with only program promo branding (as shown in the PowerPoint slides)
  - 6 stations with 6-10 racks each; NO panels or kiosks; no anchoring to street
  - Operational February 10<sup>th</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> with installation a couple days before and removal on the 24<sup>th</sup>.
  - 4 stations will be in downtown, 2 in the French Quarter
 For the French Quarter they have identified Barracks at Decatur and Bienville at Decatur. No parking spaces will be removed. Images of these locations are shown in the slides.

This will be a valuable opportunity to inform feedback as we discuss and evaluate permanent locations with all parties in the months following Mardi Gras.

- Our field inspectors have noticed an increase in the prevalence of illegal “sandwich board” signage and merchandising, as well as tables and chairs being located outside of businesses along the public right of way. As this is in violation of the City Code, VCC staff is informing business owners in person whenever such moveable items in violation are discovered and requiring that the items be removed immediately. There has also been an increase in the discovery of businesses illegally blocking off sections of public parking with cones and signage claiming such areas to be private or drop-off zones. These are being reported to the Department of Public Works for immediate removal, as well.
- Mr. Block also explained the list of required drawings and details for submittals to the Architectural Committee and Commission.

Mr. Musso noted that the list will add clarity to the requirements of submittals and asked that the list be added to the website. Mr. Musso also noted that on resubmittals the applicant is asked to respond to the comments of the staff, Architectural Committee, and Commission, and that those responses will help to clear up deferrals.

## V. OTHER BUSINESS

### Discussion of Architecture Committee submittal requirements

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

**907-17 Governor Nicholls St:** John C. Williams, applicant; 913 Governor Nicholls LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate existing building in conjunction with proposed resubdivision with 1211-15 Dauphine St, per application & materials received 04/13/16 & 03/21/17, respectively.

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report with Messrs. Williams and Stephens present on behalf of the agenda.

Susan Guillot of French Quarter Citizens addressed the Commission, stating that she appreciated the review process that the project has gone through, and that it benefited all parties involved. She urged the developer and architect to take all precautions to ensure surrounding buildings are protected during construction.

Meg Lousteau of Vieux Carré Property Owners and Associates commended the VCC for working on the design with the architect to find something appropriate to the district, and stated that this project was an example of how the review process was designed to work.

With no discussion necessary from the Commissioners, Mr. Taylor moved to conceptually approve the proposal, consistent with staff recommendations. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Williams assured the Commission that all precautions will be taken for surrounding buildings, and the large oak tree on the site.

**1211-15 Dauphine St:** John C. Williams, applicant; 913 Governor Nicholls LLC, owner; Proposal to demolish existing parking structure, and construct two new buildings in conjunction with proposed resubdivision with 907-17 Gov. Nicholls St, per application & materials received 04/13/16 & 03/21/17, respectively.

*See minutes from 907-17 Gov. Nicholls, above.*

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

**816 Burgundy St:** Marcus Calhoun, applicant; Burgundy Holdings LLC, owner; Proposal to construct a two-story side addition, per application & materials received 04/08/16 & 03/21/17, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Smith present on behalf of the application. Mr. Taylor commented that this was an extremely well done addition and moved for **approval** consistent with the staff recommendation. Ms. Stokes seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Guillot, in the audience, questioned the roof deck, noting that the trees had recently been trimmed and the deck was readily visible. It was explained that the roof deck was original to the building.

**616 Esplanade Ave:** Jeffrey David Cantin, applicant; James S Alderdice, owner; Proposal to install 7.8kW solar panel system on Chartres elevation roof of one story building, per application & materials received 12/28/16 & 03/29/17, respectively.

Mr. Albrecht gave the staff presentation with Mr. Murphy present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated that he concurs with staff and that the Architectural Committee had requested that panels be reduced by 5' from the Esplanade side of the roof. Mr. Musso noted that this application is likely a one-off, noting that in general there would be a problem with economics of these applications as the Vieux Carré does not have net metering.

Mr. Blanda stated that two doors down from this address solar panels were installed without VCC approval but that Entergy could not connect to the system.

Mr. Murphy stated that this building is actually on the downtown grid with traditional overhead connection that connects to the grid.

Mr. Taylor moved for **approval** of the application as submitted. Mr. Henriquez seconded the motion, which passed with affirmative votes from Messrs. Taylor, Fifield, Skinner, and Henriquez and Ms. Stokes. Mr. Blanda voted in opposition, stating that he did not believe that solar panels should be installed in any visible location.

## VIII. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, March 08, 2017 VCC meeting.

Mr. Taylor moved to ratify the Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, March 8th, 2017 meeting. The motion, seconded Ms. Stokes, passed unanimously.

Mr. Block noted that updated staff contact information had been included in the packet of information distributed to the Commissioners. Mr. Musso asked that all Commissioners review and scrutinize the distributed list of submittal requirements for review.

With no other business to discuss, Mr. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Skinner seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:57 PM.