

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

LaToya Cantrell  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block  
DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, April 3, 2019, 1:30 P.M.**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Nicholas S. Musso, Chairman  
Daniel Taylor  
Rick Fifield  
Bill Keck  
Adrienne Thomas  
Angela King (arrived after 626 Bourbon)  
Mamie Gasperecz (arrived after the Chairman's report)

**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

**STAFF ABSENT:** Marguerite Roberts, Inspector  
Tony Whitfield, Inspector

**I. ROLL CALL**

**II. REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Mr. Taylor moved to approve the minutes of both the Architecture Committee and Commission meetings since the last Commission meeting on March 20, 2019. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

There was no Director's report for this meeting.

**I. NEW BUSINESS**

**1231-33 Bourbon: SD021-19;** Proposal to subdivide the lot at 1231-33 Bourbon into two separate lots, per application & materials received 02/05/19 & 03/29/19, respectively.

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Ms. Glass present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated that usually the VCC works to maintain historic lot lines instead of subdivision however, he did find a reasonable argument for the current proposal. Mr. Fifield state that he disagreed with the staff report and did not see a reason to paint the two townhouses different colors. Mr. Musso stated that he agreed either way. Ms. Gasperecz asked where in the process the applicant was with converting the buildings into single family homes and did they have potential buyers in mind. The applicant stated that there were no current plans or buyers, they were just looking to the future. Mr. Musso asked if these were full time residences. The applicant stated that she was unsure. Mr. Keck asked if they would be used as rentals. The applicant stated that she was unsure. Ms. Quigley stated that these issues were not related to the recommendation for resubdivision. Mr. Taylor moved to accept the new lot lines for division of the property. Ms. Gasperecz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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**818 Royal St: 17-14282-VCGEN;** John C Williams, applicant; 818 Royal LLC, owner;

Proposal to elevate the existing structure 2'6" above the existing foundation and add additional matching foundation, per application & materials received 05/10/17 & 03/13/19, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=714224>

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Mr. Albrecht read the staff report with Mr. Williams and Mr. Heck present on behalf of the application. Ms. Deville, in the audience, stated that she is currently the upstairs tenant and noted that the previous tenant in the ground floor space was successful. Ms. Deville continued that small businesses are getting kicked out and will no longer be able to afford the space. Ms. Szalwinski, in the audience, stated that she was opposed to raising the building.

Mr. Fifield inquired what the floor to ceiling height is currently and what it would be with the proposed raising. Mr. Heck replied that currently the height varies between 6'8" and 7'2" and once raised it would meet and exceed the 7'6" standard. Mr. Taylor stated that the building currently does not meet building code and that raising the building would not affect the historic integrity of the structure.

Mr. Taylor moved for approval of the proposal to elevate the existing structure 2'6" above the existing foundation. Ms. Gasperecz seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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## II. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

**626 Bourbon St: 17-06727-VCGEN**; John C Williams, applicant; Grace T Granger LLC, owner; Appeal of Committee denial to revise conceptually approved gallery design, per application & materials received 02/24/17 & 02/13/19, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Redirect.aspx?SearchString=17-06727-VCGEN>

Ms. Vogt read the staff report with Mr. Williams, Ms. Wotring and Mr. Hemb present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated that the Commission could move to defer the issue to the Architecture Committee to review more options. Mr. Block stated that the issue of the gallery would not hold up work as permits had been issued for the rest of the proposed work. Mr. Block further iterated that the existing building already has a front balcony that could be retained should the gallery not be approved. The previously approved plans also include a new second floor rear deck.

Ms. Gasperecz asked the project architect, John Williams, if the building was currently in commerce to which Mr. Williams stated that it will be as a retail shop once completed. Ms. Gasperecz asked if the upper floor would be an apartment to which Mr. Williams stated that the building would be strictly retail with the upper floor to be used for bookkeeping and merchandise. Ms. Gasperecz asked the building owner, Claudio Hemb, to describe the business. Mr. Hemb stated that the business has been open for 40 years as Marie Laveau's House of Voodoo which will eventually become a non-profit under the name of the Marie Laveau Foundation.

Mr. Fifield moved for the Commission to reconsider the 02/06/19 conceptual approval of the gallery, per Section XII of the By-Laws of the Vieux Carré Commission of the City of New Orleans. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Block reiterated that the VCC was not impeding work, as all VCC permits have been issued; any work pertaining to the gallery can be handled as a change order.

Ms. Gasperecz moved for the proposal for the new gallery to be returned to the Architecture Committee for further review of the schemes presented. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**524 Dauphine St: 19-05756-VCGEN**; Derrick Varnado, applicant; Eric Hatten, Jonathan P Dolese, Rodney S Ryan, owner;

Appeal of Committee denial of proposal to add exterior wood trim to stucco walls around existing French doors, per application & materials received 02/20/19.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Documents.aspx?ObjLabel=Permit&ID=794852>

Mr. Albrecht read the staff report. There was no one present on behalf of the application. Mr. Musso stated that there was no reason to emphasize an atypical opening. Mr. Fifield asked if the applicant had been notified about the hearing. Mr. Albrecht stated that they had. Mr. Fifield moved for denial of the application. Mr. Taylor seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**III. RATIFICATION** of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, March 20, 2019 VCC meeting.

Mr. Taylor moved to ratify the Architecture Committee and Staff actions since the March 20, 2019. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

With no other business to discuss, Mr. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:20 pm.