

VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION

LaToya Cantrell
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block
DIRECTOR

Minutes of the **Vieux Carré Commission** meeting of **Wednesday, August 21, 2019, 1:30 P.M.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mamie Gasperecz, acting Chairperson
Bill Keck
Angela King
Toni DiMaggio
Rodney Villarreal
Priscilla Lawrence

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Rick Fifield

STAFF PRESENT: Bryan D. Block, Director; Erin Vogt, Senior Building Plans Examiner;
Renée Bourgogne, Architectural Historian

STAFF ABSENT: Nicholas Albrecht, Senior Building Plans Examiner; Marguerite Roberts,
Inspector; Tony Whitfield, Inspector

I. ROLL CALL

Mr. Block called the meeting to order at approximately 1:30 PM. The rules were suspended to allow for appointment of a temporary chairperson. Ms. Lawrence nominated Ms. Gasperecz, which was seconded by Ms. DiMaggio. Ms. Gasperecz was temporarily appointed unanimously. A quorum was established with the presence of five (5) of the nine (9) seated Commissioners present.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

Ms. King moved, Mr. Keck seconded, that the minutes of the Vieux Carré Commission meeting of June 5th, 2019 be approved as previously circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

III. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Block introduced three new Commissioners who were appointed since the most recent hearing: Ms. DiMaggio, representing the AIA; Mr. Villarreal, at-large; and Ms. Lawrence, representing the Chamber of Commerce.

IV. CHANGE OF USE HEARINGS

1012 N Rampart St: 19-14797-VCGEN; Corbett Scott, applicant; 1012 N Rampart LLC, owner; Proposal to renovate building, including door and window modifications, in conjunction with a **change of use** from *vacant* to *restaurant*, per application & materials received 05/15/19 & 06/18/19, respectively.

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Redirect.aspx?SearchString=19-14797-VCGEN>

Ms. Vogt presented the staff report, with Mr. Scott present on behalf of the application. Ms. Gasperecz disclosed a business relationship between her employer and the property, but that she was not involved.

Ms. Szalwinski addressed the Commission, noting that the same architect and developers were developing an adjacent restaurant at 1014 N. Rampart, and voiced concern that the properties may expand into one large space. She noted aspects of the proposal that she felt suggested the use would be a bar instead of a restaurant, and was apprehensive about the impact of the businesses on the adjacent residences.

Mr. Villarreal asked the applicant what the occupancy of the business would be. Mr. Scott responded that it would be 167, including the courtyard.

Ms. Holmes, representing VCPORA, addressed the Commission. She stated that she had toured the site with the architect the previous week, and that the applicant had addressed some of her concerns with the previous proposal. She remains concerned that the rear window at the kitchen could be very loud. Mr. Scott responded that the two adjacent restaurants would not be shared, and that the connected courtyards would only be used as emergency exits. He added that the owner would be willing to further discuss Ms. Holmes' concerns regarding the rear window.

Mr. Villarreal asked for more information about the restaurant next door. Mr. Scott stated that the businesses would not be related, and that the property at 1012 had recently been purchased by a separate owner. Ms. Vogt, at the request of a concerned neighbor who could not attend the meeting, asked the applicant what the relationship between the owner and the business would be. Mr. Scott answered that there is no tenant for the restaurant at this time.

Mr. Block stated that the VCC reviews the effect of a new business on the architecture of the building and the tout ensemble of the site, but that the Commission has no final say on the use of a property.

Ms. DiMaggio stated that the proposed work on the building is positive and that the applicant has been very responsive to feedback from the staff and Committee. Her only remaining concern is the rear window, and she encouraged further consideration of it by the applicant.

Ms. Laurence moved to **approve** the renovation and forward a **positive recommendation** of the **change of use**, per the staff recommendation. Ms. King seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

V. APPEALS AND VIOLATIONS

1135 Decatur St: 16-34772-VCGEN; Harry Smith Jr, applicant; 1135-37 Decatur St LLC, owner;

Appeal of Architecture Committee denial of proposal to retain transoms installed in deviation of VCC review and approval, per application & materials received 11/01/16 & 03/26/19, respectively. **[Notice of Violation sent 11/09/18]**

<https://onestopapp.nola.gov/Redirect.aspx?SearchString=16-34772-VCGEN>

Ms. Vogt presented the application at the Commission's request; the applicant was not present at the hearing. Mr. Villarreal asked if the applicant was notified of the hearing; Ms. Vogt responded that the lawyer representing the owner had not responded, but that proper notice was given. Ms. Lawrence asked if the modifications to the pre-made transom would be difficult. Ms. Vogt responded that she did not believe they would be, but that the owner's representative was going to consult with a millworker and had not responded since. Mr. Villarreal expressed concern that approval would set a precedent for work moving forward in deviation of permit based on cost. Mr. Villarreal moved to **deny** the appeal to retain the transoms. Ms. Laurence seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The applicant may appeal the decision to City Council within thirty (30) days of written notice.

I. **RATIFICATION** of Architectural Committee and Staff actions since the Wednesday, June 5, 2019 VCC meeting.

Ms. DiMaggio moved to ratify the Architecture Committee and Staff actions since June 5, 2019. Ms. King seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

With no other business to discuss, Ms. Gasperecz moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. King seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:06 pm.