

MINUTES  
VIEUX CARRE COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2008  
1:30 P.M. CONFERENCE ROOM  
334 ROYAL STREET, 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR

MEMBERS PRESENT: E. Ralph Lupin, M.D., Chairman  
Pat Denechaud  
Carol B. Wise  
Tom Bissell  
Stewart Farnet  
Fred Lawson  
Betty H. Norris

MEMBER ABSENT: Dodie Smith, Vice Chairman  
Raymond R. Young, Sr., Secretary

STAFF PRESENT: Lary P. Hesdorffer, Director; Hilary Somerville Irvin, Principal Architectural Historian; Stephen McNair, Building Plans Examiner; Cindy Schoenberger, Building Plans Examiner; and Lily McNee, Preservation Assistant.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ed Washington (Office of City Attorney), Robert Vanlangandonck, Bruce Egger, Richard Collins, Bill Moore, Kate Bishop, Richard Bishop, Harvey Burns, Katherine Harmon and Dan DiGiuseppe

I. ROLL CALL

A quorum was established with Dr. Lupin, Mrs. Norris, Mrs. Wise, Mrs. Denechaud and Messrs. Lawson, Farnet and Bissell present.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES from meeting of February 19, 2008.

Mrs. Denechaud moved, Mrs. Wise seconded, to **approve** the minutes as drafted. The motion passed unanimously.

III. OLD BUSINESS

224-38 N. Rampart/1028-44 Bienville: Lynn Investments, LLC (Bill More), owner/applicant; Anthony Tafforo, architect. Proposal to demolish the brown-rated building & make improvements to the surface level parking area, including new curb cuts, N. Rampart elevation, concrete paving, lighting & metal fencing with stucco base & columns, per application & drawings received 03/04/08. [**End of 30-day layover**]

Mr. Hesdorffer went over the previous action regarding this application, including the facts that the 30-day layover required for demolitions had expired and that the applicant had submitted revised drawings that address the recommendations made by the Architectural Committee. Mr. Farnet expressed concern over the proposed demolition that would result in an open parking lot, in his opinion not in keeping with the urban character of the district. Mr. Farnet, however, continued that he is in sympathy with the application because of the good work done by the New Orleans Athletic Club and because the subject building has no historic value. Mr. Lawson said that he is not in favor of demolition of the office at the front of the building, only for demolition of the rear garage section.

Mr. Farnet then moved, and Mrs. Denechaud seconded to **end the 30-day layover** and to **approve** the demolition as well as the proposed landscaping, etc. modifications as shown on the revised drawings, with permits written after the Architectural Committee's review of the revised drawings. Legal counsel Ed Washington advised the Commissioners that if they approve a non-conforming use, the decision can be challenged by public or private individuals.

The motion of **approval** passed with the affirmative votes of Mrs. Norris, Mrs. Denechaud, Mrs. Wise and Messrs. Bissell and Farnet. Mr. Lawson voted against the motion.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

513 Royal: Antoine's Property # 2, LLC (represented by Rick Blount), owner; Jahncke+Burns Architects LLC (Harvey G. Burns), architect/applicant. Proposed extensive modifications for a **change of use** from *retail* (1<sup>st</sup> floor) & *vacant* (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floors) to *retail* (1<sup>st</sup> floor) & *residential* (2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> floors) including 1) addition of a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor facade gallery accessed by new full length openings and French doors; 2) reconfiguration of openings on 1<sup>st</sup> floor; 3) addition of muntin bars to existing 1/1 double-hung windows; 4) removal of non-original construction linking rear of main building & service building & reworking of impacted walls, per application & drawings received 03/04/08.

After staff presentation of this application and past actions, Mr. Lawson stated his objection to the removal of the “saddleback” on the rear of the building, along with the retention/relocation of the stained glass windows that date from the same time as the addition. Mr. Hesdorffer asked the applicant where the air conditioning equipment would be located, if the lot line of the subject property is revised so that the rear of the lot abuts the rear of the building, not leaving space for a ground level location. He further noted that the Commission likely would be hesitant to approve a rooftop location for the mechanical equipment. The Director then suggested deferral of this application because of concerns regarding the mechanical equipment location and the removal of the rear “saddleback”.

Mr. Farnet then moved, and Mrs. Denechaud seconded to **defer** consideration of this application so that 1) the applicant can study further the proposed location for the mechanical equipment and 2) the Commissioners can make a site visit to the Antoine complex of buildings. This motion of **deferral** passed with the affirmative votes of Mrs. Wise, Mrs. Norris, Mrs. Denechaud and Messrs. Lawson and Farnet. Mr. Bissell abstained from voting.

713-17, 719, 723 & 725 St. Louis; 513 & 519 Royal St: Antoine’s Properties # 1 (represented by Rick Blount), owner; Jahncke+Burns Architects LLC (Harvey G. Burns), architect/applicant. Revised proposal to re-subdivide properties (6 lots of record into 2), per application & drawings received 03/05/08.

Staff explained that the item of business under review is a revision to the previous recommendation for approval of a resubdivision of six (6) lots from three (3) to two (2) lots. Dr. Lupin expressed concern over the proposed expansion and increased massing. Mr. Bissell said that a determination should be made concerning the value (historical/and or historical) of various portions of the building, as well as what needs to be taken down and what needs to be cleaned up. Mr. Bissell continued that the applicant should propose what he wants and the staff should determine the value of various building parts.

Mrs. Denechaud moved, and Mr. Lawson seconded, a motion to **defer** consideration of this application until site visits are made and additional material submitted for Architectural Committee review. This motion of **deferral** passed unanimously.

## V. APPEALS

827 Ursulines: Linda Sampson, owner; L. Katherine Harmon, architect/applicant. Appeal of Architectural Committee’s denial of proposal to install copper cap-flashing on the service building parapets (approved for the main cottage by the AC in 2003), per application received 03/06/08.

VCC Building Inspector Arthur Pittari told the Commission that since the March 25, 2008 Architectural Committee meeting, he made a site visit to the subject property and determined that the service building parapets are in unstable condition and require remedial work. Mr. Bissell said that these repairs should be made in an historic manner. Ms. Harmon introduced Danny DiGiuseppe, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office, who told the Commissioners that action should be taken on the roofing repairs issue soon because the money given to the owner through the Historic Building Recovery Grant Program is about to run out. Mr. Farnet moved, and Mrs. Denechaud seconded to **defer** the application and to refer back to the Architectural Committee so that further research can be done to explore ways to repair/waterproof the parapets in an historic manner.

## VI. 8.1 CHANGE OF USE HEARING

717-19 Royal: Sahuque Realty Co., owner; Veniamin Grebenchichikov, applicant/lessee. **Change of use** from *vacant* to *art gallery*, per sign application received 03/11/08.

Ms. Denechaud moved and Mr. Lawson seconded to **approve** the proposed **change of use** provided that the applicant revises the drawings to include an appropriately sized sign. The motion of approval passed unanimously.

## VII. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

There was no Chairman’s report

## VIII. DIRECTOR’S REPORT

The Director reported that he continues to work with the City’s **Office of Film & Video**, along with other City agencies and citizen representatives, as the Office coordinates film and video activities. Most recently there were two major films with French Quarter shooting: *12 Rounds* & *Librarian III*, as well as various parts for a marketing piece produced for the New Orleans Tourism & Marketing Corporation.

On February 25, the Director attended a board meeting of the French Qtr/Marigny Management District to discuss the Commission’s process for violations and citing owners, tenants, etc. As an additional endeavor

by the French Qtr/Marigny Management District, the Responsible Hospitality Institute has been engaged to work with local representatives to target areas where the local hospitality industry can affect positive change. To that end, the Director participated in a Development Roundtable on March 4<sup>th</sup>. It is one of several sessions that will all be filtered into Institute recommendations at a later date.

Also in February (27), the staff participated in an all-day retreat as part of the Office of Recovery & Development Administration. The session focused on big picture issues about which each agency and department plays a role in the City's overall recovery.

Further, an introductory meeting was held with representatives from MWHGlobal, the consulting entity that is managing many of the City's recovery projects, to make certain that there is understanding about the overlap and coordination between the various departments of city government, but specifically the VCC and the Department of Safety & Permits. The Director also noted that The Young Leadership Council is working on a public art project that will bring streetcar sculptures to the cityscape. Their sites, while not final yet, may include some Vieux Carre locations. The process will involve the Commission's normal application process and staff review for these temporary installations.

After the Director's report, Mrs. Norris expressed her concern with the recent filming that had taken place adjacent to McDonough #15 elementary school. She hoped that in the future the production company would provide more warning to the neighbors and would be more respectful of the children's need for a calm learning environment.

III. RATIFICATION of Architectural Committee and Staff Actions

Ms. Denechaud moved and Ms. Wise seconded, to **ratify** the Architectural Committee and Staff Actions taken since the last Commission meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 4:20 P.M.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Raymond R. Young, Sr., Secretary

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