

OWNER'S STATEMENT RE: DEMOLITION PERMIT REQUEST FOR 300 AUDUBON STREET GARAGE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

CITY DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY AND PERMITS

You will find herein a redevelopment plan for the rear half of the property located at 300 Audubon Street, Lakeside corner of Audubon and Coliseum Streets. Assuming our permit application to demolish the 30 to 40 year old garage structure on the property is approved, the plan will allow more open, green space, and garden decorative elements. Details will include channeled paving of driveway and walkways for both aesthetic and environmental considerations, with the channels facilitating proper drainage. The fountain pond will feature a wall with statuary and antique spouts. The walkways and driveway will be in Peacock Pavers, durable concrete pavers hand made to resemble travertine.

Because the garage was there and the roof was sound, originally we had planned to renovate the garage and use it as a combination of heated and cooled storage and a home office with the daily work environment convenience of a half bath and kitchenette. The demolition permit request comes as a result of a stop work order instigated by the property owner whose downtown side property line is shared with the rear property line of my property. The neighbor, Chris Bellone, demanded that the garage – standing where it has been for three to five decades – be moved off of his property. He offered a flim flam proposal suggesting that we cut a foot off of the back of the roof all the way across and replace the butchered roof on a rebuilt back wall moved forward 11.5 inches onto my property. Both my contractor, Matthew Pollitt of Royal Renovations of Louisiana, and my architectural and engineering consultant, Ivan Mandich, PE and MA, stated flat out that his proposal is completely unsound from both structural and cost/value ratio standpoints. Since the City Permits Director concurrently said we could use the structure for nothing but storage, we determined that the financially sane course of action is to demolish the structure, since it is full of rot, old termite damage, water damage, foundation, window and door damage from Hurricane Ida, and old rotten siding torn loose by Ida.

While I recognize the encroachment exists – has existed for decades – I assumed that it was grandfathered because of the history. Had the neighbor, Mr. Bellone, given me the courtesy of discussing the matter of the moving the structure forward onto our property a few inches on a TIMELY basis, we might have developed in cooperation a good plan initially but he chose the Japanese-Pearl Harbor sneak attack approach, waiting until we had built the Stucco wall elements defining the rebuilt driveway pad to bring the matter
(More...)

Page Two, Owner's Statement

up with the City. He did not even have the common decency to notify me of his plans to ask for a stop work order.

This plan offered here will be pleasing but we cannot have car security with automatic gates now without creating a useless boxed in space of no benefit to the overall landscape/hardscape plan.

This plan will require us, in fact, to knock down a stucco post and a piece of stucco wall, just constructed at significant expense, which had been intended to tie into the end wall of the garage.

In addition to demolition of the garage, we request permission to extend the stucco wall already permitted and under construction, across the rear property line with Mr. Bellone's property and across a portion of the Lakeside property line to replace rotten fencing rotten and ready to fall down. Under the law, property line walls/fences are constructed half on each side of the line. If Mr. Bellone wishes to share the expense of the new wall at his property line, I am happy to place it completely on my property.

We urge you to issue these permissions expeditiously so that we can go forward with an extension of the stucco wall for both privacy and security and get on with completion of the overall renovation, which already has suffered numerous delays. We request emergency action, also, because of the fact that we are in hurricane season and the garage elements could pose a threat to public safety in any heavy wind event. The demolition can be done very quickly as we already had moved siding loose and falling and rotted uprights. It currently is being supported by temporary timber posts.

If permitting is delayed and a hurricane strikes New Orleans prior to demolition of the garage and removal of the debris, I take no legal responsibility for any consequences of delays.

The issue of moving the garage wall off Mr. Bellone's property by a few inches is moot, as I have no interest and will spend no money to rebuild the garage or any part of it, since I have been told it could not be used for anything but storage, that I would not be able to use part of the space for a home office. I am very happy, instead, to redevelop the space as a garden expansion with some extra open space for grass and flower beds and fountains.

I will not be requesting a permit to construct a new dependency building of any kind.

(More...)

Page 3, Owner's Statement

With regard to ownership of 300 Audubon Street, I own it outright with no mortgage or liens. This application was prepared for me by Ivan Mandich, PE & MA, my renovation consultant, and licensed contractor Matthew Pollitt. My thanks most especially to Mr. Jay DuFour and Ms. Estelle Brown for their kind assistance with this matter, as well as their guidance through the permitting channels.

Sincerely,

Rosemary James

Rosemary Jame
Rosemary James, Owner, 300 Audubon Place, NOLA 70118
faulkhouse@aol.com
(504) 491-8859

*Note: My married name is Rosemary Powell James DeSalvo.
I was married to Joseph J. DeSalvo, Jr., who died in December of 2020.
I have always used Rosemary James, however, as I had that name as a
journalist and as a professional business woman prior to our marriage.
Currently, my driver's license and most other documents are in the
name of Rosemary James*