

MAPLE AREA RESIDENTS of NEW ORLEANS

7513 Hampson St.

New Orleans, LA. 70118

Phone: 504-458-6225

Email: Jeff@GetJeff.com

March 23, 2026

To the Clerk of Council:

RE: 7309 FRERET ST., Reference Code: NJCONQ

I am writing on behalf of Maple Area Residents, Inc. (MARI) to formally appeal the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission's (HDLC) decision of March 13, 2026, which approved the application by Zac Smith Consulting and Design to demolish the residential building at 7309 Freret St.

MARI explicitly adopts and incorporates the prior appeal filed by the Town of Carrollton Watch dated April 24, 2025. As the underlying facts and the impact on our neighborhood remain unchanged since that filing, we ask the Council to exercise its discretionary power to overturn this approval based on the following:

- **Prior Counsel Support** In the previous hearing regarding this property's demolition, Councilmember Giarrusso moved to support the community's appeal. The applicant withdrew the request before a vote to avoid a formal denial.
- **A Documented Pattern of Violations:** The development interests associated with this project have a history of "negligent and abusive business practices" in the University Area. As described in the Town of Carrollton Letter, this includes an unpaid HDLC fine for unpermitted work at 838 Lowerline and a roof collapse due to unpermitted demolition at 1808-1810 Lowerline.
- **Non-Compliance with City Codes:** As described in the Town of Carrollton Letter, several properties owned by these entities have operated without Certificates of Occupancy or failed to comply with Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA) orders regarding landscaping and illegal front-yard parking.
- **Abuse of Affordable Housing Incentives:** There is no evidence that the "affordable" units (SMFAs) co-owned by these developers are rented to legitimate low-income candidates. Instead, these designations appear to be used solely to circumvent the parking requirements of the University Area Overlay (CZO 18.30).
- **Saturation and Density:** The 7200-7300 blocks of Freret are already oversaturated with dense student housing. Permitting this demolition for an insupportably

dense 10-bedroom development further degrades the quality of life for long-time residents.

To uphold this demolition would be to reward a track record of non-compliance and further degrade the surrounding neighborhood. We respectfully request that the City Council overturn the HDLC's decision and deny the demolition of 7309 Freret St.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Bernard', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jeffrey Bernard

President, Maple Area Residents, Inc.

7513 Hampson St. New Orleans, LA 70118



FW: Appeal of HDLC Decision, 7309 FRERET ST., Reference Code: NJCONQ

From Clerk of Council <clerkofcouncil@nola.gov>

Date Mon 3/23/2026 1:54 PM

To Denise Mills <dmills@nola.gov>; Naomi R. Mark <nrmrk@nola.gov>; Denise M. Russ <dmruss@nola.gov>; Cecil C. Hartzog <cchartzog@nola.gov>

 3 attachments (468 KB)

Appeal Letter- 7309 Freret-MARI.docx.pdf; 7309 Freret demolition appeal—Clerk of Council—4-24-25—IN FULL (1).pdf; 7309_CMM Result NO (2).pdf;

From: Jeffrey Berniard <jeff@getjeff.com>

Sent: Monday, March 23, 2026 11:24 AM

To: Clerk of Council <clerkofcouncil@nola.gov>

Subject: Appeal of HDLC Decision, 7309 FRERET ST., Reference Code: NJCONQ

Clerk of Council,

Please see the attached. Please acknowledge receipt.

Sincerely,
Jeff Berniard

Jeffrey Berniard

Attorney At Law

BERNIARD LAW FIRM, L.L.C.

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New Orleans, LA 70130

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NEW ORLEANS HISTORIC DISTRICT LANDMARKS COMMISSION
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT HISTORIC DISTRICT LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Helena Moreno
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan D. Block
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

Friday, March 13, 2026

Zach Smith Consulting & Design
1000 S. Norman C. Francis Pkwy
New Orleans, LA 70125

Re: 7309 Freret St
Reference Code: NJCONQ

Dear Zach Smith Consulting & Design:

This letter confirms the actions of the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission at its meeting of Wednesday, March 11, 2026, concerning your application for the following work: Demolition of a Non-Contributing rated, one-story, single-family, residential building to grade.

At that time the Commission voted to:

Approve the application for demolition to grade. An HDLC Certificate of Appropriateness (CofA) will be issued in ten (10) calendar days to allow time for any appeals to be submitted to the City Council and the HDLC. Once the CofA is issued, it will also be submitted to the Department of Safety and Permits. Do not begin work until your building permit has been issued by that department. Please keep a copy of the CofA on-site and visible from the public right of way for the duration of work.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, feel free to contact me at (504) 658-7043 or Chad.Spurlin@nola.gov.

Sincerely,



Chad Spurlin
Historic Preservation Plan Reviewer

Approved ___BB_ Bryan Block, Executive Director



Endeavor Partners, LLC
1100 Poydras St, Suite 1515
New Orleans, LA 70163
