

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

LaToya Cantrell  
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Bryan Block  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Monday, November 03, 2025

Honorable City Council  
1300 Perdido Street  
New Orleans, LA 70112

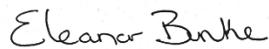
Re: 1516 Erato Street

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Attached, please find a report summarizing an appeal of the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission's denial of an appeal of the ARC recommendations regarding the construction of a hotel at the above referenced address

Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Burke  
Deputy Director



United States



Historic building

New building



September 16, 2025

1516 ERATO STREET HOTEL

1516 Erato Street is a vacant lot located in the Lower Garden District, full control, local historic district. The applicant first appeared before the ARC in July of 2025. At that time the ARC noted that the proposed massing envelope of the development was too large in relationship to the existing historic structures of the streetscape. The ARC recommended breaking down the massing of the proposal to allow the development to be more compatible with the historic context.

**07/22/25:** The ARC voted to defer your application for additional review. The ARC agreed that:

- The massing isn't consistent with the overall Lower Garden District context.
- A widened scale analysis for scale of the surrounding area should be completed prior to the next ARC meeting.
- A five-story building next to an existing two-story is incongruent.
- The detailing on the primary has dimension but the depth needs to be emphasized more.
- Adding more glass for transparency is not the solution to reduce the massing.
- Solutions for massing reduction could be a penthouse condition coupled with an "eroding corner" design.
- If the massing can't be reduced to better align with the context then possibly the program may need to be reduced.

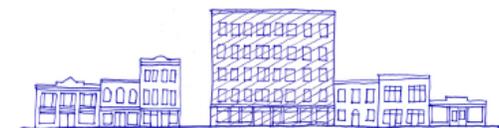
The applicant returned to the ARC two more times in August and September of 2025 but at each review the massing remained the same as initially proposed. The applicant contends that the height and bulk of neighboring, incompatible, non-contributing structures justifies their request to fill the entire allowable zoning envelope at this location. The HDLC and ARC contend that new infill should follow the HDLC Design Guidelines (see below) and be compatible in terms of massing and height with the historic district and immediate, adjacent historic context.

### **Building Form and Massing**

Building form refers to the shape of major volumes while massing refers to the overall composition of the major volumes, its overall "bulk" and how it sits on the site. Elements that are typically used to define building form and massing include the roof form, as well as wings, ells and other projecting elements, such as bays. New buildings with similar form and massing to adjacent construction will allow the new building to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

*It is Generally Appropriate to...*

- Construct a new building with similar form and massing to buildings on adjacent sites
- Construct roof forms, wings, ells and bays and other projecting elements that are similar to those found on the block of the proposed building
- Match adjacent cornice heights



*The central building in each case is 5-stories tall. In the top example, it abuts adjoining walls and steps up in the center. The new 5-story building in the lower example is a single volume and appears more massive.*

Adjacent historic, residentially scaled buildings in the 1500 block of Erato Street





At their meeting of October 17, 2025, the Commission reviewed the proposal and the ARC recommendations. The Commission agreed that no effort had been made during the ARC review process to reduce the massing of the proposal to better relate to the height and massing of the existing historic context. The HDLC Architectural Review Committee routinely works successfully with architects and developers to adapt development proposals to be compatible with the historic context. Hundreds of large-scale developments throughout the city of New Orleans have been improved and enhanced because of HDLC Architectural Review Committee recommendations. In the end, architects and developers often thank the ARC members for the assistance as they agree the process led to an improved design. Despite this, certain developers do not wish to work within the design review process to achieve sensitive, thoughtful development that fits well within the historic neighborhoods in which they are placed. These developers often seek to extract the maximum amount of profit rather than provide a design that relates to the neighborhood they seek to profit from. The Lower Garden District and the St. Charles Avenue corridor are attractive precisely because of the successful efforts of the historic preservation community to protect and enhance the historic resources. Those that seek to develop in the communities that have benefited from the protections of historic preservation should have to work within the framework that made those places desirable to develop in in the first place. The City Council should not reward developers that refuse to engage in good faith with the HDLC to achieve a development that meets the HDLC Design Guidelines and is compatible with the neighborhood. The HDLC requests that the City Council deny this appeal and require the applicant continue to work with the HDLC ARC to achieve a design that meets the HDLC Design Guidelines.

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**From:** Suzy Lamore <suzy@reverealtors.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 12, 2025 1:52 PM  
**To:** Wendy Cargile <wcargile@nola.gov>  
**Subject:** 1516 Erato Street

Hello-

I am wiring to submit public comments for the upcoming September 16, 2025, ARC meeting. My home address is 1704 Prytania St., New Orleans, LA 70130.

1516 Erato is a proposed five story hotel, and my concerns relate to the proposed height of this project (5 stories) and the fact that the neighborhood is already short on parking in that area due to the existence of several other hotels and an office building.

This is not located in Central City as the applicant indicates on its application, but it is located in the Lower Garden District. We've had some bad architecture creeping into the neighborhood from St Charles and Calliope, and I am concerned that this project won't be cohesive with the Lower Garden District's architectural elements. Parking is already a challenge, and this hotel will do nothing but increase the parking headaches currently experienced.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincere regards,  
Suzy Lamore  
1704 Prytania St.  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
(504) 729-8818

Additional drawings and photos may be found in the staff report: <https://sites.google.com/view/no-cmm-101725/new-work-applications/1516-erato-st>

Video of the hearing may be found here:

[https://cityofno.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=7&clip\\_id=5216](https://cityofno.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=7&clip_id=5216)

## COMPATIBLE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The development of each of New Orleans’ neighborhoods followed its own pattern and rhythm. The culture of the City’s early inhabitants is expressed through its architectural and built environment. To continue the evolution of the built environment, the HDLC encourages creative solutions that reflect current design and are sensitive to the character of their historic surroundings.



Each local Historic District and individual Landmark has its own unique characteristics and vocabulary. The specific styles and types of compatible new construction or additions will vary at each site depending on its specific context. Recognizing that what might be appropriate at one property is not appropriate at another, no specific design “solutions” for new construction or additions are mandated. However, in making determinations regarding the appropriateness of new construction or additions, the HDLC is guided by *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* and general design principles when reviewing the compatibility of a proposal within the property’s specific context. When reviewing applications the HDLC will consider the following design principles:

DESIGN PRINCIPLES	NEW CONSTRUCTION AND ADDITIONS
<b>Scale: Height and Width</b>	The proportions and size of the new building / addition compared with neighboring buildings / existing buildings
<b>Building Form and Massing</b>	The three-dimensional relationship and configuration of the new building/ addition footprint, its walls and roof compared with neighboring buildings/ existing building
<b>Setback</b>	The distance of the new building/addition to the street or property line when compared with other buildings on the block/existing building
<b>Site Coverage</b>	The percentage of the site that is covered by building/addition, when compared to nearby sites of compatible size
<b>Orientation</b>	The location of the front of the new building/addition and principal entrance relative to other buildings on the block
<b>Architectural Elements and Projections</b>	The size, shape, proportions and location of entrances, porches, galleries, balconies, chimneys, dormers, parapets and elements that contribute to an overall building’s shape and silhouette relative to neighboring buildings
<b>Alignment, Rhythm and Spacing</b>	The effect the new building/addition will have on the existing patterns on its block
<b>Façade Proportions: Window and Door Patterns</b>	The relationship of the size, shape and location of the new building/addition façade and building elements to each other, as well as when compared to other buildings on the block/existing building
<b>Trim and Detail</b>	The moldings, decorative elements and features of a building that are secondary to major surfaces such as walls and roofs
<b>Materials</b>	The substance of which something is composed or constructed