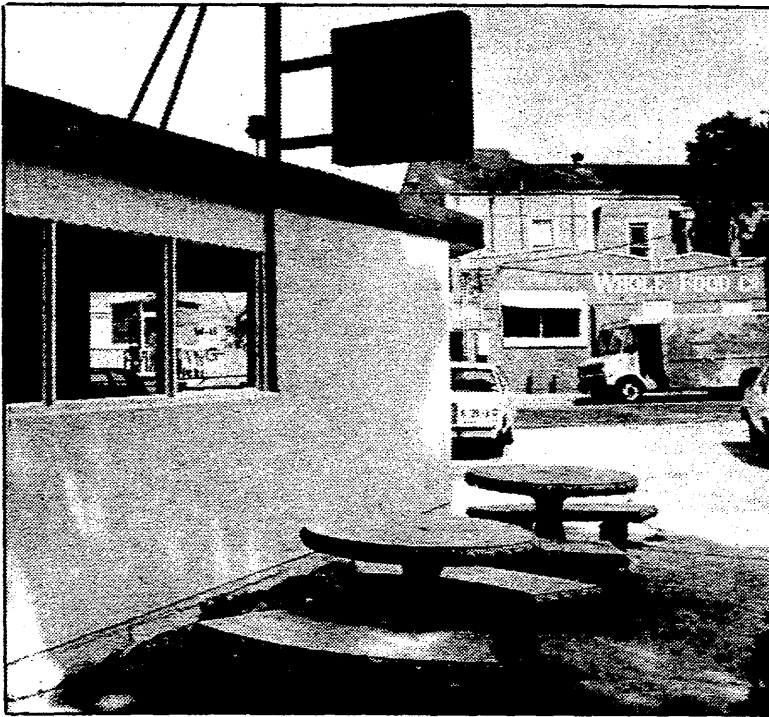


COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Restaurant building may be demolished to make way for a parking lot.

STAFF PHOTO BY ELIOT KAMENITZ

Building may be razed to build parking lot near Whole Food Co.

By LETTICE STUART
Real estate writer

Faubourg St. John residents who opposed the use of a small building at 3201 Esplanade Ave. as a fast-food outlet may not have to worry any longer.

Permission to demolish the structure for an eight-car parking lot for the Whole Food Co. was granted Tuesday by the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission.

The 1,100-square-foot building occupies a triangular block bounded by Esplanade, Maurepas and Mystery streets, next to Whole Food Co.

The commission voted to allow the demolition for a parking lot with the stipulation that the lot be heavily landscaped with a green buffer along the length of Esplanade Avenue.

Getting the demolition approval was the first step, but "the deal is not con-

summated," Wagner Truax real estate agent John Posey said.

The property is for sale for \$135,000 and Whole Food Co. owner Peter Roy is interested in having a parking lot, Posey said. "But whether an eight-car parking lot will be financially feasible for Roy to do or someone else to do for him remains to be seen," he said.

The property was the center of controversy late last year when Safety and Permits Director Ulysses Williams issued an operating permit for a Zack's Famous Frozen Yogurt franchise on the site.

Fast-food and drive-in restaurants are prohibited in the area, which is a Neighborhood Business District. But owner Joe Miorana said the property had housed nothing but fast-food restaurants since he bought it in 1975.

The most recent occupant was Giovanni's Cafe, which was operated by

Miorana's son until September, when the restaurant closed due to slack business.

The question was whether or not Giovanni's was a fast-food restaurant. If it was, then another fast-food operation could open there within six months as a non-conforming use. If Giovanni's was not a fast-food restaurant, then the six-month non-conforming period had expired and another fast-food operation would not be permitted at the site.

In granting the Zack's permit, Williams overruled three of his employees, including the city's chief building inspec-

tor, who denied the request after separate inspections. However, Williams granted the permit, claiming the "preponderance of information indicates that Giovanni's was a fast-food restaurant."

The Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association lost its bid to have the Board of Zoning Adjustments overturn the permit. The board voted 3-1 to revoke the permit, but four votes are needed to overturn a permit.

Shortly after, however, Civil District Court upheld the neighborhood association's position and revoked Zack's permit. The property has remained vacant.



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- Call Vince Caronna, (504) 826-3064
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Canadian company may join in London development

By The New York Times

LONDON — Olympia & York, the Canadian real estate and resources group, may join the Canary Wharf Development Consortium, a group planning to build one of the world's largest office developments in London.

The Canadian company is expected to become the majority owner, according to sources familiar with the project, while

G. Ware Travelstead, an American real estate developer, and the banking company First Boston International remain as minority shareholders.

Canary Wharf is on London's Isle of Dogs, a 72-acre derelict dock area about four miles east of the city's financial district. It would be Europe's largest real estate development, providing 10 million square feet of office space, at a cost of \$5 billion.