

Minutes  
City of Syracuse  
Board of Zoning Appeals  
Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
1:00 p.m.  
Common Council Chamber

I. Meeting called to order at 1:02 p.m.

Members Present

Mr. Michael Cheslik	Yes
Ms. Honora Spillane	No
Ms. Karen Gillette	Yes
Mr. Ronald O. Jennings	Yes
Mr. Timothy Rudd	No
Mr. Liam Kirst	Yes

Staff Present

Mr. Jake Dishaw	Yes
Ms. Meira Hertzberg	Yes
Mr. Cristian Toellner	Yes
Mr. Zhitong Wu	Yes
Mr. Nate Pan	Yes
Ms. Amber Dillon	Yes

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting minutes was made by Mr. Kirst and seconded by Mr. Jennings. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Public Hearings

A. New Business

1) **V-24-10**

**Area Variance - to allow the length of a multi-unit dwelling structure to exceed 180 FT**

1105-17 State St S & Burt St to Oakwood Ave

William Simmons, Executive Director, Syracuse Housing Authority (Owner)

Michael Saunders, Vice President, McCormack Baron Salazar (Applicant)

MX-2 Zone District

Andrew Schuster, from Ashley McGraw Architects, presented the Area Variance application. They explained the property is a multi-unit apartment building with affordable housing for seniors and YWCA. The section along State St S is for seniors while the section along Burt St is for YWCA. The reason they are asking for the variance is to for the needs for the apartment. They designed the building to create changes in massing to break up the building design. None of the visual languages exceed 180 feet. The buildings themselves exceed 180 feet but the visual massing does not.

Mr. Cheslik asked if someone looked at these buildings from far away, would they look like three distinct buildings? Mr. Schuster said that's correct.

No members of the public spoke in favor or in opposition to the variance application.

Mr. Jennings made a motion to approve the area variance application. Mr. Kirst seconded the motion. A rationale for this decision from Mr. Jennings explained that this variance will not bring any undesirable change to the surrounding area or use any other avenue to

change the dimensions of the building. The requested variance is not considered substantial and will not have adverse effects or difficulties. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

2) **V-24-11**

**Area Variance – to allow the structural coverage area of a single-unit dwelling building to exceed 30% of the lot area.**

116 Jasper St  
Irfan Elahi (Owner/Applicant)  
R2 Zone District

David Colegrove, the Senior Project Manager, presented the Area Variance application. The applicant is looking to add an addition to a preexisting house. A few weeks prior to the meeting they were approved to combine two lots into one. A structure currently on site will be demolished to make room for the addition. There will be a new frontage with a two-car garage and an indoor therapy pool. They are looking for structural coverage variance. They are currently 5.8% above the structural coverage allowed in the R2 Zone District.

Mr. Cheslik asked if the pool was outdoors if they would need a variance. Mr. Colegrove was not sure. Mr. Cheslik also asked how many cars would be able to park in the garage. Mr. Colegrove answered two.

The problem with an outdoor pool would be that is only used for three months of the year and is unfit for year-round use. Mr. Cheslik asked how many bedrooms would be in the house. Mr. Colegrove said there would be seven total, three on the second floor and four in the basement.

Mr. Jennings asked zoning staff about substantiality criteria. The structure will exceed maximum by 5.8%, asking what would be feasible if could approve this.

Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg said it is up to the BZA members to decide what would be considered substantial structural coverage. Zoning Administrator Dishaw said substantiality is considered on a case-by-case basis when taking everything on the lot into consideration when it comes to lot coverage. The Code does have an allowable administrative adjustment but only for 5% of coverage. They are 0.8% above this. This would be considered a minor deviation.

Ms. Gillette asked if this construction could be done with a 5% variance or less. Mr. Colegrove said they tried but it was not feasible with the large cars and driveway. The renovations will cost more than possibly just buying a larger house.

Mr. Kirst asked if the applicant is the owner of the house, and Mr. Colegrove said he is. He, his wife and extended family live there.

There were two members of the public who spoke in favor of the application. The first was Mark Cass who works near the property due to the family's contributions to the Mosque and community. The second was Marty Nave who is part of the Common Council. He

believes this is a good idea to start adding moderately sized homes to the area and also appreciates the family's contributions to the neighborhood. No one spoke in opposition to the variance application.

For the Variance Application V-24-11, Mr. Jennings made a motion to approve the area variance application. Ms. Gillette seconded the motion. A rationale for this decision from Mr. Jennings explained that this variance will not bring any undesirable change to the surrounding area or use any other avenue to change the dimensions of the building. The requested variance is not considered substantial because it only exceeds maximum variance by 0.8% and will not have adverse effects or difficulties.

Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg assisted the Commission in its SEQR review and determination of the proposed Unlisted action. Mr. Kirst moved to make a negative SEQR declaration. Ms. Gillette seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion to approve the variance application passed unanimously.

#### **IV. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Jennings and seconded by Ms. Gillette. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting called to adjourn at 1:33 p.m.