

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
City of Syracuse Planning Commission  
City Hall, Syracuse, New York  
05/06/2024

Summary of cases discussed herein:

Z-2865	Z-2868	MaSPR-24-11	Z-2864	R-24-16
Z-2867	SP-24-07	MaSPR-23-17	R-24-28	SP-24-08
SP-24-06				

Attendance

Commission Members Present

Mr. Steven Kulick, Chairman      Yes  
 Mr. Barry Lentz                      Yes  
 Mr. Walter Bowler                  Yes  
 Ms. Kathy Murphy                  Yes  
 Mr. George Lynch                  No

Staff Present

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

I. Meeting called to order at 6:07 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting minutes was made by Commr. Bowler, the motion was seconded by Commr. Lentz. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Hearings

A. Old Business

**1. SP-24-06** – deliberate on SEQR  
 Special Use Permit  
 1133-37 S Salina Street

Applicant withdrew, the project was not discussed at this meeting.  
 The project will be heard again at the meeting on 5/28/2024.

**2. Z-2865** – deliberate on recommending this item to Common Council  
 Zoning Map Amendment  
 321-23 Cortland Ave. and 323 Cortland Ave. (rear)

Commr. Lentz made a motion to recommend a Zoning Map Amendment for Common Council consideration. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. New Business

**1. Z-2868**

**Text Amendments to ReZone: the City of Syracuse Zoning Ordinance and Official Map**

Zoning Administrator, Jake Dishaw, summarized the essential proposed amendment to ReZone, Articles 1,2,3,5,7.

Commr. Murphy recommended staff and Asst. Corporation Counsel to schedule a work session to formally discuss proposed definitions, new use types, and use specific standards specific to affordable housing within Mix-Income Development.

Commr. Lentz inquired about the text Amendment approval procedure and SEQRA. Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg replied that the approval timeline would depend on the planning commission's determination after the work session.

No members of the public spoke in support of or in opposition to the application. Chairman Kulick closed public comment.

Ms. Kathleen Bennet from Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC guided the commissioners in conducting the SEQR review for the text Amendment. Commr. Lentz made a motion to add the community grid vision plan to the list of plans in the EAF Part 3 for consistency with other plans. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Lentz moved to make a negative SEQR declaration and Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Bowler moved to hold the public hearing open to May 28<sup>th</sup> and to schedule the work session as requested by Commr. Murphy before the next planning commission meeting. Commr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**2. MaSPR-24-11**

**Major Site Plan Review – convert Crown Plaza Hotel to a 287 multi-unit apartment building**

701-06 E Genesee St.

Terrance McCarthy, TJM Syracuse, LLC (owner)

Brian Bouchard, CHA Consulting (applicant)

MX-5 Zone District

Mr. Brian Bouchard introduced the Major Site Plan application.

Asst. Corporation Counsel confirmed for Commr. Lentz that the Planning Commission can take action on SEQR during the presented meeting since all interested agencies consent to the Planning Commission declaring itself and acting as the lead agency.

Commr. Lentz inquired about the details pertaining to the quality of required affordable housing units; Mr. Bouchard confirmed that every unit would be identical in size and quality based on the renovation design plan and the existing structure layout. Mr. Bouchard answered Commr. Murphy's question about the construction schedule, that is, the owner wishes to start the construction as soon as receiving zoning approval and other pertinent permits, and the applicant will first demolish the interior structure in June for the forthcoming renovation. Commr. Murphy followed with a question about the future character of proposed commercial space on the first floor fronting Almond Street. In response, Mr. Bouchard pointed out that the purpose of providing commercial spaces in the first floor is to bring back the storefront along Almond Street to provide flexible opportunity for any business. Chairman Kulick wanted to confirm which streets ( Almond Street, or E. Genesee Street) will be the primary entrance for the future residence, and Mr. Bouchard stated that this will depend on the demands of different tenants.

No members of the public spoke in support of the application.

Mr. Danny Leka, CEO of Visit Syracuse spoke in opposition to the application. He expressed concerns that losing a hotel would negatively affect the ability to draw convention events to Syracuse and otherwise impact tourism. Mr. Bouchard acknowledged Leka's concerns and explained that it is the owner's intent to revive the proposed building and provide more housing to the city.

Chairman Kulick closed public comment.

Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg assisted the Commission in its' SERQ review of the Type 1 application including review of the 18 questions of EAF Part 2. Commr. Lentz moved to declare the Planning Commission as Lead Agency and make a negative SEQR declaration. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Bowler moved to approve the application, MaSPR-24-11. Commr. Lentz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

**3. Z-2864 & R-24-16**  
Zoning Map Amendment & Resubdivision  
211 ¼, 213 Kellogg St. and 232, 236-38 Holland St.  
William D'Angelo and Smith Housing, LLC (owners)  
Mark Smith, Smith Housing, LLC (applicant)  
R2 and R3 Zone Districts

Mark Smith, from Smith Housing , LLC introduced the project.  
No questions or concerns were raised by the Commissioners

No members of the public spoke in support of or in opposition to the application. Chairman Kulick closed the public comment.

Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg assisted the Commission in its SERQ review of the proposed Unlisted action. Commr. Bowler moved to make a negative SEQR declaration. Commr. Lentz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Lentz moved to conditionally approve the resubdivision application R-24-16 contingent on the (1) Common Council approval of the Zoning map change; and (2) Resubdivision map updated with water and utility easement. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Lentz moved to refer the Zoning Map Amendment application Z-2864, for review by the Syracuse Common Council. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**4. Z-2867**

Zoning Map Amendment

139 W Kennedy St.

Deanna Barton (owner)

Nabil Akl (applicant)

R2 Zone District

Mr. Nabil Akl introduced the project.

No questions or concerns were raised by the Commissioners

No members of the public spoke in support of or in opposition to the application. Chairman Kulick closed public comment.

Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg assisted the Commission in its SERQ review of the proposed Type II action. Commr. Lentz moved to make a negative SEQR declaration. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Bowler moved to refer application, Z-2867, for review by the Syracuse Common Council. Commr. Lentz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**5. SP-24-07**

Special Use Permit - establish Food and Beverage, Retail land use

900-16 E Fayette St.

Chirs Geiger, East Fayette, LLC. (owner)

Bill Pitcher, Pitcher Architects, PLLC (applicant)

MX-4 Zone District

Mr. Bill Pitcher from Pitcher Fayette LLC introduced the project.

Commr. Lentz incorporated the staff's proposed conditions (1) No beer and wine sale for onsite consumption., and (2): No drive-through and drop-off window. Mr. Pitcher acknowledged that it is physically impossible to have a drive through and drop-off window on site. Commr. Bowl questioned the hours of operation, and Mr. Geiger, the owner, clarified that the tenant of the proposed grocery store is a good business actor and probably won't keep the business open late at night. While the hours of operation are not clearly indicated by the applicant, the commissioners discussed the limited hours of operation.

No members of the public spoke in support of or in opposition to the application. Chairman Kulick closed public comment.

Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg assisted the Commission in its SEQR review of the proposed Type II action. Commr. Lentz moved to make a negative SEQR declaration. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Murphy moved to refer application, SP-24-07, for review by the Syracuse Common Council with two approval conditions (1) No beer and wine sale for consumption onsite; and (2) limiting the hours of operation hour to 6 am to 10 pm, 7 days a week. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Syracuse Gateway Apartments project**

#### **6. MaSPR-24-17 & R-24-28**

Major Site Plan Review – build a 7-story, mixed-use, 291 dwelling unit building

Resubdivision – combine 6 properties into 1

701-03, 705, 709, 715 E Fayette St. and 706-08, 712-16 E Washington St.

Chris Geiger, GW Syracuse, LLC. (owner)

Ben Harrell, CHA Consulting (applicant)

MX-5 Zone District

Brain Bouchard from CHA Consulting, Lnc, introduced the companion Resubdivision and Major Site Plan Review applications.

Commr. Lentz asked about the distribution plan for the affordable housing units and Mr. Bouchard replied that the developer committed to the Neighborhood and Business Development Department to evenly distribute the units among different unit types.

Chairman Kulick inquired about the approach that the applicants propose to maintain the community character, especially with the adjacent church on Fayette Street. Mr. Bouchard explained that the project developer had experience in preserving the community character and historic structures by using building design techniques such as similar color, and structure design, and he took an example of the new apartment development on 910 Madison Street for illustration. Additionally, he will consider the comments from the Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board (SLPB) on 5/9/2024. Commr. Lentz inquired about the current soil conditions because there was a former gas station on the subject property. Mr. Bouchard clarified that the project is undergoing phase I and II environmental remediation studies. Once they are approved, the applicant will submit the parcels to the Brownfield cleanup program which will clean up the site for long-term use.

No members of the public spoke in support of or in opposition to the application. Chairman Kulick closed public comment.

The project requires a coordinated review under SEQRA, at the time of this meeting, not all involved review agencies had responded to Zoning Administration's letter declaring City Planning Commission as the lead agency.

Because the SEQR was not ripe, no action was taken for this application in this meeting.

7. **SP-24-08**

Special Use Permit – establish Food and Beverage, Retail land use  
1524 Valley Dr.

Sam Abdul, Valley Drive Properties, LLC (owner)

Bill Pitcher, Pitcher Architect, PLLC (applicant)

MX-2 Zone District

Mr. Bill Pitcher from Pitcher Fayette LLC introduced the project.

Commr. Lentz incorporated the staff's proposed conditions (1) No beer and wine sale for onsite consumption., and (2): No drive-through and drop-off window. Commr. Murphy confirmed with the applicant that the operation hours will be from 10 Am to 9 Pm, 7 days a week.

No members of the public spoke in support of or in opposition to the application. Chairman Kulick closed public comment.

Asst. Corporation Counsel Hertzberg assisted the Commission in its SERQ review of the proposed Type II action. Commr. Lentz moved to make a negative SEQR declaration. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Murphy moved to refer application, SP-24-08, for review by the Syracuse Common Council with two approval conditions (1)No beer and wine sale for consumption onsite; and (2) limiting the hours of operation hour to 10 am to 9 pm, 7 days a week. Commr. Bowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Commr. Bowler and seconded by Commr. Murphy. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was called to adjourn at 8:25Pm