

Minutes
City of Syracuse
Board of Zoning Appeals
Thursday, April 4th, 2024
1:00 p.m.
Common Council Chamber

I. Meeting called to order at 1:01 p.m.

Members Present

Mr. Stewart Koenig, Chairman	Yes
Mr. Michael Stanton	Yes
Mr. Michael Cheslik	Yes
Ms. Honora Spillane	Yes
Ms. Karen Gillette	No
Mr. Ronald O. Jennings	Yes
Mr. Timothy Rudd	Yes

Staff Present

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

II. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the March 14th, 2024, meeting minutes was made by Mr. Cheslik and seconded by Mr. Jennings. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Public Hearings

A. Old Business

1.) V-23-23

An Area Variance to allow a multi-unit dwelling structure (Building 1) to exceed maximum allowable building length of 180 feet.

301-11 E. Taylor Street

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, D.P.C., presented the Area Variance application.

Mr. Stanton asked what the proposed length is for the Building 1. Mr. Schuster replied the building is 199-foot-long on South Townsend Street and 303-foot-long on East Adam Street. Mr. Stanton asked if the applicant is willing to add 1 more story to the Building 1 to decrease the building length while keeping the same amount of dwelling units. Mr. Schuster said the applicant is happy to add additional story but still wants to maintain the street wall as long as possible from a walkability standpoint. Mr. Stanton mentioned that having a long building will form a block for pedestrian, therefore Mr. Stanton asked if the applicant has considered to have a pedestrian walkway through the building that can take people from sidewalk to the interior of the property. Mr. Schuster explained that the applicant and his team have not considered the walkway because the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, which funds this project, requires that no more than 25% of the building footprint is allowed to be anything other than the residential space; therefore, the applicant and design team are not sure if they have enough space to have connectivity

between the two wings of the building with a pass through. Mr. Schuster also indicated that 300 feet is not a terribly long distance to go around, and the building has 2 entrances at the corner so that people do not need to go around the building to enter the building; the residents will have the ability to go through the building at the lobby. Chairman Koenig asked if the lobby is on one end of the building. Mr. Schuster explained that the lobby is designed to be located at the corner of the building, which is near to the 2 entrances, from an environmental standpoint. Mr. Schuster explained to the questions from Chairman Koenig and Mr. Stanton about the pedestrian access to the interior of the site, that the interior of the site will be fenced and gated and will not be an open access for non-residents. Mr. Stanton then asked how residents are going to enter the building when they stand on sidewalks at the center of 300-foot-long facade. Mr. Schuster explained that the residents can use the entrance and lobby at the corner, or they can use the gap between the supportive housing building and Building 1 to access to the interior of the site; the estimate time for pedestrian to access to the interior of the site from the sidewalks at the center of 300-foot-long facade is about 11 seconds. Mr. Cheslik asked if the emergency vehicles are able to access the interior of the site. Mr. Schuster replied that the emergency vehicle access is from the full street length and the interior parking area is designed to accommodate emergency vehicles in the back; therefore, the building will be accessible at any entrances for emergency vehicles. Mr. Schuster added that there will be elevators in the lobby designed for patients on stretchers and they can access directly to the parking area which are designed for emergency vehicles to access without any traffic issues. Chairman Koenig asked if all the entrances for the site are ADA accessible. Mr. Schuster confirmed that is correct and added that the entrances near to egress stairs on the end of the building will have key card access, but they are not intended to be primary building entrances. Ms. Spillane asked if the building façades will be segmented by architectural design to make each segment less than 180 feet. Mr. Schuster confirmed that is correct. Mr. Cheslik asked what material the building is made of. Mr. Schuster replied that the majority of the street facing facade is made of brick in primarily 3 different colors; some of the panels around the window are made of fiber cement; the building structure is made of wood.

No members of the public spoke in favor of nor in opposition to the area variance application.

With the advice from Asst. Corporation Counsel, Ms. Meira Hertzberg, Chairman Koenig stated that the Board of Zoning Appeal does not need to take up the SEQR review because the City Planning Commission is the lead agency for this project.

Mr. Rudd made a motion to approve the area variance application, Mr. Stanton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Spillane and seconded by Mr. Rudd. The motion carried unanimously. Meeting called to adjourn at 1:19 p.m.