

Minutes
City of Syracuse
Board of Zoning Appeals
Thursday, December 18th, 2025
1:00 p.m.
Common Council Chamber

I. Meeting called to order at 1:00 PM

<u>Member Present</u>		<u>Staff Present</u>	
Mr. Michael Cheslik	Yes	Mr. Jake Dishaw	Yes
Ms. Honora Spillane	No	Ms. Meira Hertzberg	Yes
Mr. Otis Jennings	Yes	Mr. Zhitong Wu	No
Mr. Liam Kirst	Yes	Mr. Nate Pan	Yes
Mr. Vincent Ryan	Yes	Ms. Amber Dillon	No
Ms. Katelyn Wright	Yes	Mr. Noah Garcia	Yes

I. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the September 25th, 2025 meeting minutes was made by Mr. Kirst, and seconded by Mr. Jennings. The motion carried unanimously.

II. Public Hearings

A. New Business

1) **V-25-10**

Use Variance for a total of 14 dwelling units in one building

99 Macdougall Place

Catamount Properties LLC. (Owner/Applicant)

R1 Zone District

Mr. Dishaw introduced the application and explained that the applicant will establish an additional apartment unit at the existing apartment complex at 99 MacDougall Pl.

The attorney for the applicant introduced the project, she explained that their project would add a basement unit in one of the three buildings at the property. She explained that a now expired variance and permit were issued, and that this application is to re-present the application.

Mr. Kirst asked why the work took so long when the application was originally approved all the way back in 2010.

The attorney for the applicant explained it was due to construction delays that the project took so long, and later due to COVID and other issues, which further pushed the project.

The attorney presented a permit placard to the board for 98 MacDougall Pl, the real address of the property is 99 MacDougall Pl. Three buildings are present on the Lot at 99 MacDougall, 97, 98, and 99 MacDougall. This application is for an apartment in the 98 MacDougall building.

Mr. Ryan mentioned the additional approval criteria to screen the dumpster area, restripe the parking lot, etc. and they agreed to all of them as conditions of approval.

Ms. Wright asked how they would prove the criteria that they would not receive a reasonable return.

The attorney argued that without the approval of the variance, the money put into the renovation would take much longer than the expected 8-year timeline for the additional unit.

Ms. Wright explained that this criterion is usually held to a standard that it would be unfeasible without the variance, not just that it would take them a long time to recoup the loss.

Mr. Dishaw asked about the previous approvals and how many units are within the building right now.

The attorney and the owner clarified that 14 units in the building.

Mr. Jennings asked if they would seek to finish the 15th unit.

The attorney said it depends on the outcome of this meeting.

A motion to an executive session to consult with legal counsel was proposed and seconded.

Mr. Cheslik brought the board back in session.

Mr. Cheslik opened the public comment period.

None spoke in favor or opposition.

Mr. Cheslik closed the public comment period.

Ms. Wright asked Mr. Dishaw when the last Certificate of Compliance was granted.

Mr. Dishaw said 2025, it was inspected for 14 units, but no Certificate of Compliance was granted.

He further noted that it was previously inspected in 2022 and issued a Certificate of Compliance for 13 units in line with the earlier variance.

Ms. Wright walked through the four approval criteria with a discussion with the board members, and all board members agreed that the application can not meet all four criteria, resulting in the disapproval of the proposed variance.

Ms. Hertzberg asked the requisite SEQR questions.

Ms. Hertzberg recommended a negative declaration of the SEQR.

Mr. Ryan motioned for a negative declaration of the SEQR. Mr. Kirst seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Wright motioned for denial specific failure of 3 criterions: the self-created hardship, the unique circumstances, and the reasonable return.

Mr. Ryan seconded the motion.

The motion for denial was passed unanimously.

B. Other Business

1) **V-24-10**

First Time Extension for Area Variances

1105-17 S State St.

Syracuse Housing Authority (Owner)

McCormack, Baron, & Salazar Inc. (Applicant)

MX-2 Zone District

Mr. Shushter presented the application for extension. He explained the project was approved two years ago and they intend to begin construction in January 2026. They are asking for an extension of 24 months until the end of the construction period.

Mr. Cheslik opened the public comment period.

None spoke in favor or against.

Mr. Cheslik closed the public comment period.

Ms. Wright asked if this would require SEQR.

Ms. Hertzberg said no.

Mr. Jennings motioned for approval.

Mr. Kirst seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

III. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn brought by Mr. Cheslik, moved by Mr. Jennings, and seconded by Mr. Kirst. Motion passed unanimously

Meeting Adjourned at 1:50 PM