

Minutes of the Meeting of the
City of Syracuse Planning Commission
City Hall, Syracuse, New York
8/18/2025

Summary of cases discussed:

Z-2880	R-25-33	SP-25-19
SP-25-22	MaSPR-25-17	MaSPR-25-13
R-25-40	MaSPR-15-16	MaSPR-25-12
3S-25-08	MiSPR-25-64 / MaSPR-25-15	3S-25-10

Attendance

Commission Members Present

Mr. Steven Kulick, Chairman	Yes
Mr. Barry Lentz	Yes
Mr. Walter Bowler	Yes
Ms. Kathy Murphy	Yes

Staff Present

Mr. Jake Dishaw	Yes
Ms. Meira Hertzberg	Yes
Mr. Nate Pan	Yes
Ms. Amber Dillon	Yes
Mr. Zhitong Wu	Yes
Mr. Noah Garcia	Yes

I. Meeting called to order at 6:02 p.m.

Meeting is called to order by Commr. Kulick

II. Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes from the July 28th 2025 City Planning Commission Meeting

July 28th 2025, minutes motioned by Commr. Bowler for approval, seconded by Commr. Lentz

Motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Hearings

A. Old Business

Z-2880

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

Jake Dishaw introduced the project and asked that the commission consider moving forward while holding any changes to Table 2.15.

Commr. Bowler asks if we are entertaining a new motion since there have been alterations to the rest of the section.

Ms. Hertzberg explained that the changes marked on the paper copy are labeled with different colors so that the original, proposed, and revised proposed language are all represented.

Commr. Murphy made a motion to accept the changes proposed to section 2.15, and a proffered amendment to Article 3 Section 3.6G Use definitions, subsection B(2)a(1) and Article 5. Section 5.4, subsection B(5)d(3), and Article 5 Section 5.6B(2),f(2) adding a new section.

Commr. Murphy made a motion to recommend approval to the Common Council for all proposed changes.

Commr. Bowler seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. New Business

1. R-25-33

Resubdivision
500 Seymour St.
Catholic Charities (Owner/Applicant)
Frederick Marty (Representative)
R2 Zone District

Frederick Marty, Mckenzie Hughes law firm, and Mr. Smith introduce the project, and explains that Mr. Smith would be purchasing the portion of the property being resubdivided out, while Catholic Charities would retain another portion of the lot with a building and continue to operate out of that structure.

Commr. Lentz asked a question regarding the residential building and what will happen to the building which will be converted into a residential structure.

Mr. Smith replied that it would just need interior remodeling, no demolition is required.

Ms. Hertzberg conducted the SEQRA review.

Commr. Lentz motioned for a negative SEQRA declaration.

Commr. Bowler seconded.

The motion for a negative SEQRA declaration passed unanimously.

Commr. Lentz motioned for approval with one special condition to file the resubdivision with the County Clerk within 62 days.

Commr. Murphy seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. SP-25-19

Special Use Permit
2000 South Ave. & Glenwood Ave.

Ammar Adbo Alwadi, Cuse City Properties LLC. (Owner/Applicant)
MX-3 Zone District

Mr. Abraham introduced the project and explained that the applicant has owned the building since 2023 and had operated a business out of this location since the early 2000s. He went over the recommendations of the CPTED assessment. He explained that the applicant also purchased the building across the street to prevent unwanted tenants from altering the character of the street.

Commr. Murphy asked about the residential units above the store.

Mr. Abraham explained that there are 6 units, 4 are vacant, one is occupied by a family member, and an unrelated tenant, he is awaiting repairs to the rest of the units, and a Certificate of Compliance is in progress pending the approval of this applicant.

Ms. Hertzberg conducted the SEQRA review.

Commr. Lentz motioned for a negative SEQRA declaration.

Commr. Bowler seconded.

The motion for a negative SEQRA declaration passed unanimously.

Commr. Lentz motioned for recommendation to the Common Council, with 5 conditions.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Municipal Parking Lot Project

a. SP-25-22

b. MaSPR-25-13

Major Site Plan Review
1171 W Fayette St. & Magnolia St.
City of Syracuse (Owner)
Michael Lehman, Deputy Director of Asset Management (Applicant)
MX-4 Zone District

Michael Lehman introduced the application and explained that it would be utilized for the new

Commr. Lentz asked if any bike parking is proposed since the usual requirement is 1 bike parking spot per 6 parking spots.

Commr. Murphy asked if the lot would be for public use and who would maintain it.

Mr. Lehman replied that paid parking is something that would be considered in the future but is not currently proposed.

Commr. Lentz was informed by Corporation Counsel that the 1/6 parking spaces per bicycle parking ratio does apply to this project and would be necessary as a special condition.

Ms. Hertzberg conducted the SEQRA review.

Commr. Lentz motioned for a negative SEQRA declaration

Commr. Bowler seconded.

The motion for a negative SEQRA declaration passed unanimously.

Commr. Lentz motioned for recommendation to the Common Council with 5 conditions and one special condition regarding adding bicycle parking.

Commr. Bowler seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. Lafayette Hills Estate Project

a. MaSPR-25-13

Master Plan Review

455 Lafayette Rd.

Estate At New York LLC (Owner/Applicant)

Kassie Smith (Applicant)

R1 Zone District

Kassie Smith, Estate at New York LLC, and Scott Freeman introduced the application and explained that they would be proposed 110 units within the first phase of this project.

Commr. Murphy asked if this would only be SEQRA, Mr. Dishaw asked if the applicant could provide more details before the commission asks their questions.

Ms. Smith explained that there would be fourplexes, single family homes, and amenities in the location of the old Lafayette Hills Golf Course. She further explained that clubhouses, picnic benches, and other outdoor amenities would be within this phase, while future phases would introduce more fourplexes, and then the final phase would be single family units on 8000 and 10000 sf lots. Trees would be preserved within a specific area, and signage would denote that the area is a preserve.

Ms. Smith further explained that there would be retention ponds, new parks, etc.

Ms. Smith explained the challenges of adding a new sewer line as well as other utilities to the area and that a grant from the state would be helping to fund the sewer line, which would also connect to other nearby homes that are on septic systems.

Commr. Kulick asked how many homes this help would get onto the municipal sewer line.

Ms. Smith replied they don't have that information at this time.

Commr. Lentz asked about the storm water ponds labeled “future”, Mr. Freeman explained that they are proposed in a later phase of the project, which would be reviewed as a Major Site Plan at another date.

Commr. Lentz asked about the development timeline and whether they’re still on track.

Mr. Freeman replies they’ve been delayed, but that site work will begin in 2026, depending on the weather with survey work and clearing occurring in the interim.

Commr. Lentz asked about protected species in this area and how they would comply with these requirements.

Mr. Freeman replied that they are aware of the issue and would ensure compliance with the preservation.

Commr. Lentz asked about any potential traffic concerns from the intersection.

Mr. Freeman replied that a traffic study is in the works currently.

Ms. Smith corrects her earlier statement that there would be 103 units, instead of 110.

Ms. Smith explains that the later phases are speculative pending the success of the first phases.

Commr. Kulick opened the public comment period

None spoke in favor.

Kathleen Stribley at Monticello Dr. spoke in opposition to the project, and objects to the segmentation of the project into phases because she is concerned that later phases will not be followed through on. She explained that the site bedrock is very low and is not absorbed by the land well which will cause issues with flooding. She is also concerned with slopes around the site, and recommends reducing the density of the site. She also has concerns with water pressure on the site since the area has lower water pressure in general. Traffic is a concern of hers as well, and she isn’t sure how other nearby proposals such as the car wash and storage units will impact the traffic conditions with the addition of so many new homes. At the end she provided her comments to the commission.

Commr. Lentz asked about the ponds and whether dry ponds will also need to be lined.

Ms. Stribley replied that all the ponds should be lined.

Jim Calcerinos spoke in opposition to the project and expressed concerns with the water pressure of the area since his houses don’t have adequate water pressure. His other concerns are that no sidewalks are available near this property and is worried about the potential for the extra traffic and lack of pedestrian paths could be dangerous.

Mr. Freeman replied to the comment regarding the storm water ponds and that they do propose to have the ponds lined. He further adds that all stormwater regulations are going to be met and will be held to usual level of scrutiny. The traffic concern is understood and that it will improve as other projects are completed and construction ceases. He also adds that minor changes may be made to the layout including adding additional entrances/exits from the new development. Ms. Smith explained that there have been many discussions internally on the traffic concerns and that they are taking the issue seriously and consider many alternatives including potentially widening Lafayette Rd. itself. Ms. Smith further explained that there are proposals in the works to improve other public utilities to the area and potentially increase water pressure, but they are in the early stages at this time, any improvements would help the nearby properties as well. Ms. Smith replied to the comments on the density and explained that their geotechnical research has assuaged their concern and that terracing would also help with the slopes that exist. Mr. Freeman explained that they have already reduced the number of houses due to the grade where previous proposals would not have been complaint with the maximum road grade.

Economic Development Planner Nate Pan walked staff through part II of the EAF. The CPC as the lead agency of the coordinated review under SEQR has thoroughly reviewed all relevant materials and analyzed all aspects of the action. By assenting to all the items outlined in part II SEQR review the CPC has completed this part of the review. CPC is in agreement with all of the listed mitigations regarding this proposed development received from the applicant and from staff. The CPC issued a negative SEQR declaration for the proposed Master Site Plan Review. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Lentz motioned for approval to the subject project.

Commr. Bowler second.

The motion passed unanimously.

5. South Ave Apartments Project

a. R-25-40

Resubdivision

b. MaSPR-15-16

Major Site Plan Review

680 South Ave.

Katelyn Wright, Greater Syracuse Property Development Corporation (GSPDC)
(Current Owner/Applicant)

BLD Properties (Future Owner/Applicant)

Keplinger Freeman Associates (Representative/Applicant)

Mr. Freeman introduced the applicant and explained that the final combined lot would be about 1 acre with 51 apartments in a U-shaped configuration and includes 46 parking spots.

He also mentioned that a variance would be necessary to approve of the length of the structure.

Commr. Kulick opened the public comment period

Common Counciller Rita Paniagua spoke in favor of the project and explained that this would be part of a larger project to revitalize this area of Syracuse and that funding has been granted additional funding.

Bernard President of the Syracuse Chapter of the National Action Network spoke in favor of the application and explained that, in his view, the infusion of support would help to revitalize the area not just materially but also morally, and felt that this project is an excellent example of how subsidized housing should be done.

None spoke in opposition.

Mr. Kulick closed the public comment.

Mr. Dishaw asked that the Commission hold the application pending approval of the Variance by the BZA, but that a SEQRA review could be conducted at this time.

Zoning Director Zhitong Wu walked staff through part II of the EAF. The CPC as the lead agency of the coordinated review under SEQR has thoroughly reviewed all relevant materials and analyzed all aspects of the action. By assenting to all the items outlined in part II SEQR review the CPC has completed this part of the review. CPC is in agreement with all of the listed mitigations regarding this proposed development received from the applicant and from staff. The CPC issued a negative SEQR declaration for the proposed Major Site Plan Review and Resubdivision. The motion passed unanimously.

The commissions held the application pending the BZA decision on the Variance.

6. MaSPR-25-12

Major Site Plan Review

311 Genant Dr.

Graziano Zazzara, 311 Genant Holdings LLC (Owner/Applicant)

Keplinger Freeman Associates (Representative/Applicant)

MX-2 Zone District

Jacob Freeman introduced the project and explained that several upgrades to the site would occur, including façade alterations and work to the existing bones of the building.

Commr. Murphy asked what the anticipated start date is.

Mr. Freeman replied that it would begin in November and last approximately 1 year.

She asked a further question regarding the parking inside, Mr. Freeman replied it would be at ground level.

Commr. Lentz asked about the types of units that would be in the structure, Mr. Knittle replied that there would be a mix, but mostly studio and one bedrooms with a number of two bedrooms.

Commr. Kulick opened the public comment period.

None spoke in favor or against.

Zoning Director Zhitong Wu walked staff through part II of the EAF. The CPC as the lead agency of the coordinated review under SEQR has thoroughly reviewed all relevant materials and analyzed all aspects of the action. By assenting to all the items outlined in part II SEQR review the CPC has completed this part of the review. CPC is in agreement with all of the listed mitigations regarding this proposed development received from the applicant and from staff. The CPC issued a negative SEQR declaration for the proposed Major Site Plan Review. The motion passed unanimously.

Commr. Bowler motioned for approval of the project with 4 conditions, including modifications would be subject to review by LPB, to collaborate with NBD to ensure that 10% of units are affordable units, to acquire separate land use for the commercial tenant space, and to coordinate with the I-81 team for any future concerns.

Commr. Murphy seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

7. MiSPR-25-64 / MaSPR-25-15

Major Site Plan Review referred by the Zoning Administrator
4141 S Salina St. & Fillmore Ave.
William Paladino, 2468 Group Inc. (Owner/Applicant)
Channell Pickard (Applicant)
CM Zone District

Mr. Dishaw explained quickly to the board the reason it was referred to the commission where the previous Special Use Permit was revoked by the Common Council in December 2024.

Mr. Walton of Walton Architectural group introduced the application explained that they would perform minor interior alterations for the restaurant, as well as some outdoor seating, which was removed following the recommendation of the CPTED, and a change to the signage of the establishment.

Commr. Bowler asked a question regarding the hours of operation, which were incorrectly transcribed.

The applicant explained that the hours would be 6AM to 10PM with takeout services only from 10PM to 2:30AM.

Commr. Lentz asked about the previous application, which was revoked by the Common Council, and asked if the new owner would operate in a substantially different way from the previous similarly named establishment.

Mr. Walton ceded the microphone to Channell Pickard, who explained that the name was retained because it is a family business, and that many of the operations of the business would be done differently from the previous incarnation.

Commr. Murphy explained that when concerns are raised by the police department and community, a CPTED report was conducted and five recommendations were made, and the applicant did not want to comply with the recommendations of the CPTED other than the tinted window recommendations.

Commr. Bowler explained that they are being held to standards that other businesses across the city are being held to.

Commr. Lentz explained that the parking lot seems to have been a primary issue during the previous business in this tenant space.

Ms. Pickard agreed with Commr. Lentz and expressed that she wishes that Mr. Paladino, the property owner, would do more to address the parking lot issues.

Commr. Lentz asked if she had ever spoken to Mr. Paladino.

Ms. Pickard replied that all conversations have been through his property manager.

Mr. Jack Lena spoke in representation of Mr. Paladino and explained that the fence was his recommendation in order to prevent vagrancy in this area and reduce the potential for break-ins.

Commr. Murphy explained that one of the CPTED recommendations would be to increase to lighting in the “nook” that the business occupies, and she further recommends that the parking lot should be maintained in better order, which will require coordination between the property owner and the tenants.

Ms. Pickard is willing to look at the CPTED report again and reconsider some of the recommendations from the police department.

Mr. Lena spoke again regarding the lighting and that more lighting has been installed in the rear, and that new lights have been installed in the “nook” area since the CPTED was conducted. The parking lot is in the process of being improved due to recent excavation for a break that occurred, and several lights were repaired.

Commr. Kulick opened the public comment period.

A member of the public spoke in favor of the application and felt that it would provide good alternative to other nearby restaurants

Mr. Terry Hanks spoke in favor of the application as it would provide a good place for him to relax

Ms. Dona spoke in favor of the application and spoke highly of the owners.

Mr. Arms spoke in favor of the application

Mr. Nelson spoke in favor of the application

Mr. Prichard spoke in favor of the application, particularly because he enjoys their food.

Mr. Kumar spoke in favor of the application and spoke for the Minority Entertainment Coalition who support the business and would work closely with the Deputy Mayor to organize and keep this business safe. He speaks highly of Ms. Pickard who lives nearby the business and would reinvest into her community. He explains that hundreds of customers would be served weekly and that over a dozen new jobs would be created. He explained that jobs are essential in this ZIP code as it is one of the poorest in America. He believes there is a future for Valley Plaza with the new state investment in the grocery store that has long been abandoned.

Mr. Walker spoke in favor of the application and is happy to support the new business and have new local investment into the area. He feels that the nightlife crowd gave the old business a poor reputation and is excited for the new establishment to operate during the day and hopes the new business will cater towards those customers.

Ms. Hollington spoke in favor of the application and feels that it should not be held to the issues of the previous tenant.

Sean Nelson spoke in favor of the application because the business would do good for the community and spoke on some of the issues of the previous tenant.

Kathleen Stribley spoke in opposition to the application and felt that the previous business degraded the reputation of Valley Plaza and has particular concern with the hours of operation attracting cars into the parking lot which she believes will continue many of the same issues as the previous tenant had.

Robin Baker spoke in opposition of the application, she had previously spoken on the last tenant in this space and said that she feels it has made her unsafe, and that the hours are too extensive and is not conducive to the residential uses nearby. She feels that the business does have a responsibility of their customers and their actions in the parking lot.

Rhonda Vesey founder of Food Access Healthy Neighborhoods Now spoke in opposition of the application, she explained that she had previously spoken to Bill Paladino as well as Mayor Walsh and Eric Ennis on attempting to get a new tenant in the grocery store space which has been vacant since 2018. In the interim, she formed a group to host a farmers' market in valley plaza, that had been successful.

Commr. Murphy asked if the grocery store moving in is guaranteed.

Ms. Vesey replied that they are coming in, and that it is tentatively scheduled to open in April, with a ribbon ceremony in September

Ms. April representative for Tomorrows Neighborhoods Today spoke in opposition to the application, she explained that her issue with the restaurant is not the restaurant itself, but rather the location and the seclusion it grants. It was once an opening to access the rear side of the property. She also has an issue with the extensive hours and feels that it must wind down at night.

Ms. Pickard replied that the points made were valid and that they are members of their community, however she feels that with additional assistance the problems of the past can be avoided. She feels that there are plenty of other business that operate late at night and that their business would operate fine as a takeout. She expresses a willingness to work with them to avoid the problems of the past. She feels that the grocery store moving in would help to make the area safer and more community driven.

Commr. Lentz asked a question about the ownership structure and whether Mr. Nelson is still involved in the business

Commr. Lentz clarifies that the he is specifically asking who is the registered owner.

Ms. Pickard replies that she is the owner of the business at this time.

Commr. Lentz discusses that he sees a path forward, and that there were compromises in previous applications that were similarly contentions between the business and nearby residents. He also has concerns with the applicant not being aware of the CPTED report, and would appreciate a better response that is more willing to accept the recommendations of the CPTED report. He is inclined to place the application on hold pending further discussion of the CPTED report and acceptance of more of the recommendations.

Commr. Lentz also mentioned concerns with the hours of operation and recommends following up further with community members and compromising with them.

Ms. Pickard replied that she is willing to organize with the organizations that spoke in opposition and find a middle ground.

Commr. Murphy commented that she would like to see the applicant talk with FAHNN and get real feedback from the neighborhood and find a way that they can all have success and not an antagonistic relationship with the neighborhood.

Commr. Murphy also urged the applicant to reconsider the CPTED recommendations.

Commr. Bowler recommended that the applicant reach out the staff for questions, and also that they get written confirmation of improvements made by the landlord.

Commr. Kulick closed the public comment period.

The applicant agreed to hold the application, and wants some further guidance on her next steps.

The application was held.

C. Other Business

1. 3S-25-08

Three-Mile Limit – Town of Onondaga
4774 Cleveland Rd. & 4848 W Seneca Tpke.
Michael Harmer, Dwell Equity Group (Owner/Applicant)

Zoning Administrator Jake Dishaw introduced the project and commented that city engineering approved the application.

Commr. Murphy motioned for approval

Commr. Lentz seconded

The motion passed unanimously

2. 3S-25-10

Three-Mile Limit – Town of Salina
500-02 Old Liverpool Rd.
Gary Angeloro, GHA Property Management (Owner/Applicant)

Zoning Administrator Jake Dishaw introduced the project and commented that city engineering approved the application.

Commr. Murphy motioned for approval,

Commr. Lentz seconded.

The motion passed unanimously

IV: Adjourn

Commr. Bowler motioned for adjournment

Commr. Murphy seconded

The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 9:38 PM