



## CITY OF GENEVA PLANNING BOARD

### MEETING MINUTES

5:30 PM | July 8, 2025  
City Hall – 47 Castle St, Geneva NY

- 1. Roll Call:** Don Cass, Anne Nenneau, Kevin Reed, Dave D'Amico, Bryson Cochran (arrived at 5:33PM)  
**Excused:** N/A  
**Also Present:** Clr. Brennan, David Hou, Josh Kayn, Wendy Marsh, Dave Linger, Mark Pandolf, Daven Green, Whitney McClary

- 2. A work session for Lakeview Mental Health Services Inc. for a Mixed Use 5-story apt. Bldg. located at 218 Genesee St.**

The Planning Board took a few minutes to review new submission received from Lakeview this afternoon.

Mr. Reed noted that there were no new material samples to review, only new drawings today. Some color changes were noted, as well as new separation elements to break up the first floor with some vertical lines, which were well received by the Planning Board. Mr D'Amico wondered if the lentils and sills were granite. They are precast concrete, with a steel lentil. It was noted that the setback from Castle Street to the west wall is about 30 feet, and that the first floor was brought out to be flush with the right of way on Castle Street.

Ms. Nenneau noted that Lakeview's parking study is very similar to the 2016 City study, in the area of 218 Genesee Street, and seems like a fairly comprehensive study justifying the project's position. Mr. D'Amico shared his concerns about public spots being tied up. Mr. Reed wondered if an incorrect code found in the 2016 study changes its results significantly, the incorrect code was related to trip generation. He wondered when the new study occurred. The new study occurred last week and studies supply and demand. Mr. D'Amico wondered if Lakeview is considering purchasing the property adjacent to Colt Street. Project staff shared that is still on the table, and noted that the new summary shows parking demand and max capacity at peak times being 36%. Mr.

Reed cautioned to consider the nature of the structure below that lot, which sits on top of Castle Creek. He cautioned against forcing Lakeview to do something that they may have to go back on in the future. Mr. D'Amico would like to look into it, get the facts and see what might be advantageous. Mr. Cochran wondered what Lakeview properties these parking estimates were compared with. Project staff shared that they were compare to all other Lakeview properties, noting that the downtown Ithaca property has 60 units and 12-14 parking spaces. Mr. Cochran noted that Ithaca has a lot more walkability for getting goods in the downtown area, while necessary goods are further away from downtown Geneva. Not having a vehicle in downtown Ithaca versus downtown Geneva are totally different scales. Mr. D'Amico wondered what type of transportation Lakeview will be providing for their clients, and the ratio of how many walk versus have their own transportation. Lakeview estimates that about 25% of their residents will have vehicles. It was noted that Lakeview will work with the bus company to add a bus stop, and that Lakeview provides transportation for grocery shopping and other needs. Mr. D'Amico noted that Ithaca has better public transportation options. Mr. Reed wondered about the details of a bus stop at the building. Lakeview reports that they've had bus stops added for their buildings multiple times, and it's easy to work with the bus companies when they know there will be more utilization.

Mr. Reed shared notes on comments and answers he's begun to draft. Mr. D'Amico thanked residents for being active and giving their comments. He noted that parking has been beat up pretty good at meetings and there are a lot of comments about this building dwarfing others. He noted a nearby four story building, and a block away, the Eddie O'Brien's building that is five stories tall. Mr. D'Amico raised concern about comments suggesting that there will be loitering, theft, and addicts hanging around, disagreeing with those assumptions. Ms. Nenneau spoke to that point reminding the board that there will be onsite staff 24/7 to mitigate and monitor those concerns, and pointed out that tenants will be well vetted. Discussion followed around discomfort with comments about "those kinds of people" who will live there. Ms. Nenneau explained that the Planning Board looks at the building fitting into the neighborhood, what it looks like, is it code compliant, but how the building is used isn't under their purview. City Attorney Hou confirmed that the board is deciding if the building fits in with the neighborhood, noting that its good to identify comments about "those people" and opposition to them are not reason to deny a project. The board is determining if the building fits the character of the neighborhood. Ms. Nenneau explained the new form based zoning, and noted that the Planning Board is addressing how the building looks. City Attorney Hou explained that the special use permit for over 12 units is under Planning Board review, and if the applicant has met qualifications the special use permit should be allowed.

Mr. Reed has reviewed and sorted feedback, noting that there was a lot of consistent feedback in four main buckets: character of building residents, parking, loitering, and a building that is too large. Mr. Reed noted that the Planning Board considering resident character would be dancing on icy water, noting that many single, young professionals will meet income criteria to rent units in this building, and that assuming the worst of low

income people may not be a good idea and won't dictate his decision. Many comments also related to parking concerns. The board has discussed the parking studies, and asked Lakeview to look at alternate parking locations. Discussion followed around parking and walking to your destination, and that the application can't be denied because of staff and where they park. City Attorney Hou recommended to the board that once they've had an opportunity to review today's submissions, decide if they're satisfied with alternative parking sites being time restricted around the city, and how that will impact building residents, reach out to Lakeview for more information if the board feels that they need it. Mr. Reed suggested reaching out to the City for comment, ask if they see any adverse effect, and if they would be willing to change some lots parking regulations. Discussion followed. Mr. Cochran would like to finish and finalize site plan details like the bus stop and shuttle availability, as he'd like solid information on those subjects. He noted that he's unsure that 25% tenant parking utilization is a good number, and wants to talk accessibility. He raised concerns about relocating people to an area where they aren't close to goods. Lakeview shared that they predicted parking based on past history, and shared that once tenants are there, they will work with them and develop a transportation plan. They also noted that adding a bus stop is supplemental, they believe they're providing additional parking, and will add other options. Mr. D'Amico highlighted four or five nearby public lots, and offered to look into their timing for parking. Mr. Reed shared that there haven't been enough residents downtown to support a grocery store. This project and others in development may provide enough demand to support another store, and noted that they will give Hernandez more business. Mr. Reed also reminded the board that this parcel is zoned for five stories, and that Lakeview did knock the frontage on Castle Street down to four stories to match surrounding buildings, satisfying the historic marker for Castle Street. Mr. D'Amico doesn't see much aesthetic in the area now, and believes that landscaping and streetscaping will be better than the parking lot and old unused warehouse type buildings that are there now. He sees the project fitting in, while being modern, and doesn't see it looking out of place or negatively affecting anything around it. Ms. Nenneau read an excerpt from the Comp Plan that explains too many unused spaces in the City, leading to a lack of critical mass of business and residents to fuel economic development. She recalls businesses opening with good hope, that don't last as there isn't enough critical mass to sustain them outside of summer tourism. She explained that the OEO and Foundry are also exciting, and can improve critical mass to make the city more successful. Ms. Nenneau commended Lakeview for the changes made, some being significant and effective. She also noted that a lot of buildings downtown don't have their own lots, and likes half of this building being workforce housing affording people the opportunity to live downtown. Discussion followed about closing the public hearing next week as the comments are all very similar, and the board still has some issues they need responses for. She hopes to have those cleared up for next week. Mr. Reed committed to sending comments and responses around tomorrow. Other comments included wondering how this project benefits Geneva (housing); Tax concerns (will pay more than Finger Lakes Times pays now even with a PILOT, not a tax give away), it was also noted that subsidized housing

is the only new housing Geneva will be able to attract for a while; Why not a different housing program (because Lakeview bought the property and this is the type of housing they run); concerns about waste water treatment capacity (Mr. Braman expressed confident that the city has sufficient capacity now, and noted that the waste water treatment plant is being expanded); if more than 37 Lakeview clients apply, will they occupy more than 37 units (no, funding is tied to 37 supportive units and 37 workforce units, the numbers are locked in and won't be able to change); Castle Creek flooding concerns (the building is designed to be above the flood plain, and reduces overall hard surfacing on the system, Mr. Reed's analysis is that it's an improvement on the downtown flooding characteristics); alleyway between buildings safety concerns (the alleyway begins at four feet wide, and will be widened at the other end, looking at a gate so the neighboring building's fire escape exit has egress); limited greenspace (there is some, residents have places to hang out).

**Action Taken:** Mr. D'Amico makes a motion to adjourn at 6:33PM. Mr. Reed seconds.

*Roll was called and the motion was **APPROVED** unanimously (5-0 excused).*

Respectfully submitted by Nicole Tillotson, City Clerk