



CITY OF GENEVA PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

6:00 PM | July 16, 2025
City Hall – 47 Castle St, Geneva NY

- 1. Roll Call:** Kevin Reed, Bryson Cochran, Dave D'Amico, Anne Nenneau, Don Cass
Excused: N/A
Also Present: Neal Braman, David Hou

- 2. A Subdivision Application by the property owner, Debra Cleveland, at 160, 164 & 166 N Main St. [Tax ID# 104.11-2-29, 104.11-2-30, 104.11-2-31]**

Parcel is located on Dorchester & North Main and currently holds a church and two outbuildings supportive of the church. Debra Cleveland, property owner, is proposing to subdivide all buildings into their own lots. Believe the church will become a single family, a current house on 160 N Main will remain a single family, and the third building to be converted into a single-family home.

Single family homes are permitted uses in this zoning district. Current parcels are non-conforming. Area variances will be required for some parcels due to the buildings being too close to the property line.

Lot #1 is 16,000 sq ft, Lot #2 is 34,000 sq ft, and Lot #3 is approximately 11,000 sq. ft.

Mr. Cass opens the public hearing. No member of the public is present to speak. Mr. Cass closes the public hearing.

- 3. Continue a review of a Site Plan & Special Use Permit Application by Lakeview Mental Health Services Inc. for a mixed use 5-Story apartment building located at 218 Genesee St. [Tax ID 104.42-2-44.110]**

John Brennan, ½ of Maryak Properties, LLC, which owns 120 Castle St. First concern is the east side of 120 Castle, which has a fire escape, will become an alleyway that will become a nuisance. Cannot put gates due to it being a means of egress. Another

concern is the proposed building will have flat roof which will compound stormwater runoff at 120 Castle St basement. Has already flooded before.

Rebecca Petropolous, 506 Exchange St, talks about building aesthetics and how they affect various aspects of people, including personality, mood, and health. Believes the proposed building does not contribute to the character of downtown Geneva.

James Petropolous, city councilor and resident of 506 Exchange St, expresses concerns from his constituents regarding the appearance and size of the proposed building.

Bob Stivers, downtown business owner and landlord, does not find the appearance of the building aesthetically pleasing. He states that it is his and his downtown tenant's opinion that the building does not belong in downtown Geneva. Too large for character of neighborhood, does not fit historic feel, wrong location. Lack of amenities for tenants, not enough green space, not enough parking.

Marty Schutt, Castle Street resident, believes putting the proposed building in the proposed location will negatively affect parking downtown. Believes the city should be focused on attracting more foot traffic downtown and does not believe this project is the answer. Long term will only provide 5-6 jobs. Would like to know the exact tax rate that the FLX Times is paying vs. what the proposed building would be paying.

Mary Henry, 499 Castle St resident, believes this project could end up like the unfinished American Legion or Trinity Church projects if not funded correctly. Concerned about federal funding and who would be responsible for the site if not finished.

Bernadette (cannot catch last name from audio recording), resident of Washington St, believes we cannot add to the number of mentally ill persons in Geneva. Believes there are already 7 buildings and many homes that house those with mental illness. Would like to know more about the project tax exemptions. Would like to see this project outside of Geneva.

Jana VanHouten, resident of Maxwell Ave, believes downtown Geneva is at a critical junction. Believes the location and building do not make sense. If zoning variances are granted, precedent will be set. Building is unappealing, parking is unrealistic, tenants could be negatively tempted by surrounding locations. Wants to focus on creating sustainable economic development that will increase the tax base.

Jim Cecere, downtown business owner and candidate for mayor, conducted a comprehensive survey of downtown residents. 40% response rate. Survey asks about strengths of doing business downtown, walkability, challenges, etc. 77% respondents say they oppose the project – scale, design, parking, etc. Urges board to weigh the data, comments, and feedback of the community.

Joshua Fraas, N Brook St resident, is in full support of the project. Believes these types of projects transform tenant lives. Believes there to be precedent in the downtown area to the size of the building, parking. Believes many people not looking as to how the project

would affect the entire community instead of just themselves. Believes benefits outweigh the negatives.

Tom Burrall, resident of 105 Jay St & 50 Linden St, cares for the downtown business community. Would like to see a transformative project, but this isn't it. Since 2010, 5 attempted murders in that area. Economic development is not temporary construction jobs, but it is all about retail. Wants every developer or entity that starts a project of this magnitude to be a community partner.

Dave Linger, downtown business owner, landlord, and resident, also expresses concerns about an alleyway in their building. Proposed building is too large for the location and believes there are many other sites that would be suitable. Concentration of poverty is inappropriate. Parking is a large concern. Mentions that Lakeview was going to buy HWS building on Seneca St, but did not due to lack of public parking. Mentions the Lakeview owned Ithaca building is not downtown. Stay in lane regarding what is good for downtown Geneva.

Wendy Marsh, 91 Castle St, believes the PB is already in support of the project and ready to approve it. She speaks to current Ithaca Lakeview building and the increase in emergency calls. States the parking study conducted by Lakeview did not account for different parking rules in different areas (2-hour time limit, alternative parking, length of time parked, etc) and requires more investigation. Proposed building is size of current Ramada hotel. Visible impacts – aesthetics, parking, traffic, historic area, etc. States this would be Lakeview's first project located in a commercial business district.

Maureen Wallace, owner of William Smith Inn, asks why anyone would want to cram 74 units into a 12-unit area. Too many people in a condensed area. Asks if the applicant has explored other sites and if not, why not.

No other members of the public speak.

Mr. D'Amico asks why Lakeview chose the 218 Genesee St location. Cathy Lovejoy, CEO of Lakeview, states that developing in Geneva has always been a goal. Other sites that have been explored have not had access to amenities, lack of sidewalks, etc. Right now, not pursuing other opportunities.

Mr. Cochran asks if the quantity of units was decided before this location was chosen. Ms. Lovejoy responds no.

Peter Bars, BME Associates & civil site engineers, mentions the prepared parking study July 7 and land use codes that were used. Summarizes responses to questions raised by the board at previous meetings & work sessions – CE-5 zone is meant to contribute to mass, density and vertical growth and development. The lot itself is much larger than surrounding lots. The building itself is 17,000 sq. ft and contribute to 37% lot coverage. Lot can support a building of that footprint. Zoning variances are for relief of setbacks only, not size of the building. Building size and unit count is appropriate under CE-5 zoning. Greenspace is being added while the current lot has zero green space. Impervious

cover is being reduced, which also suggests building is not too large for the lot. Implementing stormwater rain garden which will assist with stormwater runoff. Complete stormwater plan submission was prepared in compliance with the city and DEC.

David Cruizi, senior transportation project manager, discusses transportation/parking study. The analysis adheres to the methodology outlined in the City of Geneva code, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), and Urban Land Institute Standards. City code suggests a deficit of 57 spaces, the analysis conducted indicates a total requirement of 38 parking spaces. Utilized shared parking methodology. Peak shared parking demand for the entire project shows 33 spaces. 25% of Lakeview residents own vehicles, 5 staff on site. Based on this information, analysis shows 24 parking spaces needed. Proposed project will provide 26 onsite parking space. In addition to onsite parking spaces, the analysis counted approximately 743 public parking spaces within 1000 sq ft of the site. Study was conducted on June 24, 2025 at various peak times. Analysis showed approximately 20% of the 743 public parking spaces were used at 6AM, 54% at 11AM, and 35% at 6PM. Project encourages alternative transportation, such as bicycles. Professional opinion – adequate onsite availability to support parking needs.

Mr. Cochran states he understands the parking study, but does not understand how so few spaces would be needed for a building with so many units.

Mr. Reed asks Ms. Lovejoy where the information on 25% parking information could be located. Ms. Lovejoy informs the board where it can be found in materials already submitted to the board.

Mark Pandolf, shares some design revisions. The Genesee St side brick masonry portion has been changed back to the original red brick color. Siding color intent to be gray. Southwest side of Elm St elevation - another vertical bay was added to break up façade. Projecting community room changed color from charcoal to terracotta. Elm St entrance now faces Elm St. Fencing will be aluminum or steel with black vertical elements. Referring to the previously mentioned alleyway and fence/gate, Mr. Pandolf suggests doors with panic hardware could be added in case of an emergency.

Mr. Cruizi states parking regulation in city code and signage was considered in the parking study.

Ms. Lovejoy, 74 units, affordable housing and permanent housing for those with a mental health diagnosis. Staff on site 24/7. Not a medical facility. All prospective tenants are screened, supportive units go through additional screening. Laundry, green space, community room, fitness and wellness rooms on site. Onsite staff supports tenants with mental, social and physical individual needs. Could include transportation, day trips, etc. Reached out to RTS and would provide bus transportation. Buildings are locked and key fobbed – safety & security is paramount. Cameras located inside and outside of building. Prospective tenants are already in Geneva and being served by Lakeview already.

Action Taken: Ms. Nenneau makes a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. D'Amico seconds.

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

Mr. Cass states that the board has heard a large amount of comment and information this evening and will take the time to go through it.

4. Any questions or concerns

No questions or concerns.

5. Adjourn

Action Taken: Mr. D'Amico makes a motion to adjourn at 7:34PM. Mr. Cochran seconds.

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

Respectfully submitted by Lauren Karlsen, Administrative Aide