



# CITY OF RENSSELAER PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES



**DATE:** July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**TIME:** 6:30 PM

**LOCATION:** City of Rensselaer-City Hall, City Court Room, 62 Washington Street, Rensselaer NY

## **STAFF PRESENT**

Thomas E. Hulihan, Director of Planning and Development  
Tim Lippert, Building Zoning Administrator  
Amy Lolik, Assistant Director of Planning and Development  
Jack Spath, Consulting Attorney

## **OTHERS PRESENT**

John Collins, City Resident  
Rosemary Gier, City Resident  
Kathleen & Michael Micheli, City Resident

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Ray Stevens, Chairman, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission to order at 6:30 PM. Roll call was taken and quorum was determined.

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Ray Stevens	X	
Ed Schillaci	X	
Salena Dabbs		X
George Farrell	X	
Tom Cardamone		X
Fred Weakley	X	
Frank McCullain		X



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#### COMMUNICATIONS

##### **Planning Department/Building-Zoning Department/Planning Commission Updates:**

- Tom Hulihan, Director of Planning and Development, provided an update on the Brownfield Opportunity Area Designation/Study. The project is in the draft master plan phase.
- The Planning Department is applying for six funding opportunities for the 2024-year Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process. Applications are due on July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.
- The Common Council will be reviewing Local Law Chapter 179, Article I&II- Bed & Breakfast. Under consideration is the permissible length of stay allowable for room rentals.
- The Planning Department held its kick-off meeting for the new **Pedestrian Infrastructure ADA Compliance Project**. As a public entity, the City is required to develop a transition plan to ensure accessible pedestrian facilities are provided in public rights-of-way. Through, La Bella Associates, our consultant for the project; the current state of sidewalks, curb ramps, crossings, pedestrian signals and transit stops have been inventoried and will be used to develop a prioritization plan, alongside a public participation plan to gather feedback and recommendations.
- Other Updates: None.

#### OLD BUSINESS

- **Approval of Minutes**

**Motion Made:** Ed Schillaci made a motion to approve the June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 regular meeting minutes, as posted on the city website. No changes noted. George Farrell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

##### **Voting Record (Approval of 6/10/24 minutes):**

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MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs- absent				



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George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McCullain-absent				

- **227 Riverside Ave-** Polsinello Fuels, Inc. had applied for Preliminary Site Plan (Major) Review, Certificate of Appropriateness and Special Use Permit for a proposed building addition as a storage and distribution center of fluid storage (lubricants, petroleum) at the May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting. Polsinello met with the Planning and Engineering Department in June to review all of the outstanding conditions necessary for Final Site Plan Approval, as well as, reached out to the Rensselaer County Department of Health for approval of the proposed sanitary septic system. Conditions required for re-submittal were met.

**Motion Made:** Ray Stevens, Chairman made a motion to grant Final Site Plan Approval, Certificate of Appropriateness and Special Use Permit to Polsinello Fuels Inc. Ed Schillaci seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Voting Record (227 Riverside Ave):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs- absent				
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McCullain-absent				



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## NEW BUSINESS

- **5 Riverside Avenue-** Kenny Candelaria is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior improvements to his residential property to maintain and preserve the historic characteristics of the Fort Crailo Neighborhood. Fred Weakley commended Mr. Candelaria for his outstanding work-to-date in upgrading the property.

**Public Hearing:** The public hearing opened at 6:42PM. No one commented. The public hearing closed at 6:45PM

**Motion Made:** George Farrell made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness, which was seconded by Fred Weakley. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Voting Record (5 Riverside Avenue):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs - absent				
George Farrell	X			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McCullain-absent				
Tom Cardamone -absent				

- **11 Fourth Ave-** Station Properties, LLC<sub>2</sub> is seeking Preliminary Site Plan Review for a proposed 17,300 sq ft, 100 Room, five (5) story hotel with 104 parking spaces. The hotel construction is anticipated to be completed by 2026. Station Properties submitted a parking study completed by Creighton Manning to evaluate the traffic impact of the proposed hotel (posted on the Planning Department website: [www.rensselaerplanning.com](http://www.rensselaerplanning.com)) on the surrounding area.



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**Public Hearing:** The public hearing opened at 7:27PM.

Four residents spoke regarding the possible impact of the project on their neighborhood. Topics of the ratio of available green space; intended landscaping; potential for vacant cars parking in the lot and potential sightlines of hotel guests into neighborhood homes were all discussed. Fred Weakley commented on the importance of preserving the integrity of the quality of lives for surrounding neighbors to the planned hotel. The public hearing closed at 7:47PM

**Motion Made:** Ed Schillaci made a motion for the Planning Commission to accept lead agency for the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) coordinated review of this Type 1 Action; an updated site plan must be presented to further clarify elevations, landscaping, setbacks and other metric requirements. Fred Weakley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Voting Record (11 Fourth Ave – Lead Agency):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs - absent				
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McCullain-absent				

- **Planning Department Applications** The Planning Department is applying for grant funding through the 2024 Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Part of the application process involves a preliminary environmental record review. As such, four Type II applications need Lead Agency NEPA/SEQR determination since the proposed activities involve four units or less and are all categorically exempt.

**Application 1: Single/Multi-Family Housing Rehabilitation**

**Motion Made:** Fred Weakley made a motion for the Planning Commission to accept lead agency for the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) coordinated review of this Type II Action. George Farrell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



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## **Voting Record (Single/Multi-Family Housing Rehabilitation):**

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>RECUSE</b>
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs -absent				
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McCullain-absent				

## **Application 2: Targeted Replacement of Lead Water Supply Laterals and Plumbing.**

**Motion Made:** Ed Schillaci made a motion for the Planning Commission to accept lead agency for the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) coordinated review of this Type II Action. Fred Weakley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Voting Record (Targeted Replacement of Lead Water Supply Laterals and Plumbing):**

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>RECUSE</b>
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs -absent				
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McCullain-absent				

## **Application 3: Targeted Vacant Property Clearance of Unsafe Structures**



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**Motion Made:** George Farrell made a motion for the Planning Commission to accept lead agency for the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) coordinated review of this Type II Action. Fred Weakley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Voting Record (Targeted Vacant Property Clearance of Unsafe Structures):**

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>RECUSE</b>
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs -absent				
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McCullain-absent				

#### **Application 4: Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) – Sweeper Vacuum Truck**

**Motion Made:** Ray Stevens made a motion for the Planning Commission to accept lead agency for the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) coordinated review of this Type II Action. Ed Schillaci seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Voting Record**

#### **(Water Quality Improvement Program (WQIP) – Sweeper Vacuum Truck):**

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>	<b>RECUSE</b>
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs -absent				
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley	X			



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Frank McCullain-absent				
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## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion Made:** George Farrell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 PM. Ed Schillaci seconded the motion. Motion carried; meeting was adjourned.

## **Voting Record: (Adjournment)**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	X			
Salena Dabbs -absent				
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone -absent				
Fred Weakley				
Frank McCullain -absent	X			

## **NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULE MEETING**

**\*Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 @ 6:30 PM, City Hall-1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room.**

## **RECORD OF DECISIONS**

This official record of decisions of motions and votes from this meeting along with any conditions & stipulations of approval has been filed with the City Clerk and a copy maintained in Planning Department records.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Hulihan  
Director of Planning and Development