



CITY OF RENSSELAER PLANNING COMMISSION

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DATE: May 12th 2025

TIME: 6:30 PM

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

STAFF PRESENT

Thomas E. Hulihan, Director of Planning and Development
 Amy Lolik, Assistant Director of Planning
 Jason Schofield, Planning
 Jack Spath, Deputy Corporation Counsel

CALL TO ORDER

Ray Stevens, Chairman, called the meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission to order at 6:31 PM. Roll call was taken and it was determined that a quorum was present.

MEMBER	PRESENT	ABSENT
Ray Stevens	X	
Ed Schillaci		X
Salena Dabbs	X	
George Farrell	X	
Tom Cardamone		X
Fred Weakley	X	
Frank McClellan	X	

Communication:

Tom Hulihan, Director of Planning and Development gave a brief update to the Commission on the following;

- Preliminary Meeting -Hudson River Estuary Program for Conservation Overlay Grant – Kick-Off Meeting was held last week. The planning group will be working to protect stream corridors in the city.
- Clean Mobility Transition Plan- Survey (until May 16th) & Workshops-Senior Center (May 1st) & Library (May 13th). - Surveys available and presentations are being conducted.
- Grant Applications Underway (Inland Flooding & Local Revitalization Implementation Program, CDBG)
- Grant Applications Submitted (BUILD, OSHA Training, Local Govt Grant & Food Access & Retail Expansion Fund, NYS Archives 2025 Grant, Farmers Market Resiliency Grant, NYSOPR-MPR Grant)



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Raymond Stevens, Chair, Planning Commission added

- Management Report – Database old site plan requests, approved/planned projects through year end, in addition to, summary metrics and planning and building process steps. The Commission was given a list of the applicants, actions requested, and the status of projects that have come before the Commission from 2020 until current.

OLD BUSINESS

➤ **Approval of Minutes – April 21, 2025**

Motion Made: George Farrell made a motion to approve the April 21, 2025 regular meeting minutes as presented. Fred Weakly seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Voting Record (Approval of 4/21/25 minutes):

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McClellan	X			

- **49 Riverside Ave-** Bitumar USA, Inc. is seeking Site Plan Review Approval and Special Use Permit to upgrade the property into a liquid Asphalt Terminal. – Chairman Stevens gave a brief summary of the history of this project to the public, noting this was their third time before the Commission. He stated that the company had completed all required items and provided the Commission with all requested information. He added that the City Engineer had visited the site multiple times. Salena Dabbs thanked Bitumar for submittal of additional documentation to clarify for the Board, VOC Emissions and the company regulatory and inspection schedules.

Motion Made: George Farrell made a motion to give Final Site Plan Approval and a Special Use Permit Fred Weakly seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Voting Record (49 Riverside Ave – Final Site Plan Review and Special Use Permit):

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
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Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McClellan	X			

NEW BUSINESS

901 Third St- Rensselaer Volunteer Ambulance, Inc. is seeking Site Plan Review for a proposed use for an existing building. (Was 2nd on the agenda but moved to 1st)

The applicant told the Commission that the current variance for an ambulance to used at the garage had expired. Ambulnz is seeking to rent the space to house 1-2 ambulance(s) that are mainly used for transport work. Ambulnz could also be dispatched if needed to assist city residents if Mohawk Ambulance is not available, as they are on the County list. The current structure would remain unchanged, with sufficient parking. Only 2 people will be present at one time.

Public Hearing: the public hearing opened at 6:56 PM the following people commented;

John Defrancesco – Common Council President, read a prepared statement questioning the 501C status of the Volunteer Ambulance, who is on the Board, when the Board voted on this agreement, what its assets are, and if the applicant had the authority to make the request to the Commission. A copy of the entire statement was submitted to Mr. Hulihan.

Ken Ford – Resident, stated he had no problem with the project and asked about the variance, Mr. Hulihan informed him that the applicant must go the Zoning Board of Appeals for that.

Mike Stammel – Mayor of Rensselaer, stated that this is a help to public safety, that often at times Mohawk is backed-up. He also stated that could help the city develop a reciprocal agreement with East Greenbush and North Greenbush for ambulance services. He also stated that this agreement will not have any impact on the agreement the city currently has with Mohawk Ambulance.

Todd Rutecki – Resident, asked the Commission to look at the lack of an owner signature on the application. He suggested that the application should be tabled as he did not believe the applicant has the right to sign the application.

Chuck Hall -Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman, stated this is a very simple request as it is a



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site plan review for the same use. He spoke of his personal experience waiting for an ambulance to arrive and encouraged a yes vote for the application.

Donna Baxter – Resident, asked why Mohawk isn’t renting the space and inquired about when the agreement would begin.

Bonnie Hahn- Applicant, stated this is simply a request for site plan review. There is not cost to the city, Mohawk remains the ambulance provider for the city, however if they are busy the County could dispatch Ambulanz.

Stacey Hover – Resident, asked how many calls were estimated for the ambulance.

Andrea Lopez – Resident, inquired why are the ambulances already in the building?

Diana Dwyer – Resident, asked how would the city make money.

Mike Stammel – Mayor of Rensselaer, indicated that Rensselaer Volunteer Ambulance, Inc. already pays taxes on the building and Ambulanz employees stationed at the facility would spend money in the community.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:31

Motion Made: Salena Dobbs made a motion to declare this a SERQ Type II Action. Frank McClellan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

➤ **Voting Record (901 Third St –Type II Action):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McClellan	X			

Motion Made: Fred Weakly made a motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan. Salena Dobbs seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.



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➤ **Voting Record (901 Third St – Preliminary Site Plan Review):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McClellan	X			

- **96 Columbia Street-** William Brayton is seeking – Site Plan Review and Special Use permit for an addition to Crailo Plaza.

Motion Made: George Farrell made a motion to table as the applicant was not present. Fred Weakley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

➤ **Voting Record (Table - 96 Columbia Street):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McClellan	X			



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300-338 Broadway-Downtown Parks Improvements Implementing the LWRP Proposed

Plans – The City of Rensselaer is seeking site plan review for landscaping improvements. Tom Hulihan, applicant informed the Commission that the city is seeking a grant to make improvements in the area around Mill Creek in Riverfront Park and around Huyck Square. Over growth will be cleared, native plants/bushes and pollinators will be planted, benches will be added, a new fence will replace the existing one, and new lighting will be installed. A play area will also be added to area.

Public Hearing: the public hearing opened at 7:42 PM the following people commented;

Mike Stammel – Mayor of Rensselaer, spoke in favor of the project and was glad to see improvements coming to the area.

Dawn Gillian – Resident, was glad to take a tour of the area and glad to see the improvements proposed.

Ann Burton, Alderperson, spoke in favor of the project. She added she was glad the city was pursuing a conservation easement to allow the whole area to be used for public use and the good this will do to help the wild life of the area.

The public hearing closed at 7:47PM.

Motion Made: The first motion was made by Salena Dobbs to declare the project to be a Type II action under SEQR. Frank McClellan seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously 5-0.

➤ **Voting Record (300-338 Broadway - Type II Action):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			



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Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McClellan	X			

Motion Made: The second motion was made by George Farrell to approve the Preliminary Site Plan Review. Fred Weakly seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously 5-0.

➤ **Voting Record (300-338 Broadway - Special Use Permit):**

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			
Frank McClellan	X			

ADJOURNMENT

Motion Made: George Farrell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:49PM. Fred Weakly seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0; meeting was adjourned.

Voting Record: (Adjournment)

MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	RECUSE
Ray Stevens	X			
Ed Schillaci	ABS			
Salena Dabbs	X			
George Farrell	X			
Tom Cardamone	ABS			
Fred Weakley	X			



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Frank McLellan	X			
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NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULE MEETING

Monday, June 9, 2025 @ 6:30 PM, City Hall-1st Floor Conference Room. Applications are due by May 19, 2025. Incomplete applications will not be placed on the agenda.

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