

**Village of Geneseo Zoning Board of Appeals
May 7, 2025 @ 4:30pm**

Members Present:

Carolyn Meisel, Chair
Robert Meyers, Member
Paul Schmied, Member
James Kier, Member
Gretchen Crane, Member- absent

Other Village Representatives Present:

Janna O'Brien, Secretary
Craig Wadsworth, Code Enforcement Officer

Applicants/Public Present:

Susan Conklin
Bill Brummett
Charlotte Brummett
Anna Kowalchuk
Marlene Hamann-Whitmore

At 4:30pm, Chair Meisel called the meeting to order. Minutes from March 5, 2025, and April 2025 were reviewed. Minor suggestions were discussed. *Member Schmied moved to approve the amended minutes; Member Meyers seconded. The motion was approved with ayes from all.*

**Public Meeting- Area Variance
Livingston County Historical Society
30 Center Street, Geneseo
Tax Map #81.16-2-4**

At 4:35, Chair Meisel opened the Public Meeting for an area variance for the Livingston County Historical Society. The Board introduced themselves. It was recorded that all proper notices were sent via US Mail, return receipt requested, as well as published in the Livingston County Newspaper, as follows: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a public hearing will be held by the Village of Geneseo Zoning Board of Appeals on May 7, 2025 at 4:30pm, in the Geneseo Village Building Board Room, 119 Main Street, Geneseo NY pursuant to Chapter 130 Zoning, Section 130-12, Section 130-17 and, 130-131 Residential 2 Bulk and Use Table and any other sections of Village Code which may apply. On the application of the Livingston County Historical Society. The applicant is seeking a rear lot line set back variance of 16 feet. The Village code requires a 30-foot setback for cultural use facilities or museums in the R-2 District. The variance is for the property located at 30 Center Street, Tax Map # 80.16-2-4, in the Village of Geneseo.

Chair Meisel noted that the green cards were returned and that the Board did receive two letters from neighbors in support of this project. Chair Meisel asked Director Anna Kowalchuk to present the project to the Board. Director Kowalchuk stated that she was seeking the area variance for an addition to the museum property. Director Kowalchuk has been working with the New York State Historic Preservation Office, engineers and neighbors on the updated designs. She submitted 2 letters of support from the neighbors, as well as having supporters at this meeting.

Chair Meisel asked her Board if they had any additional questions. There was a brief discussion about the original rear lot set back requirement for the Museum when it was first established in 1838. Today the Code requires a 30-foot setback for cultural use facilities in this district. Funding was also discussed with Director Kowalchuk. She stated that a grant from the Institute of Library services was

rescinded recently due to government cutbacks, but NYS Council of the Arts has been supportive in helping them with their goal. Hearing no further discussion, Chair Meisel asked for a motion to close the hearing. *Member Meyers moved to close the Public Hearing. Member Schmied seconded the motion. The hearing was closed with ayes from all.*

This was followed by the Board discussing and answering the five variance questions.

(1) Will an undesirable change be produced in the character of the neighborhood or will a detriment to nearby properties be created by the granting the area variance?

Chair Meisel: No. The museum has been here since 1838. It is part of this neighborhood

Member Meyers: No. It will improve the property.

Member Schmied: No. Public use facility to be enhanced.

Member Kier: No.

(2) Can the benefit sought by the applicant be achieved by some other method, feasible for the applicant to pursue, other than an area variance?

Chair Meisel: No. Approved by the State Historic Preservation Office in the design. Best placement by them.

Member Meyers: No. Approved by the State Historical Office.

Member Schmied: No, building is existing. Various changes were made, approved by state (SHPO)

Member Kier: No, nothing desirable without impacting more community space. Design approved by SHPO.

(3) Is the requested area variance substantial?

Chair Meisel: Yes. New requirement since 1838.

Member Meyers: Yes, over 50% but no objections from neighbors.

Member Schmied: Yes, new building meets existing, original building built in 1838 without any zoning. This is a very minor change.

Member Kier: Yes, only due to being greater than 50%.

(4) Will the proposed area variance have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district?

Chair Meisel: No. No negative comments. Two letters in support and one person here to offer support.

Member Meyers: No. Three neighbors have voiced the opinion that they have no objections.

Member Schmied: No. Strong support from immediate neighbors.

Member Kier: No. Neighbors are supportive of the project.

(5) Is the alleged difficulty self-created? (Which consideration shall be relevant to the decision of the Board of Appeals but shall not necessarily preclude the granting of the area variance.)

Chair Meisel: Yes.

Member Meyers: Yes, always is.

Member Schmied: Yes, always. If not change, no difficulty.

Member Kier: Yes. They could choose not to put the addition on but would like to.

Member Meyers moved to grant the area variance for a rear lot line set back of 16 feet. Member Schmied seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the variance was approved with ayes from all.

With no further discussion, Member Meyers moved to close the meeting at 5:10pm. Member Kier seconded the motion. The meeting was closed with ayes from all.

Janna O'Brien
Secretary