

CITY OF ONEIDA
PLANNING COMMISSION / ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 13th, 2026

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Location: Common Council Chambers, City Hall, 109 N. Main Street, Oneida, NY

Call to Order

Chairperson Perry Tooker called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Roll Call

Present: Perry Tooker (Chair), Kipp Hicks, Pat Thorpe, Dave Scholl

Absent: Todd Schaal, Greg Myers, Vacant (Barbara Henderson – retired; seat pending appointment)

Also Present: Steve Vonderweidt (Director of Planning & Development), Jeannie Markle (Codes & Planning), Jay Ackerman (Code Enforcement Officer)

Quorum: Achieved.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2025 – Approved as presented.

Motion: Hicks / Second: Myers

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Item #1 – Area Variance – 221 Maple Drive

Applicant / Owner: Nathan Ryan Kling

Location: 221 Maple Drive, Oneida, NY

Tax Parcel: 38.56-1-29

Zoning: R-2 Residential-2

Request: Area variance to allow an approximately eight (8) foot reduction from the required side-yard setback pursuant to City of Oneida Code §190-14(D)(2) to permit construction of a residential accessory shed.

Discussion:

The applicant presented a request to construct a residential accessory shed that does not meet the minimum required side-yard setback under the City of Oneida Zoning Code. The Board reviewed the site plan, lot configuration, existing development pattern, and the proposed location of the shed relative to adjoining properties.

The Board discussed the statutory area variance criteria, including whether an undesirable change would be produced in the character of the neighborhood, whether the benefit sought could be achieved by other feasible means, the substantiality of the variance, potential adverse environmental or physical impacts, and whether the difficulty was self-created.

The Board found that the requested variance was dimensional in nature, would not result in an undesirable change to the character of the neighborhood, would not create adverse impacts on nearby properties, and represented a minor deviation from zoning requirements.

SEQRA: Type II Action – No further environmental review required pursuant to 6 NYCRR §617.5(c)(1) and §617.5(c)(15).

Motion to Open Public Hearing:

Motion: Schaal / Second: Thorpe

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

No members of the public spoke.

Motion to Close Public Hearing:

Motion: Thorpe / Second: Scholl

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Motion to Approve Area Variance:

Approve the area variance for 221 Maple Drive to allow an eight (8) foot reduction from the required side-yard setback for construction of a residential accessory shed, subject to compliance with the City of Oneida Zoning Code and issuance of all required building permits.

Motion: Hicks / Second: Myers

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Action: Area Variance approved.

Item #2 – Conditional Use Permit – 1566 Middle Road (Buddhist Temple / Monk Residence)

Applicant: Dinh Thanh Temple

Owner: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Location: 1566 Middle Road, Oneida, NY

Tax Parcel: 47-1-24

Zoning: Agricultural

Request: Conditional Use Permit to allow continued use of an existing church building as a Buddhist temple, including on-site residence by monks as accessory to the religious use.

Discussion:

The applicant presented the request to continue use of the existing structure as a Buddhist temple with limited on-site residential occupancy by monks. The Board discussed the scope of the proposed use, emphasizing that the approval was limited to religious worship and customary accessory religious activities only. The Board specifically discussed occupancy, parking, operational impacts, and the importance of ensuring that no physical expansion or site changes occur without further review.

The Board noted that the applicant confirmed in writing that no exterior alterations, site work, parking changes, or building expansion were proposed as part of this application, and that the existing site layout would remain unchanged from its prior use as a church.

SEQRA: Type II Action – No further environmental review required pursuant to 6 NYCRR §617.5(c)(1) and §617.5(c)(7).

239 Review:

Staff reported that the subject parcel does not front or lie within five hundred (500) feet of a county or state roadway; therefore, General Municipal Law §239-m review was not required.

Motion to Open Public Hearing:

Motion: Schaal / Second: Thorpe

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

No members of the public spoke.

Motion to Close Public Hearing:

Motion: Thorpe / Second: Scholl

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Motion to Grant Conditional Use Permit:

Grant a Conditional Use Permit to allow continued use of the existing church building as a Buddhist temple, including on-site residence by monks as accessory to the religious use, at 1566 Middle Road, subject to the following conditions:

1. The approved use shall be limited to religious worship and customary accessory religious activities, including on-site residence by monks as accessory to the religious use.
2. No exterior alterations, site work, parking changes, or building expansion are approved as part of this action.
3. Any future exterior or site changes shall require separate review and approval by the City of Oneida Planning Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals.
4. All required building, fire, and occupancy permits shall be obtained and maintained in compliance with applicable City, State, and Federal codes.

Motion: Schaal / Second: Myers

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Action: Conditional Use Permit approved.

Item #3 – Traditional Use Permit Extension – Hotel Oneida

Location: Hotel Oneida, Oneida, NY

Discussion:

The Board discussed a request related to the Hotel Oneida project. During the discussion, a Board member recused themselves from participation due to a conflict of interest. As a result of the recusal, the Board no longer had a quorum necessary to take formal action on the item.

Motion to Table:

Table the Hotel Oneida item due to lack of quorum.

Motion: Tooker / Second: Schaal

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Action: Item tabled. No action taken.

Other Business**2026 PCZBA Meeting Schedule**

At the request of the Chair, the Board reviewed the proposed 2026 Planning Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals meeting schedule.

Motion to Approve 2026 Meeting Schedule:

Approve the 2026 PCZBA meeting dates and times as presented.

Motion: Hicks / Second: Thorpe

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Public Comment

No members of the public offered comment.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Scholl / Second: Myers

Vote: Ayes – Unanimous / Motion Carried

Time: 7:18 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Vonderweidt, MBA

Director of Planning & Development

City of Oneida