

PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF COLONIE

COUNTY OF ALBANY

TRAFFIC STUDY AS IT RELATES TO THE
PROPOSED WAL-MART SUPERCENTER
AT 1 AUTOPARK DRIVE - CONTINUED

THE TAPED AND TRANSCRIBED MINUTES of the above
entitled proceeding BY NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART
commencing on January 26, 2010 at 8:13 p.m. at
the Public Operations Center 347 Old Niskayuna
Road, Latham, New York 12110

BOARD MEMBERS:

CHARLES J. O'ROURKE, CHAIRPERSON
MICHAEL SULLIVAN
ELENA VAIDA
TIMOTHY LANE
PAUL ROSANO
PETER GANNON
TOM NARDACCI
PETER STUTO, Jr. Esq.,
Attorney to the Planning Board

Also present:

Joe LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic
Development

Kevin DeLaughter, Planning and Economic
Development

Tom Baird, Barton & Loguidice

Joe Grasso, Clough Harbour & Associates

Josephine Kosek

Gloria Knorr

1 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Last on the agenda
2 is a traffic update from one of our town
3 designated engineers, Barton and Loguidice
4 in regard to a specific area in the Boght
5 GEIS on Route 9.

6 Tom, if you would like to take us where
7 we were and bring us up to speed?

8 MR. BAIRD: Back in December we
9 presented a review and comment on the
10 traffic study that was presented to the town
11 on February of 2009.

12 We submitted comments and spoke to the
13 applicant's engineer and subsequently we
14 have a revised traffic study for November
15 2009. We have gone through that traffic
16 study as well and had a number of comments
17 that still need to be resolved as part of
18 this review.

19 There are approximately 17 different
20 comments. We're going to do similar to what
21 Joe did and touch on more of the in-depth
22 issues and some of the other things we're
23 going to let go. There were typos and things
24 like that.

25 The first comment which is really the

1 big meat of the whole review here is that we
2 feel the development from Wal-Mart will have
3 far reaching effects of the local residents
4 and the town roadway network beyond what has
5 been evaluated in the current study. We're
6 grasping out again to provide an expanded
7 study area to evaluate the effects of this
8 project on the local roads and intersections
9 including 9R/Old Loudon Road, Old Loudon
10 Road/Cobbee Road, Old Loudon Road/Latham
11 Ridge Road - intersections such as those.
12 Those intersections are touched upon in the
13 GEIS that is being worked on by another firm
14 for the town.

15 However, in that analysis one of the
16 stipulations that they included in one of
17 their improvements is having two-way traffic
18 on Old Loudon Road. In that analysis they
19 did not include an option for one way on
20 Old Loudon Road. So, we need to see that in
21 the study for the Wal-Mart project what
22 effects it will have on the accompanying
23 intersections.

24 The second comment that I'd like to
25 bring out here is that the GEIS that is

1 being prepared recommends pedestrian
2 improvements at the US Route 9 and
3 Autopark Drive intersection.

4 We're asking the applicant to update
5 the analysis of this intersection to include
6 accommodations for pedestrians and that is
7 consistent with the GEIS. So, that means
8 that the overall study of the area that
9 talked about pedestrian accommodations - we
10 need to know what the effect of pedestrians
11 crossing the road will have on the timing
12 and the traffic at this intersection.

13 There is a pedestrian checklist and to
14 be consistent with the GEIS as well they've
15 checked yes that there will be an existing
16 sidewalk or pedestrian crossing facility at
17 this intersection. Bus stops, transit
18 stations are also in the GEIS and need to be
19 accommodated and looked at in the traffic
20 study.

21 One thing that is discussed in this
22 letter is coordinating traffic signals.
23 Everyone has heard about coordinating
24 signals. We're going to coordinate this one
25 with that one (Indicating). When you start

1 grouping them closely together sometimes it
2 becomes difficult to actually see what
3 effect that would really have. Especially in
4 this condition because we have a heavy
5 northbound Route 9 movement in the a.m. and
6 p.m. We also have a heavy northbound
7 movement coming from Alternate Route 7. With
8 those two very heavy movements, it's
9 difficult to have an accurate view of a
10 traffic model to show what is going to
11 happen in the corridor as a whole.

12 What we'd like to see the applicant do
13 is evaluate the performance of the corridor
14 in the built condition if the signals were
15 not coordinating and add these results to
16 the table in the report. What that will show
17 is the effect of the coordination as opposed
18 to not doing the coordination. We haven't
19 proven yet that the coordination will work
20 in the corridor.

21 The description of the proposed
22 recommendations of this project are not
23 consistent with the most current version of
24 the GEIS. Left turn lane extension, a second
25 thru lane on 9R approaching the Route 9

1 intersection -- there are other improvements
2 that may be necessary as a part of this
3 project. So, we'd like a description of
4 those to be included in the traffic study.

5 In addition to that, a plan that shows
6 these improvements. We can look at it and
7 analyze the lengths and the sight distance
8 and all the geometry involved with such an
9 improvement.

10 The corridor as a whole, or more
11 specifically the US Route 9/9R/I87 access
12 intersection will experience a significant
13 impact to the project built without
14 mitigation. It essentially will see
15 126 seconds of average delay during the p.m.
16 peak without mitigation and 67 seconds with
17 mitigation. Therefore it is our
18 recommendation to the board that the
19 mitigation measures proposed for the project
20 be completed and functional prior to the
21 opening of the development to the public.

22 The last comment here has to do with
23 coordination of the traffic signals.

24 Coordination of the traffic signals
25 along the U.S. Route 9 will likely improve

1 traffic flow. However, the Route 9
2 northbound and Route 7 eastbound to 9
3 northbound movements are both heavy. The
4 introduction of the traffic signal at
5 Autopark Drive will degrade the corridor as
6 a whole by reducing travel speeds since
7 signal coordination cannot accommodate the
8 traffic progression for both heavy
9 northbound movements and southbound
10 movement, which is also heavy in the
11 afternoon.

12 The Boght Road GEIS update presents
13 travel speed diagrams that indicate an
14 overall drop in average speed of 26%, which
15 equates to an increase of travel times from
16 three minutes and 46 seconds to five minutes
17 and 28 seconds between US Route 9 and the 9R
18 access and Boght Road. The discussion and
19 information is tied to the coordination
20 comments previously and should be included
21 in the summary conclusions of the study.

22 It's not to say that the increase in
23 time -- and I'm sure that it sounds very
24 exact; three minutes and 46 seconds. But
25 just to give you a range, it's about a 25%

1 increase in delay. That's not to say that's
2 the end of all ends, but it's something that
3 we need to be aware of and consider for the
4 corridor as a whole. I do understand that is
5 one of the primary concerns of DOT and their
6 corridor having that increase in delay time.
7 That's how it ties in.

8 That's all of our comments.

9 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: this is the first
10 time that I see someone has mentioned Route
11 7, which I think is significant. Has it been
12 looked at - whether it's back up through
13 Mill Road and up through Sparrowbush or up
14 through the circle - has anyone looked at
15 the improvements that are being done at
16 Exit 6 and what that will do as well?

17 MR. BAIRD: No, that has not been
18 looked at.

19 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: In your opinion,
20 would that have further effects?

21 MR. BAIRD: The improved access at
22 Route 6 - you can certainly access Latham
23 Farms and that area by getting off at Exit 7
24 and looping around and getting on Route 9
25 going across Sparrowbush and the backside.

1 When Route 9 is clogged with traffic and
2 backed up, I certainly do that. I know a lot
3 of people will do that especially around
4 Christmastime. The improvements at Exit 6
5 could alleviate some of that traffic drift
6 that goes to 7. We have not looked at that.

7 We do have a meeting with Creighton
8 Manning tomorrow concerning the DGEIS and
9 the update that we have. We certainly are
10 going to discuss with them how that impact
11 of that project will have on the whole
12 network as a whole. We will have more
13 information on that tomorrow.

14 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: The other
15 intersections that you're asking the
16 developer to look at, is that going to
17 include Boght? From where to where are you
18 including?

19 MR. BAIRD: It's Old Loudon Road and
20 9R, right at Latham Ford. This has to do
21 with cut-thru traffic that's going to
22 bypass. If you coordinate the signals on
23 Route 9 and sacrifice one of the
24 movements -- we'll say that you're going to
25 sacrifice 9 northbound because you have a

1 lot of storage. We'll sacrifice that. It's
2 going to get clogged up and people are going
3 to make a right on Cobbee. How many? We
4 don't know, but in order to coordinate the
5 signals you've got to sacrifice one. If
6 that's the one, I expect to have a lot of
7 traffic that will be redirected and cut
8 through Cobbee, left on Old Loudon or to
9 Latham Ridge Road. So, that's what we want
10 to have to make sure that we're covered.

11 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: My question in
12 particular would be how far back do you go?

13 MR. BAIRD: You only go back to
14 Sparrowbush and through Cobbee and through
15 Latham Ridge, possibly.

16 If we look at Old Loudon and 9R by
17 Latham Ford and we back up to the Starlite
18 Music Theater, the analysis of that
19 intersection will tell us what the queue
20 lengths will be so we'll know inherently
21 what will happen at Johnson Road and 9R.
22 That analysis that we're asking for will
23 also tell us what we want to know about the
24 next intersection that heads up to the east.

25 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Tom?

1 MR. NARDACCI: Just a quick comment.
2 Thank you Tom for your review. We've come a
3 long way from the first day that we came on
4 the board and saw the project being
5 presented as well as the traffic, as far as
6 really reviewing it.

7 With regard to C.J.'s point with being
8 concerned about the overall traffic impacts,
9 we know that 9 is challenged. We know that
10 the p.m. peaks are really bad and we know
11 that the levels of service at lights have
12 changed dramatically from Cs to Fs at a lot
13 of these intersections.

14 One of the things that we've been
15 consistent talking about is the impacts
16 downstream. We had a lot of discussions
17 about people finding alternate routes. Like
18 you said Christmastime is: How do you get
19 there and what's the quickest way?
20 Self-mitigating was another term that folks
21 mentioned.

22 So I think that it's important as we
23 look at this to note that we're not just
24 looking at the site itself and where it's
25 located and what the zoning is but we're

1 looking at the impacts of the entire area.
2 It's a big residential area and it's a big
3 residential population and certainly we need
4 to be concerned about what impacts there are
5 from downstream - if that's the right term.
6 I think that it has come a long way from the
7 first day that we looked at it and I think
8 having the TDEs on board is really a credit
9 to the Town Board and to the Supervisor for
10 bringing the town designated engineers
11 onboard. If we didn't have this expertise,
12 where would we be? Its appreciation and it's
13 something that needs to be mentioned,
14 especially as people understand how we
15 review this. It's a serious review and it's
16 a thorough review. We've been through this
17 for a number of months and specifically on
18 traffic. So, that was it; just an overall
19 comment.

20 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Thanks, Tom.

21 Paul?

22 MR. ROSANO: I have nothing.

23 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Elena?

24 MS. VAIDA: I want to thank you for
25 this. I thought that it was very thorough

1 and very useful and much appreciated.

2 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Tim?

3 MR. LANE: All I want to say is that
4 this was a great job and it only furthers
5 and increases my concern as we look at this.
6 The study only goes out a year and we know
7 that there are several developments that are
8 going to occur over the next decade or
9 sooner with this as well. How would you
10 haven taken those into consideration? They
11 would not have even known about it.

12 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Mike?

13 MR. SULLIVAN: I thank you for the
14 thorough review, Tom, and I look forward to
15 seeing the -- that was a great suggestion in
16 seeing a plan of the mitigation features
17 that they wish to add and also to see a
18 queue analysis of the graphical display to
19 see how long the backups would be at each
20 intersection. I think it would be very
21 important to see what the backup would be at
22 each intersection for each movement. That
23 would be very helpful, especially if it
24 could be with the Boght mitigation to see,
25 like you said, if it was working. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Thanks, Mike.

2 Peter?

3 MR. GANNON: Just a couple of things
4 real quick.

5 Tom, I'm looking at comment two of your
6 letter regarding the manual method. In your
7 expert opinion what impact do you think that
8 would have on traffic flow when those
9 numbers are run in the alternate method?

10 MR. BAIRD: The analysis that was
11 conducted and we agree with the methodology
12 and the procedure that was filed. There was
13 a switch in the program. There was a choice
14 where we have the output that comes out and
15 whether it follows the highway capacity
16 manual or for Synchro, the output will only
17 change slightly

18 For anyone who doesn't know, the
19 Synchro method is a proprietary method in
20 relation to the program that was used which
21 is an approved New York State DOT traffic
22 program. The output will change slightly.
23 That's what that is and it really won't have
24 a big impact. It's all cumulative too so we
25 want to make sure that every little piece

1 doesn't stack up into a big piece.

2 MR. GANNON: My only other question or
3 comment is really to Joe and the department.

4 We just heard from Sipperly about
5 Northern Pass and it seems to be in the
6 proximity of this proposal, at least in
7 terms of traffic. Granted, I've had my
8 traffic study for about two and a half hours
9 so forgive me if I'm missing something but I
10 don't see it reflected in the 2011 no-build.
11 Is that something that we should be
12 considering going forward and the impact
13 that will also have?

14 MR. LACIVITA: These are coming in on
15 two different parallel tracks. This is
16 specific to the Wal-Mart project. There is
17 another process that we're going through
18 right now and that's updating the GEIS
19 corridor. Joe Grasso and Creighton Manning
20 were all involved in looking at that. We're
21 also looking at the corridor with all the
22 build-outs from the 2013 perspective and the
23 2020 perspective. So we're taking all of
24 that traffic into account.

25 MR. NARDACCI: Joe, that includes

1 Canterbury?

2 MR. LACIVITA: Yes, and there are even
3 a couple of projects that are outside the
4 corridor; Shelter Cover and Park side.

5 MR. NARDACCI: And the Starlite?

6 MR. LACIVITA: The Starlite area is
7 included in that potential connectivity as
8 well. All of those different scenarios are
9 being considered through Creighton Manning
10 and Clough Harbour as well.

11 MR. BAIRD: We'll be bringing that all
12 together tomorrow to be sure that everybody
13 is coordinating the efforts and looking at
14 all the traffic.

15 MR. GANNON: That's all I have, C.J.

16 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Thanks Pete.

17 Okay, we'll conclude this evening. This
18 was just an informational update to the
19 board.

20 MS. KOSEK: Can we speak?

21 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Yes, ma'am.

22 MS. KOSEK: Josephine Kosek, 680 Boght
23 Road.

24 I didn't hear from anybody about the
25 traffic impact on Boght Road and in that

1 area. Is that being included in this? I am
2 concerned about the school busses.

3 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: That will be looked
4 at in the GEIS. In terms of this study those
5 things were not looked at. That's why I
6 asked the question how far back are we
7 going?

8 MS. KOSEK: Right, but I was hearing
9 about the southerly direction. I didn't hear
10 anything about the northerly direction and
11 that's why I was asking.

12 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: The traffic
13 actually as you look at it -- and Tom, you
14 should probably speak to this, but it tends
15 to clear up in a different manner the
16 further north that you go.

17 MR. BAIRD: Yes, it's kind of an
18 analysis and it's called a time-space
19 diagram. It tracks how fast cars can get
20 through signals based on the green time and
21 the yellow time that you have. As we move up
22 north the effect of this project diminishes
23 out the farther north that you go.

24 Here we have Century Hill and 9
25 (Indicating) and there will probably be

1 another one right in the middle so the
2 compactness of it will be where you really
3 feel the effects. As you approach past
4 Guptils you almost get up to the regular
5 speed at 45 to 50 miles an hour. We're
6 within that 22 mile an hour average speed,
7 down by Autopark drive. So, that's kind of
8 the difference.

9 As C.J. said, the DGIS -- do you
10 understand what that is or do you want me to
11 explain it a little bit?

12 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Take the time to
13 explain it, please.

14 MR. BAIRD: It's an environmental look
15 at the whole area and the area chosen as a
16 study area. It does extend down from Haswell
17 and all the way up to the Boght and up where
18 you are. It looks at everything that is
19 going on from water to sewer. We're talking
20 about traffic here so it takes all the
21 development in and it lumps it into a very
22 large model. Using previous information on
23 previous studies and what really happened to
24 update and improve your knowledge, they make
25 predictions of what it would be like down

1 the road in each incremental year. They are
2 looking at that section very specifically in
3 that study area and that report is in
4 progress right now.

5 MR. NARDACCI: The updates of the Boght
6 GEIS were done when?

7 Kevin, what were the years that they
8 were done?

9 MR. DELAUGHTER: The original was '89
10 and there was an update, I believe, in 2005.

11 MR. NARDACCI: As part of this process
12 we have pushed for a further update to take
13 into account all of the building going on
14 and not just this project but Canterbury and
15 the other planned developments.

16 MR. LACIVITA: Now specific to the
17 2005, Joe, the town never adopted that,
18 correct?

19 MR. GRASSO: No.

20 MR. LACIVITA: That information is
21 being brought into this current study.

22 MR. GRASSO: We're using that as a
23 basis for the 2010 update.

24 MR. LACIVITA: Some of the update that
25 we did back when we were looking at it - the

1 development that was proposed at that time
2 or looked at really never came to be. So,
3 that's why this new look is trying to take a
4 more holistic or realistic look as well.

5 MR. BAIRD: And the study for
6 Wal-Mart - it is acceptable to tie in
7 information from that adopted study that was
8 done generically. We don't want to duplicate
9 the work and waste money and time doing
10 that. They can pull out information and
11 apply it to their project as long as it's
12 reasonable and everybody agrees with it. We
13 can use that as a basis to work from and add
14 the overall impact from their project to
15 what was originally predicted in the GEIS.

16 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Tom, just one
17 further question. Has anyone looked at the
18 northbound movement and the curb cuts that
19 are on the northbound side between 9 and 9R
20 and say, Boght?

21 MR. BAIRD: That would be the Hess
22 station and the Motel. No, we did not look
23 at those curb cuts.

24 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: There's a
25 possibility that could do something to the

1 traffic. Is that something that we should
2 look at?

3 MR. BAIRD: We have our rookies that go
4 up Route 9 and get in the right lane and
5 always get stopped by the vehicles that are
6 turning in. You have your veterans that stay
7 to the left and I don't think that's really
8 going to change very much.

9 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: If you can get to
10 the left.

11 MR. BAIRD: Right, if you can get to
12 the left. Because when you pull up to the
13 intersection, there are 50 cars in the one
14 lane and two in the right lane and you know
15 something is going on. But no, that wasn't
16 looked at and I don't feel that's really an
17 issue because I don't see anything changing
18 there. It's more of a generator or receptor
19 that's there right now.

20 It is difficult to make a left there
21 but the signal may help it with more of a
22 stop and gaps. Then again, if the signal is
23 backed up you may never be able to make a
24 left out of there. That's something that we
25 have to look at with the queuing. When the

1 analysis of that intersection is redone with
2 the pedestrian accommodations accounted for,
3 things may change again.

4 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Thank you.

5 Yes, ma'am.

6 MS. KNORR: Gloria Knorr. Is tonight
7 just discussing the traffic or other things
8 like when the other building is empty in
9 Latham Farms?

10 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: No, ma'am. We're
11 not going to talk at all about that. This is
12 just a traffic specific update from the town
13 designated engineers.

14 MS. KNORR: When do we talk about the
15 other things?

16 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: When Wal-Mart gets
17 back on our schedule at some point in the
18 future.

19 Anything else?

20 ***(There was no response.)***

21 CHAIRMAN O'ROURKE: Thanks for coming.

22

23 ***(Whereas the proceeding concerning the***
24 ***above entitled matter was adjourned at***

25 ***8:36 p.m.)***

CERTIFICATION

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3
4 ***I, NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, Notary***
5 ***Public in and for the State of New York,***
6 ***hereby CERTIFY that the record taped and***
7 ***transcribed by me at the time and place***
8 ***noted in the heading hereof is a true and***
9 ***accurate transcript of same, to the best of***
10 ***my ability and belief.***

11
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13
14 -----
15 ***NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART***

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18 ***Dated March 1, 2010***