

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY
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MEADOWDALE ESTATES
PLANNING BOARD UPDATE

THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
proceeding BY NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, a shorthand
reporter, commencing on November 22, 2011 at
8:07 p.m. at the Public Operations Center
347 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham, New York 12110

BOARD MEMBERS:

- PETER STUTO, Chairman
- LOUIS MION
- PAUL ROSANO
- TOM NARDACCI
- TIMOTHY LANE
- MICHAEL SULLIVAN
- ELENA VAIDA, Esq., Attorney for the Planning Board

Also present:

- Joseph LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic Development
- Lynn Sipperly, PE, Sipperly and Associates
- Joseph Sausto, Platform Realty Group
- Chuck Voss, PE, Barton and Loguidice

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The next project on the
2 agenda is Meadowdale Estates, 297 Old
3 Niskayuna Road. This is a Planning Board
4 update presented by Sipperly and Associates.

5 Joe, do you want to give us an
6 introduction on this?

7 MR. LACIVITA: This is a Planning Board
8 update. This project was before the Planning
9 Board on May 24, 2011 when concept was given
10 to 316 units. Tonight they're here to talk
11 specifically about the 5.3 plus acres that is
12 available that area near the roundabout. I
13 know that there is a plan for either a senior
14 housing component, or park use.

15 MR. SIPPERLY: Good evening Members of
16 the Planning Board. My name is Lynn Sipperly.
17 With me tonight is Dan O'Brien and Joe Sausto,
18 the developers.

19 As Joe indicated, we'd like to get some
20 direction from the Planning Board. In our
21 concept acceptance back on May 24th and prior
22 to that, there always was a parcel here for
23 future development that was 5.3 acres.

24 The plan now is that the developer has
25 looked at that again with regard to its value

1 and success for retail and commercial, which
2 would require a zone change. We're looking now
3 at putting a use out there that is permitted
4 under the multifamily zoning which the whole
5 property is zoned for. We came up with two
6 schemes that are right here (Indicating).

7 I sent the Board a copy of this drawing
8 with the schemes superimposed; Plan 1 and
9 Plan 2. What I did tonight was just an
10 enlargement of Plan 1 and Plan 2, only as it
11 relates to that corner of the property.

12 Plan 1 - this is 5.3 acres. This is Old
13 Niskayuna Road is here and Watervliet Shaker
14 Road is here (Indicating). What we're
15 proposing in Plan 1 is to construct a senior
16 citizen independent living apartment building,
17 which is three stories high and 80 units. It
18 would be similar to the Beltrone living
19 center. In fact, the owners of the Beltrone
20 Living Center have expressed interest in this
21 type of facility at this location. It would be
22 like a second location for them for their
23 service population.

24 CHAIRMAN STUTO: How many units?

25 MR. SIPPERLY: 80.

1 Our 58.3 acres would allow 350 units by
2 zoning at six units per acre. When we add the
3 80 units to our previous plan of 360, we come
4 up with 396 units. If the Board feels
5 favorable to this plan, the developer would go
6 back and visit with Beltrone to make sure that
7 they are serious with this plan at this
8 location.

9 We would also use the encouragement to go
10 to the Zoning Board of Appeals to see if they
11 would allow us an area variance for 46
12 additional units on the site.

13 In this plan, the senior facility would
14 be connected to Meadowdale Estates via
15 walkways. We're proposing that they have
16 independent access. There would be one access
17 point here (Indicating) and another access
18 point at this location here (Indicating). I
19 guess the pros with regard to the senior
20 citizen independent living plan is that it
21 probably has lesser impacts then if we were to
22 just do it as an apartment building as we're
23 proposing in Plan 2. I guess what we're saying
24 is even though there are more units, there is
25 less population. Most of the new apartments

1 would be one bedroom and one person. We have
2 an approximately distribution of 61 unit
3 one bedroom apartments and 20 two bedroom
4 apartments. So, we really have a reduced
5 population.

6 We also have less traffic in the sense
7 that a good portion of the residents in an
8 independent living facility don't have
9 automobiles. If they did, it would be limited
10 to one automobile, typically. This is just
11 typical of that demographic use. So, there
12 would be less traffic.

13 Also, senior citizen traffic distribution
14 to highways would be off-peak periods. The
15 peak periods would be 7 to 9 and 4 to 6. Most
16 senior citizens would go out after that 10:00
17 or 11:00 and be off the road about 3:00 in the
18 afternoon. As far as impact on adjacent roads,
19 it would be less impact also.

20 The other part is that senior citizens
21 would not have children. There would be no
22 impact to schools. When we say senior
23 citizens, this will be a dedicated senior
24 citizen - 55 years and above complex. This
25 will be a deed restricted use.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Would you be splitting
2 it off with selling it to the Colonie Seniors?

3 MR. SIPPERLY: Probably. I don't know if
4 anybody on the Board has visited the Beltrone
5 Living Center as it exists now. It's really a
6 full operating community with social
7 activities for the residents. It also has a
8 restaurant. It's a fairly self-contained great
9 facility for senior citizens who want to be in
10 the local environment.

11 Plan 2 is again to add one more apartment
12 building that we have elsewhere on the site
13 that would add 30 more units and bring our
14 density up to 346 units. Right now we're at
15 316 which was the concept plan that was
16 presented and favorably accepted by the Board
17 on May 24th.

18 What we are proposing to do is to connect
19 these two buildings here to Meadowdale Estates
20 at this point (Indicating). There is a
21 driveway here and we're also proposing an
22 emergency egress and ingress at this location
23 here (Indicating). So, that provides us this
24 parcel here - two means of ingress and egress.
25 Again, this would be very similar in building

1 architecture and size as other buildings in
2 Meadowdale's layout. We would have garages. We
3 would be proposing them. They would provide
4 about 40 or 50 percent of the residents with
5 garage space.

6 That's the two plans that we're looking
7 for some input from the Board.

8 What we really want to do is not leave
9 this parcel out of the plan any longer. Before
10 we were thinking that there might be some
11 retail commercial value to the parcel, but
12 upon further evaluation it would only
13 accommodate X number of square feet of
14 retail/commercial. It's really an isolated
15 location. Most of the retail is closer to
16 Route 9 and further east on Watervliet Shaker
17 Road and/or further south on Wolf Road.

18 I guess the real question is: What would
19 be the real success? We could develop it as
20 such, but whether or not the tenants would
21 really enjoy success there - we're not sure.
22 We're not sure that the public would actually
23 use these facilities.

24 There was a third item that we wanted to
25 discuss tonight. That's the buffer in the rear

1 of a couple of homes on Sherwood Drive. We'd
2 just like to clarify something. Specifically,
3 along the rear of the townhomes, as they back
4 up to existing residents on Sherwood Drive.
5 We're proposing a 30-foot rear yard where we
6 have rear yard backing into rear yard on these
7 properties. The plan incorporates a 50 foot
8 buffer as we go further north from there. I
9 think that there was some - we're not sure if
10 there was some confusion on our part or maybe
11 there was some confusion as to whether the
12 Board was under the understanding that there
13 was a 50-foot buffer behind these homes here.
14 The developers have met with all these
15 homeowners here and discussed what was going
16 to be built as part of Meadowdale's town
17 homes. We actually took a tape out there and
18 showed them where the property line was and
19 where the homes would be on Meadowdale. The
20 neighbors didn't seem to have any problem with
21 that.

22 You can see from the drawing that most of
23 the rear yards of these properties - about
24 five - the furthest most structure is the
25 garage.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Your homes or the
2 Sherwood Avenue homes?

3 MR. SIPPERLY: The Sherwood Avenue homes.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Joe, are you familiar
5 with this issue?

6 MR. LACIVITA: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you give us your
8 perspective on it?

9 MR. LACIVITA: We had a meeting on this
10 as well. I think that the minutes may have
11 dictated the fact that a 50-foot buffer was
12 the entire length of the property. I think
13 that there was a discussion by the Board as
14 well. In fact, Lynn can just state for the
15 record the addresses of those houses. I think
16 that's where we couldn't get the 50-foot
17 buffer there. I just wanted to clarify that
18 they were discussing what Lynn was talking in
19 the minutes that the 50-foot buffer area,
20 where they can get it, is there. As it gets to
21 that turning radius on Sherwood Drive, they
22 lose that component of the 50-foot buffer, but
23 also the 50-foot buffer is assisted by the
24 fact that the garages were in the back, as
25 Lynn was talking about.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What was your
2 recollection that the Board approved for
3 concept? Do you know? What does the record
4 show?

5 MR. LANE: I'm flipping through it. There
6 was some mention on page 12 about the buffer,
7 but it doesn't get into the distance part of
8 it.

9 MR. ROSANO: I only recall the 50 foot
10 from that point. That's the only area that I
11 recall being 50 feet. I don't recall
12 discussing 50 foot going in the other
13 direction. It was tight, as it was.

14 MR. SIPPERLY: You're correct, but there
15 was some source of confusion on our part as we
16 looked at the transcript of the meeting.

17 MR. ROSANO: I do remember talking from
18 the townhouse over being 50 foot, but not in
19 the other direction.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: When did you meet with
21 the residents? Was it since concept approval?

22 MR. SIPPERLY: No, before we had that
23 meeting at the Fire Department - it was this
24 exact map and then some people asked if we
25 would come out with a tape and show exactly

1 where it was. We met with five to six
2 different neighbors. We brought out florescent
3 surveying tape and showed them. Then we had a
4 subsequent meeting after.

5 I think that this is the same plan that
6 we've had for the whole time. We never amended
7 it. We weren't asking for any variances. We
8 were just making sure that the buffer was, as
9 we said, reflected the way that everyone else
10 thought, also.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I don't have a contrary
12 recollection. The neighbors are going to come
13 for final approval. So, we'll make sure that
14 we discuss that.

15 MR. LANE: I couldn't find a mention of
16 the distance. Your comment at the last meeting
17 was

18 "I think that we've incorporated the
19 various land uses with buffers. These are
20 natural buffers that we're going to maintain,
21 so that we have buffers between communities.
22 We also discussed with the neighbors - where
23 we have backyards that abut backyards of homes
24 on Sherwood Drive - with putting in a solid
25 fence along there, if they wanted that, to

1 make an instant buffer if they thought that
2 was to their liking and specification.

3 We really only have - I think that there
4 are seven homes here and there are six homes
5 up here..."

6 It's really what you just mentioned.

7 "That's an important point. I'm sure that
8 we'll hear from the neighbors on that. The
9 HOA - the homeowners' association..."

10 I don't see anything that you
11 specifically discussed the exact distance.

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We appreciate you
13 bringing that up.

14 MR. SIPPERLY: We wanted to clarify that.
15 There are several homes here that would be
16 affected. There are four to six up here
17 (Indicating).

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Same issue?

19 MR. SIPPERLY: Same issue.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Chuck, do you have
21 anything in particular to say about plans 1 or
22 2?

23 MR. VOSS: The buffer issue - we did
24 issue a letter to Planning on August 15th. We
25 went to a meeting and went to the concept plan

1 and we found no inconsistencies in the
2 discussion about the gap that they were
3 proposing in the buffer areas.

4 In terms of the concepts, obviously the
5 issue with concept - one is the variance issue
6 and there is a density issue that the Board is
7 going to have to consider. If they were to go
8 with option 1, which is the senior housing, it
9 would require an area variance for density. I
10 think that at this point, that's it.

11 MR. ROSANO: When we started this, I
12 never envisioned this as being a good fit;
13 density aside. Plan 2, to me, fits the whole
14 grand scheme of what you're trying to do here.
15 It seems like now, we're going to stick an
16 apartment building in the corner. I just don't
17 think that it's going to fit.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You like Plan 2 better
19 than Plan 1?

20 MR. ROSANO: Yes.

21 MR. LANE: I'm concerned with the density
22 as well. I'm not sure that I like either one,
23 to be honest with you. I'd like to see some
24 greenspace left. It seems like we reviewed one
25 thing at concept -

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Well, that was set aside
2 for commercial.

3 MR. LANE: I know. I understand, but to
4 just turn around and slap in another high
5 density building or two -- I guess I'd have to
6 see more. I'm not really excited about it.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'll chime in at this
8 point. I prefer more apartments rather than
9 higher density. I like Plan 2 better.

10 MR. SULLIVAN: I hate to pile it on, but
11 I'm opposed to exceeding the density and I'm
12 also opposed to adding more driveways in close
13 proximity to the roundabout.

14 MR. AUSTIN: I'm in favor of that, too,
15 as well. The whole density issue concerns me
16 as well. My only concern with Plan 2 is the
17 emergency access. I see that you have no plan
18 for that. I like the emergency access off of
19 Watervliet Shaker Road. It's close to the
20 roundabout. I don't know if there is some
21 other way that you can work out the emergency
22 access.

23 MR. SIPPERLY: What we tried to do there
24 is really keep our main entrance to the
25 development - Hastings Drive is at that

1 location there. To provide another entrance up
2 here - there probably would be no control
3 because that would allow circulation through
4 the whole development - or the apartment
5 complex part of the development. We're losing
6 a little bit of control of not having the
7 traffic at this point here (Indicating).

8 MR. AUSTIN: So, emergency access for the
9 Plan 2 would be off the back?

10 MR. SIPPERLY: Right, it would be at the
11 end of this driveway of the existing roadway.
12 We talked to the neighbor and about the
13 emergency access and we'd have access to that.

14 MR. MION: I think that density is a
15 major concern. I don't think that we'd want to
16 increase it any more.

17 MR. SIPPERLY: We'd like to see if we
18 could amend our concept acceptance of May 24th
19 to include the development of 5.3 acre parcel
20 here as a continuation -

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We can't take a vote on
22 that tonight. We'd have to notify the
23 neighbors. If you want to draw it up and bring
24 it back in, we can get the notice.

25 MR. SIPPERLY: We'd like to do that

1 because again, we're trying to avoid coming
2 back to the Board after the other part of this
3 starts.

4 MR. SAUSTO: I'd just like to say that it
5 is a big help because we've been getting calls
6 and calls about doing a senior development and
7 we're not really looking to go for variance.
8 We were directed - just so you know, not by
9 this Board but by the past Board, to try to do
10 some commercial application on that parcel.
11 So, this is helpful for us. We want to follow
12 the direction and I think that if it's
13 overwhelming, we'll just stay with Plan 2.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you.

15 MR. SIPPERLY: Thank you.

16

17 *(Whereas the proceeding concerning the above*
18 *entitled matter was adjourned at*
19 *8:28 p.m.)*

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