

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY
2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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5 SIENA COLLEGE
6 515 LOUDON ROAD
7 CENTER FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES BUILDING
8 SKETCH PLAN
9 *****

10 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
11 public hearing BY NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, a
12 Shorthand Reporter, commencing on
13 November 22, 2011 at 7:29 p.m. at the Public
14 Operations Center 347 Old Niskayuna Road,
15 Latham, New York 12110

16 BOARD MEMBERS:

- 17 PETER STUTO, Chairman
- 18 MICHAEL SULLIVAN
- 19 LOUIS MION
- 20 BRIAN AUSTIN
- 21 TIM LANE
- 22 PAUL ROSANO
- 23 ELENA VAIDA, ESQ., Counsel to the Planning Board

24 Also present:

- 25 Joe LaCivita, Director of Planning and Economic Development
- Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic Development
- Ralph Blasting, Dean of Liberal Arts, Siena College
- Mark Frost, Director of Facilities, Siena College
- Harry Kornblau
- Geoffrey MacDonald, Jr., RA, Sacco & McKinney Architects
- Bob Kernan, LA Group

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I think that we're on
2 time to call Siena College, 515 Loudon Road,
3 sketch plan, Center for Education and Social
4 Sciences Building. This is presented by the LA
5 Group. This is a three-story, 21,522 square
6 foot building.

7 Joe, can you give us an introduction on
8 that?

9 MR. LACIVITA: Michael will take this
10 one.

11 MR. TENGELER: Next on the agenda is
12 Siena College located at 515 Loudon Road.
13 They're here for a sketch plan review. It's
14 for the Center for Education and Social
15 Sciences Building, which is a three-story,
16 21,522 square foot building.

17 The initial meeting with DCC was on
18 October 12, 2011. Both Siena and the LA Group
19 are here tonight to present.

20 MR. BLASTING: Hello. I'm Ralph Blasting
21 and I'm the Dean of Liberal Arts at Siena
22 College. I'm working with the LA Group. They
23 gave me two minutes to present the idea for
24 the building because three of the departments
25 that will be in this building; the department

1 of education and social work and sociology.
2 They are all departments in the school of
3 liberal arts for which I'm responsible.

4 This building really came directly out of
5 a strategic plan and addresses two major
6 pieces. They are engagement and learning, and
7 strengthening our physical spaces on campus.
8 So, that's our strategic plan over the next
9 five years.

10 So, this building engages three
11 departments that are very well known for
12 working closely with their students. All three
13 of these departments are in a space right now
14 on the campus that is very challenging.

15 We actually are moving toward changing
16 the name of the building to the Center for
17 Social Justice and this is the name that came
18 from the three departments. They all wanted to
19 work together. They did not want any one
20 department to be singled out and they are all
21 committed in one way or another in education,
22 social work, and sociology to the concept of
23 social justice. So, we define the building now
24 as the Center for Social Justice on the
25 campus.

1 I'll be here to answer any questions, but
2 I'd like to turn it over to the people that
3 can speak more technically than I can. Thank
4 you.

5 MR. MACDONALD: Hi, I'm Geoff McDonald
6 with Sacco and McKinney Architects. We may be
7 a little ahead of this process. We've been
8 developing plans and we're actually getting
9 close to constructive documents for the
10 buildings.

11 I'll try not to take too much time. I'm
12 going to talk specifically about the building
13 and then we'll finally get LA up here and they
14 can talk about the site.

15 In essence, I'm sure that you're all
16 familiar with Siena campus. This building
17 would be located on the north end of
18 Middlefield Road. This aerial kind of shows
19 its approximate location on the campus
20 (Indicating). This is Siena all here so this
21 is on the other side of the parking area on
22 that north end (Indicating).

23 I have a couple of little photos of the
24 actual site. The thing is about this site is
25 that it's sloped. The building is going to sit

1 below, so it helps break down the scale of the
2 building. It's going to sit in that parking
3 area there. We're going to add some
4 greenspace. It will face south toward the main
5 part of the campus, and basically what could
6 become a future quad overlooking the campus.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: By quad, do you mean
8 greenspace?

9 MR. MACDONALD: Possibly. Right now, it's
10 going to overlook that parking lot. Future
11 expansion mechanics will move further north
12 and it could become more greenspace down the
13 line.

14 The site plan, as it stands now -- I
15 won't get into it too much. We meet setbacks.
16 We are engaged with the Building Department
17 right now for a zoning verification for the
18 building height. I do want to speak a little
19 bit about that.

20 We were very conscious on the scale and
21 the size of the building. You have a rendering
22 in your packet. I brought another view. Let me
23 also say that the building main entrance will
24 be at that lowest level that's in that parking
25 area.

1 When you get up to the lot and face this
2 existing building (Indicating) that will be
3 one story, so it will fit in the context of
4 the residential area in the background. This
5 site is also screened by a lot of trees, so
6 for those residents it won't be a commercial
7 building on top of them.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you orient me north
9 and south on that?

10 MR. MACDONALD: Yes, north is straight
11 up. The townhouses are further north. That's
12 Middlefield Road. There are a few residences
13 to Fiddler's Lane. So, actually it can be seen
14 in the existing photos here
15 (Indicating) - that's the existing social work
16 houses which are like single story ranches.
17 Our building will sit below. You can see that
18 there is an existing stair that gets up to
19 that site (Indicating). So, it's kind of
20 screened.

21 You can see from this elevation, the
22 first floor is classrooms with faculty offices
23 around the outside. The third floor is pretty
24 much the same with offices flanked around the
25 outside of the building. You can see the

1 straight elevations -- we tried to keep the
2 building in a smaller scale, so that it's not
3 too out of proportion to the adjacency to the
4 homes. Its height at the parapet is 40 feet.
5 The pitched roof area is 13 feet and it
6 doesn't encompass the whole building. You can
7 see from the side here, this would be the
8 single story that faces the existing social
9 workhouse (Indicating). This is the south
10 elevation, which faces the campus and that's
11 at full height with a pitched roof in the
12 background. I think that the rendering here
13 shows a good story.

14 MR. LACIVITA: If I could jump in here
15 for one second, you were explaining a moment
16 ago about the zone verification. Currently,
17 the zoning for the land use is in conflict
18 with it because there is the building height -

19 MR. MACDONALD: You're already familiar
20 with this.

21 MR. LACIVITA: The dimension table talks
22 about the height. That's where that 13.6 is
23 coming into play.

24 MR. MACDONALD: I literally spoke to Bob
25 Cordell today. Our intent was to not have to

1 get this variance. We want the project to keep
2 moving and it does say 40 feet of pitched
3 roof, so we thought that we were compliant. He
4 was confirming that.

5 MR. LACIVITA: Single family
6 residential -

7 MR. MACDONALD: Right - you can see here
8 on the rendering -

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You're saying that 40
10 plus the 13 may not be compliant?

11 MR. MACDONALD: Right, from grades at
12 this point of the building were 40 feet but
13 when you take the pitched roof, we're still
14 under the 15. The overall building height is
15 53 feet.

16 I'm going to turn it over to LA, but
17 these are some computer renderings that we've
18 produced (Indicating). If you don't have
19 these, we can certainly forward them. We'll
20 show you as we develop along.

21 Looking down Middlefield Road, you can
22 see -- this is one of the existing residences.
23 This is the existing social workhouse. You
24 cans sort of see our building in the
25 background here (Indicating). Here is a closer

1 look. Ironically, this is an earlier scheme
2 showing a two-story connection where we have
3 dropped it down to one-story. So, the building
4 is down in the campus. It's not a major
5 eyesore to the local residents.

6 Just a final note, we're pursuing LEED.
7 We're doing the building sustainable. We're
8 going to have a geothermal well. We're excited
9 about the project and hope that you'll help
10 Siena along with this.

11 MR. KERNAN: Hello. I'm Bob Kernan with
12 the LA Group. I'm going to go through the site
13 with you.

14 Like Geoff said, there are a couple of
15 different entrances. One is at the lower level
16 here where the parking lot was (Indicating).
17 That's the main access into the building. A
18 lot of pedestrian flow would be coming down
19 this block and a lot of students currently go
20 up in this direction here (Indicating). So,
21 there would be a crosswalk back over. There
22 would be parking spaces and another access
23 here to the building.

24 The upper level entrance is back here.
25 New walks would be provided to accommodate

1 pedestrians; bicycle racks, benches and some
2 site amenities.

3 Utility wise, since the DCC review and
4 the comments, we've made some improvements and
5 tried to accommodate all the questions and
6 concerns. We have relocated the sanitary line.
7 We have it constructed here with a 20-foot
8 easement. We would be looking around the
9 building with a 30-foot easement, as
10 requested. That would be with the appropriate
11 pitches and pipe sizing.

12 We would be connecting to the water
13 through the dormitories and it would run down
14 on our property. We would also provide a
15 hydrant.

16 With the stormwater - we intend at this
17 point - we're in flux and still designing the
18 system to detain water and have a system of
19 pipes underground potentially at this location
20 (Indicating), so that we're not increasing any
21 flow rates from our development.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Which way does the water
23 flow? Is it into the parking lot? Is that
24 lower?

25 MR. KERNAN: It comes this way into

1 this area here (Indicating). The new design
2 would go to new structures at low points that
3 would lead to underground detention and
4 connect into the existing storm system.

5 MR. AUSTIN: You mentioned peak flow
6 attenuation. So would there be water quality
7 treatment also?

8 MR. KERNAN: We're talking about how we
9 can accommodate that. There was a bunch of
10 other questions; one being the requirement for
11 the DCC review. The Town requested that we
12 provide a full SWPPP for this project. There
13 were some various conversations with the
14 college and staff and it seems to be that the
15 agreement was that for the next college
16 development that they would provide an overall
17 SWPPP for the campus - the next large
18 development. Maybe this isn't the appropriate
19 project because it's so small. We're well
20 under the disturbance. There was discussion
21 that maybe it should be added to the loop road
22 project. I guess that's all up for debate for
23 discussion purposes.

24 This is a small site and we're well under
25 an acre, like I said. We have an existing

1 parking lot there and we're putting a building
2 there. There will be 1,500 feet of additional
3 impervious. We have really high groundwater
4 there.

5 MR. GRANT: I would agree.

6 MR. KERNAN: From our standpoint, we're
7 saying let's not impact or increase the flow
8 rate. We know that we can do that. We feel
9 that we're improving the water quality
10 already.

11 MR. GRANT: The only thing that I could
12 think of is the proprietary water -

13 MR. KERNAN: Like a swale chamber?

14 MR. GRANT: There is about four of them
15 on there. With your typical natural green
16 infrastructure, high ground water, lack of
17 space -

18 MR. KERNAN: Our policy would be that for
19 every tree taken down, we would plant two new
20 ones. We're planting four trees here.

21 MR. GRANT: The storage
22 component - because it's a small site, we can
23 do something if there were chambers or pipes
24 to provide the storage. If this were a
25 standalone and not on this campus and just a

1 redevelopment project, with the amount of
2 development that occurs and continues to occur
3 at Siena, a full SWPP would be appropriate.

4 MR. KERNAN: For the DCC comments, it
5 said that there is potential in looking to
6 have the loop road project accommodate all the
7 stormwater. Of course, that not being here
8 yet, we would draw up a SWPP plan.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Were any of these
10 professionals on the task of the major
11 construction that they did a couple of years
12 ago? Were they mostly dorms? I can't remember
13 now. They were on the other side of the
14 campus. Didn't they do a major stormwater
15 study then?

16 MR. LACIVITA: No, it was talked about
17 looking at the water and stormwater system.
18 That was involving Schuyler Meadows. Assuming
19 that in five years they'll probably be working
20 towards that.

21 MR. FROST: I'm Mark Frost, the Director
22 of Facilities at Siena College.

23 There was a full SWPPP that was done as
24 part of the new resident hall constructed
25 about a year and a half ago. We are doing

1 another project coming down the road and that
2 is going to have a lot more disturbance. we
3 thought that it made some sense for us to talk
4 to the Town and have a meeting scheduled to
5 talk to John Dzialo to talk about the
6 possibility of moving the full SWPPP effort
7 and doing a stormwater plan for the whole
8 campus. We would do it more in conjunction
9 with the loop road project versus this
10 specific project.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I would encourage you to
12 stay in touch with Brad with that, too. Brad
13 is our stormwater expert and he's looking out
14 for our interests on that. I knew that there
15 was some history on that with the last major
16 project. You're going to have to do it sooner
17 or later.

18 MR. FROST: We were working with someone
19 at Clough Harbour who I believe was focused on
20 the athletic fields. It was just the athletic
21 fields. It was not a campus wide.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: One way or the other
23 you're going to have to do it. You're going to
24 have to update it on this one or the next
25 project.

1 MR. FROST: Understood.

2 MR. GRANT: There were some issues on the
3 Krum Kill downstream. Siena College is not the
4 only impact to it by any stretch of the
5 imagination, but those problems are real and
6 now.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, well that's a key
8 issue that we're going to keep an eye on. I
9 appreciate that, Brad.

10 MR. KERNAN: Some of this has allowed us
11 to progress the work in moving the project
12 technicality wise.

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Why don't we save those
14 kinds of conversations for the next time?

15 Do you have any other major points that
16 you want to make?

17 MR. KERNAN: No, I think that's it.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you have any other
19 major points, Brad?

20 MR. GRANT: Not really. The stormwater
21 end of it - it sounds as though he responded
22 to some of the DCC comments.

23 MR. KERNAN: We moved the sanitary lines
24 and the water lines. They're pretty straight
25 forward.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Board Members, does
2 anyone have any questions?

3 MR. MION: I don't have any questions. I
4 think that it's going to be a nice project.

5 MR. AUSTIN: It seems like you've done a
6 lot of your homework already. You're pretty
7 well underway. It looks like it's going to be
8 a good project.

9 MR. SULLIVAN: Can you explain how
10 parking will be addressed in the existing lot?

11 MR. KERNAN: There are 18 parking spots
12 that we lost. They are student parking spots.
13 They will be absorbed into the other parking
14 capacity that we have on campus. Right now we
15 do have a fair amount of spaces that are
16 available that are not being used on a daily
17 basis. These students will just have to move
18 out. The walk to class may be a little bit
19 longer than it currently is. We do have the
20 capacity on campus to handle the parking.

21 MR. SULLIVAN: But you don't envision any
22 additional trips generated? The same students
23 that are in the existing classes right now
24 will be using this space - basically providing
25 more space for students.

1 MR. KERNAN: Correct.

2 MR. SULLIVAN: Thank you.

3 MR. LANE: I like the project. I like the
4 idea that you're going for LEED status. I like
5 that.

6 Is this the final design of the building?
7 It's not particularly exciting, to be honest.
8 It's kind of standard.

9 MR. BLASTING: We're close to the end of
10 the design, but actually we tried to design
11 the building to harmonize with the area right
12 across the street. We didn't see this as a
13 major signature building.

14 MR. LANE: So you're just blending it.

15 MR. BLASTING: Yes.

16 MR. LANE: Okay, that makes sense.

17 MR. ROSANO: I don't have anything.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We're sort of out of
19 time. I had no particular problem with the
20 project. I think that it's good to develop the
21 college. We would want to look at the
22 stormwater. The height issue has to be
23 resolved one way or the other.

24 I know that this gentleman has a keen
25 interest.

1 Are you Mr. Kornblau?

2 MR. KORNBLAU: Yes.

3 MR. KERNAN: Can I add a point? There is
4 something that I forgot to add.

5 The college has met with the local
6 neighbors as well.

7 MR. KORNBLAU: I didn't hear about it and
8 wasn't notified. I have no idea about it.

9 I'm happy to have Siena as a neighbor and
10 I'm happy to be a neighbor. The students are
11 great and there are no problems. My only
12 concern is a serious one. It's not directly by
13 the building, but I think that it may be
14 affected by this development.

15 I'm having a hard time orienting where
16 Route 9 is. You don't have to show me.

17 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Sir, you can take this
18 aerial map and it will show you. You can take
19 that with you.

20 MR. KORNBLAU: Thank you. I appreciate
21 that. I Live on Campus View Drive, right off
22 Route 9. The exit from the campus and the
23 entrance are right there. The exit is directly
24 across from my street. The entrance is
25 probably less than 50 feet south of that. I

1 moved in a year and a half ago and I feel like
2 I take my life into my hands every time I'm
3 headed north and trying to turn down my block;
4 particularly in the morning when there are a
5 lot of students are coming from the north
6 headed down. If this is Campus View and Siena
7 is there (Indicating), then a lot of traffic
8 headed south moves into the turn lane before
9 the exit, crosses the street and then heads
10 down and turns left into the campus. If you're
11 headed north in that turn lane to get in,
12 you're facing traffic. I haven't done a
13 traffic study yet or checked with the Police
14 Department. I will. I don't want to see one
15 person get killed. I don't want to get killed
16 or injured. Something has to be done about
17 changing that entrance. The exit works.
18 Everyone stops and looks across the road. But
19 the entrance - something has to be done at
20 that intersection. It's a hazard. When I have
21 guests coming, I spend 10 minutes telling them
22 about that intersection. For Siena to continue
23 to be a good neighbor and to really
24 seriously -- I heard about a loop so there is
25 going to be some changes on the

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1 campus -- please consider making an adjustment
2 to that for everyone's safety. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you.

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*(Whereas the proceeding concerning the above
entitled matter was concluded at*

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8:02 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

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4 ***I, NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, Shorthand***
5 ***Reporter, and Notary Public in and for the***
6 ***State of New York, hereby CERTIFY that the***
7 ***record taken 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.***
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14 -----
15 ***NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART***
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18 ***Dated December 19, 2011***
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